

# TOWN OF WILLINGTON

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Board of Selectmen  
40 Old Farms Road  
Willington, CT 06279  
(860) 487-3100  
(860) 487-3103 Fax  
[www.willingtonct.org](http://www.willingtonct.org)

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting Minutes  
Via web interaction (via Zoom platform)

May 17, 2021  
6:30 PM

*\*Minutes are not official until approved at the next regular meeting*

First Selectwoman Wiecenski called the meeting to order at 6:30PM with the following in attendance; Selectman Boritz, Selectman Blessington and residents.

Pledge of Allegiance

### Approval of Minutes

Selectmen Blessington moved to approve the BOS Regular minutes of May 3, 2021 as written.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Boritz & Blessington) 0 No.

Motion Carried.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to approve the BOS Special minutes of May 7, 2021 as written.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Boritz & Blessington) 0 No.

Motion Carried.

### Present To Speak

No one was present to speak

### Correspondence

A list of correspondence was provided to the Selectmen for their review.

### First Selectman's Status Report

First Selectwoman Wiecenski provided a few updates.

There are no new updates related to our STEAP Grant for the Old Town Hall septic. We are still waiting for the contract from DEEP.

The School Building Committee- the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday May 19<sup>th</sup> 2021. Kosta Diamantis, Deputy Secretary of Department of Administrative Services (DAS) toured our school facilities on Monday May 17, 2021. A discussion will be held at this week's scheduled SBC meeting.

The LOTCIP Grant for the Route 32 project- There is no new update, Our Zoning Agent Mr. D'Amato is continuing to work with the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation. We are waiting for the final design to submit a Request for a quote (RFQ).

There is currently one vacant position in Public Works. Interviews were conducted with four applicants, with that we had one qualified candidate but with some conflict of interest. After much discussion it was determined that we should fill the vacancy with a Laborer. We posted the Laborer position internally where it will remain for five days per the union contract. If the position does not fill internally then we will post externally.

The lights have been installed at the park and are now around the Basketball court. By Wednesday evening all of the lights should be fully operational. The parking lot lights will be set to come on at sunset with the rest of the lights. The parking lot lights will turn off at 11:00 PM and the remaining lights will turn off between 9:30 and 10:00 PM. The WPRC is going to discuss the new on/off time for the lights and the new park hours at their next meeting scheduled for May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Selectmen Blessing inquired if we will be meeting soon on the new union contract negotiations?

First Selectwoman Wiczenski responded to say yes the union has finally responded to our many attempts to open up discussions pertaining to new union contract negotiations. The union committed to the last week in June 2021 to start discussions. It is incredibly disappointing that they have been unresponsive up until this point as this contract ends on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021. Once the dates have been confirmed by our Attorney, communications will go out to the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Finance and our Finance Business Manager Ms. Latinsics.

#### Public Works

Mr. Sposato reported the following that has been done by Public Works

- Sweeping in still going on around Town
- Roadside mowing is continuing
- Grading dirt roads is still continuing around Town.
- Picked up trash at the park.
- Moved filing cabinets in the TOB.
- Installed a half door in the Registrar's Office.
- Installed new Plexiglas in the TOB
- Serviced mowers
- Fixed a cabinet in the Tax Office.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski noted that Public Works has been integral in our planning and implementing some changes as part of our reopen plan. She extended a thank you to all of our Public Works employees for being innovative in creating barriers between our staff and the public.

Additionally, Troy has been working with Ellis Technical High School to participate with their work based learning program. The program agreement is to have a select student come and work for the Town as a temporary worker. This gives students some real time life experience, Troy has gone several times to speak to students about Public Works careers and what that would look like. We have been given the opportunity to take on a student for a period of four weeks as temporary worker in a learning based program that is fully funded by the school. The school will pay up to \$15.00 per hour reimbursed to the Town for our participation.



