

Town of Willington

Board of Selectmen

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting Minutes

In person & Via web interaction (via Zoom platform)

November 15, 2021

6:30 PM

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

Prior to the start of the meeting, First Selectwoman Wiecenski took a moment to honor Selectman John Blessington on his years of service to the Town of Willington Board of Selectmen. Selectman Blessington was presented with a plaque as a token of thanks. Selectman Blessington has served 8 terms (for a total of 16 years) as Selectmen under 4 different First Selectmen/women, including November 1993 to November 1995, November 2003 to November 2005, November 2009 to November 2021. Thank you for your commitment to the Town of Willington and for giving back to your community!

First Selectwoman Wiecenski called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM with the following in attendance in person: Selectman Blessington & Selectwoman Boritz and residents in person and via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

Selectwoman Blessington moved to approve the minutes of November 1, 2021, as written.
Selectman Boritz seconded the motion.
3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried unanimously.

Present To Speak

None.

Correspondence

Correspondence list presented to the BOS; all correspondence is on file in the Selectwoman's Office.
A letter was received from the State of Connecticut Board of Education in regards to the apportionment of the plan representation for Region 19. The BOS will need to appoint a few citizens to a review board, as the 2020 Census has been completed and it now shows that the towns are not equal to what would be considered constitutional representation.

First Selectman's Status Report

- A. **STEAP Grant:** An update will be discussed under the meeting agenda item listed.
- B. **School Building Committee:** No new update. Next meeting is this Wednesday.
- C. **LOTICIP:** No new update.

D. American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funding: Draft ordinance is on the agenda for discussion.

E. Union Negotiations: First meeting will be held next week.

F. COVID: As of 11/10/2021, the Town has a 58.77% fully vaccinated rate; that represents 22 new fully vaccinated individuals. Still less than our neighboring town; within our health district, the majority of neighboring towns are at or above 70%. Willington's vulnerable populations (65 and older) are listed as fully vaccinated at 100%. Children 5-11 are now eligible to be vaccinated. Since the last meeting, there have been 11 new positive COVID cases. We are currently in the yellow zone as of last Thursday. Face masks are still required in Town buildings.

Public Works

Public Works Director Troy Sposato reported a list of the items performed at Public Works recently:

- Changed the trash at River Road Park.
- Potholes were repaired around Town.
- Graded the dirt roads around Town.
- Changed the light bulbs at the TOB Common Room.
- Installed new plexiglass in the TOB Finance Office.
- Blew leaves off of the roads around Town.
- Changed the basin top on Hancock Road.
- Completed the Marco Road culvert project.
- Picked up debris from the storms on Schofield Road and Turnpike Road.
- Continuing to service vehicles. Most of the vehicles and plows have been serviced. Preparing for the upcoming Winter season.

First Selectwoman Wiecewski gave an update on the three new vehicles on order; replacing the F-450, the public works director's vehicle and the new plow truck stating we do not have a definite date for delivery as of yet (potentially December/January). Donna is sending out the RFP for the leasing agreement and then we will need to call a public hearing. Troy has needed to repair some of the current vehicles which has caused some unexpected expenditures.

The concern of what the Winter will look like and additional trees that will need to be handled was discussed. First Selectwoman Wiecewski said we may need to ask for a significant increase in the Tree budget.

Executive Session

- A. Pending litigation pertaining to negotiations and possible settlement of CADLEROCK PROPERTIES JOINT VENTURE, LP and CADLEROCK PROPERTIES OF CONNECTICUT, INC. v. TOWN OF WILLINGTON, CT and TOWN OF ASHFORD, CT pending in the Superior Court

First Selectwoman Wiecenski made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss pending litigation pertaining to negotiations and possible settlement of CADLEROCK PROPERTIES JOINT VENTURE, LP and CADLEROCK PROPERTIES OF CONNECTICUT, INC. v. TOWN OF WILLINGTON, CT and TOWN OF ASHFORD, CT pending in the Superior Court.

Selectman Boritz seconded.

3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session began at 6:41pm.

Executive Session ended at 6:44pm.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to add a resolution to approve settlement and limited release agreement to the agenda.

Selectman Blessington seconded.

3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried unanimously.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski RESOLVED that the Board of Selectpersons approves the Settlement and Limited Release Agreement in the form presented and as substantially discussed at this meeting and authorizes the First Selectperson to execute such agreement to resolve the litigation styled CADLEROCK PROPERTIES JOINT VENTURE, LP and CADLEROCK PROPERTIES OF CONNECTICUT, INC. v. TOWN OF WILLINGTON, CT and TOWN OF ASHFORD, CT, docket number TTD-CV-21-6023585-S, which is presently pending in the Superior Court for the Judicial District of Tolland at Rockville.

Selectman Boritz seconded.

3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

A. HEART Safe Community Designation

Over the last few years Willington Fire Department #1 Chief Alex Moore has been working with the Selectmen's office and the Schools to acquire AED devices in all public buildings, including our schools, and a portable one at the River Road Athletic Complex. Chief Moore has also worked to train staff on how to use the devices as well as offering CPR training to schools. Last week the Town of Willington was recognized as a Heart Safe Community.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski read a letter sent from Heather Aaron, MPH, Deputy Commissioner designating Willington as aHEARTsafe Community for a three-year designation, effective September 17, 2021. The Town was given a certificate and now has signs to be placed on buildings and roads as people

enter Willington. This would not be possible without the efforts and work of Chief Moore. Thank you for your commitment to Willington.

Chief Moore thanked the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Finance, and the Board of Education for all of the help in getting the project off of the ground.

