

# Town of Willington

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Board of Selectmen  
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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting Minutes  
In person & Via web interaction (via Zoom platform)

August 2, 2021  
6:30 PM

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

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

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, First Selectwoman mentioned with thanks to Phil Monty that there is a new flag in the common room and the downstairs meeting room. The old flags will be retired with the Boy Scouts next year.

### Approval of Minutes

Selectman Blessington moved to approve the minutes of July 19, 2021 as written.

Selectman Boritz seconded the motion.

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

### Present To Speak

N/A

### Correspondence

A list of Correspondence was available for the Selectmen to view.

### First Selectman's Status Report

No major updates; School Building Committee will meet this Wednesday, August 4<sup>th</sup> via a hybrid meeting.

COVID – As of 7/29/2021, 54.11% of folks are vaccinated; 265 positive cases, 5 new positive cases. Breakdown of those vaccinated is now available:

Ages 12-15 – 43.03%

Ages 16-44 – 43.08%

Ages 45-64 – 61.72%

Ages 65 and older – 100%

First Selectwoman Wiecenski reminds everyone to remain cautious and get vaccinated if over the age of 12.

Effective tomorrow, August 3<sup>rd</sup> masks will be required in TOB, also all town employees will be required to wear masks if in public space; if within their own work space it is not necessary. (as behind glass)

Selectman Blessington brought up that he questions the validity of the vaccine and indicates science is changing week to week. Selectman Boritz indicated her brother is an infectious diseases specialist is concerned about the delta variant and that she wears a mask, as First Selectwoman Wiczenski does as well, to protect others and not necessarily themselves. Following the CDC guidelines is an important step to take. First Selectwoman Wiczenski indicated that science is ever changing and the Delta Variant is very contagious.

First Selectwoman discussed the employment vacancies. There has been an offer made for the Park and Recs Director and they are waiting to hear back. Interviews have begun for the Assistant Assessor's position. There is currently no interest in the Assistant Land Use Agent so ad with remain up. There have been 4 applications received for the Administrative Assistant position and First Selectwoman Wiczenski indicated discussion with the other Selectmen will need to happen so they can set up some interview times.

### Public Works

Troy Sposato was present at the meeting. Storm cleanup is still going on around town. Most roads have had the edges filled in we are working to pave some of the edges that the asphalt was broken.

A contractor is working on the other major areas that are in need of paving: Liska Rd, Cowles Rd, Schofield Rd, and Daleville School Rd; Trash at park is picked up on Monday and Thursday; Sweeping around town where dirt has washed onto the roads as a result of storms. Tree removal is still in progress with our contractor Lindon Tree Service. Mowed at Public works / Transfer station and at Halls Pond; Waiting on new drums for mower to continue; Graded some of the dirt roads after storms. We will continue to install process gravel to some dirt roads. The swap shed is open and was cleaned out. The shed was closed for 2 weekends due to staff shortages. We ask that people only bring stuff that is deemed reusable and clean; nothing including fabric or other materials that may decay. Additionally if the shed has been closed we ask residents not to leave materials. The new Public Works vehicles, included on the CIP plan, are expected to be delivered mid-November early December.

First Selectwoman reiterated that the Swap Shed takes reusable and clean items; no fabric as it will decay and draw rodents. She will speak with Mr. Sposato about possibly having the Swap Shed looked over by volunteers when opened to assist residents which will free up time for the Transfer Station employees. if no volunteers, we may have to possibly shut. Selectman Blessington indicated that he would not be happy if the Swap Shed closed but is in agreement to having it be volunteer-run.

### New Business

Emerald Ash Borer Tree Mitigation – A letter was received by a concerned resident which included options. Tree Update per Mr. Sposato: The Emerald Ash Borer has hit the Town hard we need to be proactive and remove as many trees as we can. There is a treatment that can be applied but will not insure effectiveness. The cost to treat a tree is around \$400 compared to cutting where the cost is approximately \$800 - \$1000 depending on tree and location. If treated, there is only a 50% chance that it will survive. Arborist are encouraging that the trees be removed. The only time these trees can be treated is in early spring when it's flowering. Even if the tree looks healthy, it very likely to be infected when it is located near infected trees. First Selectwoman Wiczenski indicated that we are past time to treat the trees now and asked how many are affected? Mr. Sposato indicated that he does not know and that they grow in bunches; Of the \$50,000.00 current budget, \$24,000.00 has already been spent so far. On Mason Road there are 30 trees alone. There was discussion on last year's vote for the budget and the need for the increase in funds; Selectman Blessington indicated that it is too expensive for homeowners to remove these infected trees from their property but acknowledged the Town can't assume responsibility for that. Selectman Boritz indicated that we are underfunded in all of our departments and it seems that we wait until there is a crisis and then it is handled. Our budgets have not supported maintenance of trees or roads. Someone needs to approve the appropriate funding or we are always going to be playing catch-up.



Seems to be less expensive to take care of it now. First Selectwoman Wiecenski asked Mr. Sposato if the tree is scraped to look for disease, does it damage the tree? Mr. Sposato indicated it does. Selectman Blessington indicated that we need to plan ahead but is unsure how. Some maple trees have some infestation now as well. Possibly go back to Board of Finance to get more funds. First Selectwoman Wiecenski indicated that the Board of Selectmen need to listen to those experts that are hired and depend on their expertise. Since it is not an option to treat the trees this year, give some thought to the fact that the cost is \$400.00 per tree to treat and that it is only 50% effective. She is hoping we can get through the rest of the season without any major damage. Mr. Sposato will do the best he can with the funds he has. First Selectwoman Wiecenski encouraged residents to be aware of the trees on their property. Selectman Boritz asked if pictures can be posted on the town website and social media groups. First Selectwoman Wiecenski will put some information together as a public notice.

#### Old Business

- A. Assistant Business Manager/Treasurer Discussion – Donna is currently on a well deserved vacation. Documentation was provided with regard to the current structure of the Accounting Department and the suggested future structure of that department. This information, along with the proposed draft job description has been sent to the town attorney for review. Needs approval by the union as well.

#### Present to Speak

N/A

#### Good & Welfare

Member of Zoning Board of Appeal Jack Rup passed away over the weekend. First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked him for his years of service to the Town of Willington and sent out thoughts and prayers to his family.

COVID information can always be found at: [portal.ct.gov/coronavirus](http://portal.ct.gov/coronavirus)

The Special Town Meeting tomorrow evening at 7:00 PM will be at the Old Town Hall and is in person. Exceptions will be made for those that are unaware of the new mask mandate effective tomorrow, as there was not time to get out a notice to everyone.

Tax Bills are due without interest and penalty by the close of business today.

Mobil Foodshare will be at the Town Hall on Wednesday from 11:00 – 11:30 AM.

Wednesdays in the Park continues with Flamingo performing this Wednesday.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked Cheryl Mitchell for filling in to take notes at this meeting.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 PM**

**Selectwoman Blessington seconded the motion.**

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Cheryl Mitchell  
Acting Recording Secretary  
Town of Willington

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WILLINGTON, CT.  
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TOWN CLERK