Troy spoke about the program where the school had a job fair for senior students. Troy had the opportunity to speak to seniors and another where he spoke with juniors. From that we had a student who is from the Ashford area that had interest in Public Works and wanted to participate in the work based learning program. This will provide some real life experience to these young individuals that may not necessarily have the opportunity.

Selectmen Blessington asked Troy, what specialty is this student studying.

Troy responded to say the student is studying auto mechanics. He also expressed interest in the Public Works operations and function for a possible career path. We will have him participate in building catch basins, adding curbing and paving. It is our intent to subject the student to many the facets of Public Works operations.

Selectmen Blessington wanted to express that there are a lot of Willington kids that go to Windham Tech, perhaps we should think about that in the future.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski responded to say only Ellis Tech reached out to the Town for participation. Should Windham Tech reach out to us in the future, we would absolutely jump on partnering with them for future work based learning program.

### New Business

#### A. Public Works Week Proclamation

First Selectwoman Wiecenski read the Proclamation for Public Works Week May 16, 2021 – May 23, 2021 and congratulated Troy Sposato and his staff on the great job they are doing for Willington.

#### National Public Works Week Proclamation

May 16 – 23, 2021

“Stronger Together”

**WHEREAS**, Public Works professionals focus on infrastructure, facilities and services that are of vital importance to sustainable and resilient communities and to the public health, high quality of life and well-being of the people of Willington; and

**WHEREAS**, Public Works personnel of the Town of Willington are involved in the maintenance, planning, design, and construction of streets, parks, playfields, open space, paths, storm drains, storm water treatment, public buildings: operations of our recycling, solid waste and environmental programs and facilities; right of way management; and emergency planning and response;

**WHEREAS**, during the on-going COVID-19 pandemic Willington Public Works personnel are essential workers who are continuing to work hard each and every day to keep our community safe and functioning, with various responsibilities related to the COVID-19 response; and

**WHEREAS**, it is in the public interest for the citizens, civic leaders and children in Willington to gain knowledge of and to maintain a progressive interest and understanding of the importance of public works and public works programs in their respective communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the year 2021 marks the 61<sup>st</sup> annual National Public Works Week sponsored by the American Public Works Association; and

**NOW THEREFORE**, I, First Selectwoman Erika G. Wiecenski, Town of Willington, do hereby proclaim the week May 16 through 22, 2021 as “National Public Works Week” in the Town Of Willington and encourage all citizens and civic organizations to recognize substantial contributions Public Works personnel make to protect our health, safety, and quality of life.

Dated this 17<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2021

First Selectwoman Wiecenski thank Troy and his staff for all the work that they do. In conjunction with Public Works week, Jennie in Human Services is doing a fill a Public Works truck event this week scheduled from May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Jennie advised that typically we receive 600-800 food items in total as of Monday they successfully collected 117 food items. They are well on their way to hitting that target. She will be at River Road Athletic Complex on Tuesday, the Transfer Station on Wednesday and the Library on Thursday.

**B. Tax Refund**

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski Moved to refund \$310.04 to JP Morgan Chase on a Certificate of Correction.**

**Selectwoman Boritz Seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski)**

**Motion Carried.**

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski Moved to refund \$14.96 to Tithi Bosce-Mallik on a Certificate of Correction.**

**Selectman Blessington Seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski)**

**Motion Carried.**

**C. Approve Vendor Landfill Ground Water Monitoring**

All bids remained sealed and were opened publically in the BOS meeting.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski started the discussion stating that the Selectmen's office sent out a request for bids for the Landfill Ground Water Monitoring and received only one bid in return which coincidentally is the current vendor we use. We have been satisfied with the work that they have performed.