B. Easement Old Town Hall Septic System

The Town is working with DPH to finalize the OTH septic project and we need to establish an easement from the OTH to the Town Green; although both properties belong to the Town, this is necessary. It's technically an encumbrance of town property even though it is for the benefit of other town property. The Planning & Zoning Commission also has this on their agenda for their meeting tomorrow for an 8-24 review and approval. The next step after approval by the BOS will then be to present this at a town meeting for approval.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to accept the Septic System Easement and Maintenance Agreement as written to be approved at town meeting.

Selectman Boritz seconded.

3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Ordinance to Establish an American Rescue Plan Act Commission

Proposed to the AdHoc ARPA Committee a draft ordinance that was modeled after the ordinance in the Town of Stafford. The ordinance would allow the committee to establish this commission to manage the disbursement of the funds under the Act working in the best interest of the community, to hear the project, approve the project without needing to go to Town Meeting. The commission would administer the grant, develop a multi-year spending plan, facilitate, encourage and solicit input from the community and educate through different presentations on how the funds will be used. The commission would include the current First Selectman, the current Town Clerk, the Emergency Management Director, the current Business Manager, the Director of Public Works, the current Human Services Director, the Zoning Agent, a member of the Parks and Rec Commission, a member of the Board of Finance, and a member of the Public Health Community.

Selectman Boritz stated she thought something was missing for community representation from our businesses themselves. In addition to individual and family impacts, I think the impact on the small business community has been severe.

After discussion by the Selectmen First Selectwoman Wiecenski suggested to add the following language to the ordinance language:

K. A member or designee of the Economic Development Commission.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to send the proposed ordinance with the change to Town Meeting for approval.

Selectman Boritz seconded.

3 Yes (Blessington, Boritz & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Appointments

First Selectman Wiecenski moved to re-appoint Jennie Arpin as the Agent for the Elderly for the Town of Willington; effective December 1, 2021; expiring December 1, 2023.

Selectman Boritz seconded

Discussion: Jennie Arpin shared her thanks for re-appointment and her excitement to be at the Senior Center. There's been lots of warm welcomes and it's created a great ease of access for our senior residents to be able to access the services that my department offers. She shared that the new CERC profile was released and shows 20% of our residents are 60 and older and they've got some really great things happening at the Senior Center.

. Motion carried unanimously.

First Selectman Wiecenski moved to re-appoint Carol Jordan as a regular member of the Conservation Commission; effective December 16, 2021; expiring December 15, 2024.

Selectman Blessington seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

First Selectman Wiecenski moved to re-appoint Jackie Kulig as a regular member of the Conservation Commission; effective December 16, 2021; expiring December 15, 2024.

Selectman Boritz seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

First Selectman Wiecenski moved to re-appoint Mark Drobney as an alternate member of the Conservation Commission; effective December 2, 2021; expiring December 15, 2024.

Selectman Blessington seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

First Selectman Wiecenski moved to re-appoint William Rankin as a regular member of the Economic Development Commission; effective November 21, 2021; expiring November 20, 2026.

Selectman Boritz seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

First Selectman Wiecenski moved to appoint Melissa McKinnon as a regular member of the Willington Capital Improvement Program Committee; effective December 2, 2021; expiring December 1, 2024.

Selectman Boritz seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

First Selectman Wiecenski moved to appoint Sarah Reis as a regular member of the Willington Capital Improvement Program Committee; effective December 2, 2021; expiring December 1, 2024.

Selectman Blessington seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked all those newly appointed for service to our community.

Old Business

None.

Present to Speak

Ralph Tulis: Wanted to take a minute to thank John for his many years of involvement in Willington politics. As a former Selectman once said to me, there is life after politics. And with that John, I wish you well.

Jen Goodale: Just wanted to say thank you to Jennie Arpin for her work on the food drive that was held over the weekend. It was an absolute sight to behold all of the food coming in, all of the volunteers that helped out, and it was a really cool event. Thank you.

Chief Moore: Just wanted to say thank you to Selectman Blessington as well and thank you for his support of emergency services over the years.

Good & Welfare

First Selectwoman Wiccenski shared the following:

Mobile Food Share will continue at the TOB next Wednesday, November 24th from 11:00am to 11:30am as a drive through model.

As always, please continue to support our small businesses and restaurants, as they need our support, if you are able.

The turkey drive and the Boy Scouts annual food drive were both held on Saturday at the Town Office Building. Thank you to everyone who donated food, turkeys and donated their time. There were an estimated 5,500 pieces of donated food.

Thank you to Commander D'Agata and the VFW Post 938 for a wonderful Veteran's Day ceremony. The Hall School Band played and we were able to honor our veterans in Willington. It is important for us to always honor those who served our country. Those who live in freedom will always be grateful to those who have helped preserve it. Thank you Selectman Blessington for your service as well.

CIP request forms are forthcoming. All budget writers will be sent the forms and instructions soon.

The Annual Tree lighting is back! This year the event will be held on Friday, December 10th at 7:00PM. The Parks & Rec Department is once again partnering with the Human Services Department to decorate and donate trees to families in need. They still have a couple of trees to be sponsored and decorated.

Lastly, congratulations to all of the newly elected members of our boards and commissions. On behalf of all, I want to thank you for your commitment to serve the people of Willington. Thank you to our Registrars of Voters for their hard work on the election. We had a turnout of 44.99%, representing 1,548 people. For a municipal election, this was a very good turnout

I want to welcome our new Selectman Jim Bulick who will be here with us at our next meeting.

John, once again, thank you for your service to the Board of Selectmen and the Town of Willington.

Selectman Blessington shared a few words: Thank you, the time has been very interesting and enjoyable. I think now, like Ralph has said, there might be life after politics after all. As Chief Joseph said, "From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever."

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 PM.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.


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

Respectfully submitted,

Kelsey Allard

Recording Secretary

Town of Willington

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TOWN CLERK