Selectmen Blessington wanted to know in comparison is the current bid more than we were previously paying.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski responded to say due to COVID we had asked GZA GeoEnviornmental to extend their contract by one more year until 6-30-21. There current bid is in line with the contract extension agreement.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to award the Landfill Ground Water Monitoring contract to GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. in the amount of \$8,500.00 per year for a three year total of \$25,500.00 for contract period 7-1-21 expiring on June 30, 2024.**

**Selectman Blessington Seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski)**

**Motion Carried.**

**D. Approve Vendor Propane Bid**

All bids remained sealed and were opened publically in the BOS meeting.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski started the discussion stating that the Propane bid closed on May 10<sup>th</sup> 2021 to be opened at the BOS meeting this evening. We received 2 submissions with in the deadline. One from Superior Energy (known by way of the envelope) as the bid was sealed. The second submission was



unknown until it was opened which was from Hocon Gas. It was advised that we received one more bid via e-mail just today significantly past the deadline from Superior plus Propane Osterman Propane. The discussion continued to disqualify the late submission from the bid award as they did not follow the bid submission instructions and was filed with the Selectmen's office late.

The discussion continued to review each bid received.

Superior Energy (our current vendor) submitted a bid of \$1.79 per gallon, labor rate per hour \$150.00, labor rate per hour (after hours) \$250.00, labor rate per hour holiday & weekends \$350.00, trip charge \$100.00 regular and \$200.00 for holidays or weekends. The trip charge is defined as anytime a service technician is required on site a trip fee will be charged. Please note this does not apply to propane deliveries

Hocon Gas submitted a bid of \$1.45 per gallon, labor rate \$69.00 per hour, labor rate per hour (after hours) this also includes holidays or weekends \$75.00 per hour. There is no trip charge defined on their bid.

A discussion was held by the Selectmen, although the Superior Energy is higher than the previous contract we have been satisfied with their service. The price per gallon for Superior Energy is less than Hocon Gas however there is a new trip charge in place for Superior Energy whereas Hocon Gas has none. They are hopeful that we will not need additional servicing that will incur additional charges.

**Selectwoman Boritz moved to award the propane bid to Superior Energy in the amount of \$1.79 per gallon.**

**First Selectwoman Wiecesnki Seconded**

**Vote: 3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wieceski)**

**Motion Carried.**

#### **E. Approve Vendor Custodial Bid**

All bids remained sealed and were opened publically in the BOS meeting.

First Selectwoman Wieceski started the discussion stating for the Custodial Bid, we received one bid from H&S Carpet and Janitorial Service LLC which coincidentally is our current vendor. It was noted that we have been satisfied with the work that they have performed. During COVID they were onboard and flexible in facilitating additional cleaning to assist in the additional cleaning protocols put in place. The bid submitted is as such; TOB \$250.00 per week for 2 days of cleaning. \$40.00 each time for the Old Town Hall this was prefaced by only when asked and \$70.00 per week at the PW garage for 2 days of cleaning. The bid proposed is comparable to our current contract.

Selectman Blessington commented that it is unfortunate that the Library hasn't reached out to be included in the cleaning service bid with the Town. Last year the Library had laid off their custodial staff and in reading their recent minutes they want to pay staff extra for cleaning services since they do not have a contract in place.

First Selectwoman Wieceski responded to say that the previous Director had showed interest some time ago and the vendor information was passed along to them however they did not reach out to our office to be included in any bidding process. The Library may reach out to them separately should they want to pursue contracting for their service.

**First Selectwoman Wieceski moved to award the Cleaning Service contract to Wayne Hamilton from H&S Carpet and Janitorial Service, LLC for contract period 7-1-21 expiring on June 30, 2023.**

**Selectman Blessington Seconded the motion.**  
**Vote: 3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski)**  
**Motion Carried.**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski took a moment to thank all of the companies that bid on our contracts.

**F. Underground Oil Tank Replacement for WFD#1**

Stuart Cobb spoke about the WFD#1 underground oil tank replacement project. It was advised that the 2000 gallon oil tank is 20 years old and it is recommended that it be replaced. In the investigation the cost to replace the existing tank would cost \$100,000. We then looked into converting our current heating system to propane vs. oil and the cost would be \$50,000. This project was approved on this year's CIP plan, in order to utilize LOCIP funds the BOF will have to appropriate the funds then the BOS would call a Town Meeting. Mr. Cobb has not requested to be put on the BOF agenda as of yet however he will reach out to see if he can get on the agenda for the next meeting scheduled for May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021. He believes we will see cost savings in the use of propane vs. oil.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski advised that we are gearing up for the Annual Town Meeting, we may be able to incorporate the WFD#1 underground oil tank replacement project in that.

**G. Town Attorney Discussion**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski started the discussion by stating that she was informed last week that our current Attorney has left the firm that the Board voted to use. The firm is now left with just two attorneys and neither practices in management or labor law. We have several issues that we are currently working on with our Attorney including upcoming union negotiations. I recommended that we continue using our current Attorney in his new role at Ford Harrison Law Firm. They are a nationwide firm that would give us additional resources at our disposal. We will be grandfathered into the current rate of pay which consists of payment by the hour vs. a retainer.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to continue to utilize the services of Ford Harrison Law Firm and our current Attorney Ryan O'Donnell**  
**Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.**

A discussion was held on the logistics of the Town contract. The discussion continued on whether we are contracted with the Attorney or contracted with the Firm. The consensus of the group was to remain with the current Attorney that we have outstanding projects with vs. working with a Firm with attorneys that we are not familiar with or that do not have the experience and expertise that we require. After the projects are complete, if the Board is unsatisfied with the work the Board may look to go out to bid for Attorney services should they feel they need to do so.

**Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Boritz & Blessington) 0 No.**

**Old Business**

**A. COVID-19 Update**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski provided an updates



Willington has had cumulative 255 COVID positive cases, 3 deaths and 22 probable cases which is an increase of 6 cases since our last meeting on May 3, 2021

As of last Thursday we are no longer in the alert level. Positive cases have dropped to (<5 cases per 100,000) over the two week period reported. Organizations, families and individuals must continue to be vigilant with practicing basic COVID precautions.

As of last Thursday the CDC, and Governor Lamont announced a relaxation of masking guidance. The Governor noted in his announcement that any changes will be effective after May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021. He further noted certain exceptions, and caveats to the relaxation of the masking guidance. Our Health District recommends no changes at this current time, and requests everyone's patience as we all wait for the final guidance language from the Governor's Office, and the Connecticut Department of Public Health. Therefore I will not be making any new changes for Town properties or staff at this time. We will still require masks at the TOB. Outside at the transfer station if you maintain social distance you will no longer be required to mask.

As of last week residents 12+ are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Ages 12-17 may only receive the Pfizer vaccine. Willington's vaccine data as of May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 is 2908 (49.59%) total first doses; 2351 fully vaccinated. She encourages everyone 16+ to consider being vaccinated.

The current emergency declaration extension has been extended to July 20<sup>th</sup> 2021.

In light of the decreasing positivity rate and the increasing vaccine rate we have set Monday June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 as the date to reopen the TOB to the public. We have precautions in place in all departments. Staff will continue to wear masks when in public areas but within their separate offices they are not needed due to the partitions that we have in place. Residents are still encouraged to conduct business as much as possible online, via phone or via e-mail. If your business does require you to be in person a mask will be required and we ask to limit your time at the TOB to business. While we love to see and say hello to our residents, the layout of our building and offices do not allow for maintaining social distances and everyone's safety is the First Selectwoman's first priority. We will be opening the restrooms upstairs to the public if needed but downstairs will remain closed to the public for now.

American Rescue Funds guidance was received last Monday. The document is 151 pages, it was communicated with the BOF that she cannot with certainty recommend removing items from the budget. While she believes there may be items covered it will take more investigation to the specifics. We sent forth a budget with items we felt were needed prior to any federal funding and she still strongly stands by the budget that we sent to the BOF. There will be multiple meetings scheduled to help municipalities understand the use of the funds and the required reporting necessary. The BOF will meet on Thursday May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and we will move forward after they approve a budget. If that is done on Thursday, I would like to meet Monday to call the Annual Town Meeting. ARP funding for Willington is set to be turned over to the State by May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 then to the Town's within 30 days by June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

## **B. Town of Union Discussion**

First Selectwoman Wicewski provided an update. This Board asked me to begin the conversation with the Town of Union. She met with the First Selectman of Union and he noted the Town of Union has never funded an ambulance and the service agreement to provide service has always been with ambulance organizations outside of Union. Currently WFD#1 holds that PSA, he did not support funding from the Town of Union. It was left with the Union First Selectman that she would take that information back to the Willington BOS and the BOF and that it was likely they would want to further the discussion. At this

point if we would like to further the discussion is to either invite the Town of Union to a Willington BOS or a BOF meeting to discuss further.

The consensus of the Selectmen was to have the formal invite come from the BOF as they are inquiring.

### **C. Treasurer Position Discussion**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski shared a draft job description and a list of duties of an Assistant to the Business Manager to take on some of the duties of the Treasurer. This job description was taken from another Town that currently has this position in place.

A discussion was held, there was a consensus from the group that the job description looks good with the caveat that none of them are bookkeepers or accountants. The Board believes they are on the right track and the change should take place around the Election so that a Treasurer seeking the position is fully informed of the duties and expectations. The Selectmen would like to have this topic on the next agenda for a final vote.

#### Present to Speak

No one was present to speak

#### Good & Welfare

First Selectwoman Wiecenski provided some updates.

First Selectmen Wiecenski provided an update to the group of the Troop C Police Report for April 2021

287- Total calls for Service	7 - Accidents
6 – Criminal Investigations	0 - Burglaries
0 -Larcenies	221 - Non Reportable Matters
39 -Total Traffic Stops	3 - Onsite DUI's
2 - Misdemeanor Summons	11 - Infractions
1 - Written Warning	28 - Verbal Warnings
9 – Total Arrests	

You can find COVID information from <https://portal.ct.gov/coronavirus>

Mobile Food Share will be here at the TOB this Wednesday May 26, 2021 from 11AM to 11:30 AM. Contact Human Services with any questions.

Drive Through food distribution will be on Friday May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021

There is a fill a Public Works Truck event scheduled from May 17<sup>th</sup> 2021 to May 21<sup>st</sup> 2021

- Monday May 17, 2021 – Town Offices from 12:30 PM to 7:30 PM
- Tuesday May 18, 2021- River Road Athletic Complex from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Wednesday May 19, 2021 - Transfer Station from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Thursday May 20, 2021 – Willington Public Library 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Help us help others in Town by donating. You can contact Human Services with questions.



Please if you can support our small businesses and restaurants.

The Referendum for just the Region 19 budget passed in all three Towns. Willington had 106 Willington votes, 72 voted Yes and 34 voted No.

Boards and Commission vacancies: CIP has one vacancy, the Conservation Commission has two alternate vacancies, EDS has three alternate vacancies, Historic District has one regular and two alternate vacancies, IWWC has two regular and two alternate vacancies, Planning & Zoning has two alternate vacancies and lastly the Parks & Recreation Commission has one regular vacancy.

Reminder that all of the Town's Meetings are still being held virtually and can be viewed live or on the Town's YouTube page. There is a link on the Town Website on the left hand that states Online Boards and Commissions Meetings. Inside that page will be a link to the Willington You Tube channel.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to go into Executive Session to discuss a potential litigation**  
**Selectman Blessington seconded the motion at 7:54 PM**  
**Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Boritz & Blessington) 0 No.**

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to exit the Executive Session at 8:27 PM**

**Selectman Blessington moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 PM**  
**First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.**  
**Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Boritz & Blessington) 0 No.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Heather Sharpley*  
Administrative Assistant  
Town of Willington

RECEIVED  
WILLINGTON, CT.

2021 MAY 19 P 12:15

*[Signature]*  
TOWN CLERK