

# 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.gov](http://www.willingtonct.gov)

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting Minutes  
In person; TOB, Downstairs Room

May 2, 2022  
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: Selectwoman Boritz, Selectman Bulick and residents in person.

### Pledge of Allegiance

The Board of Selectmen meeting is in person today because the new legislation that had removed the sunset date of the remote/hybrid meetings was not yet finalized prior to the finalization of the agenda last week. Moving forward, hybrid meetings for the Board will continue until further notice.

Selectman Bulick moved to add town meeting discussion to New Business (Item G).  
Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.  
3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

### Approval of Minutes

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to approve the meeting minutes of the March 21st SPECIAL meeting, the March 23rd SPECIAL meeting, the April 7th SPECIAL meeting, the April 14th SPECIAL meeting, as presented.  
Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.  
3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

Selectman Bulick moved to approve the meeting minutes of the April 4th regular meeting and April 18th regular meeting.  
First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded.  
3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

### Present To Speak

Matthew Clark, 42 Burt Latham Road, Willington: I would respectfully ask that the First Selectwoman stop talking over Mr. Bulick when he is trying to talk. I know you're going to disagree with me but I've watched it repeatedly over and over again. Just practice good manners and just let him finish and then you can disagree. I've watched it... go back and look at the tapes. Please do that, please act respectfully toward all of the Selectmen. Thank you.

### Correspondence

Correspondence list presented to the BOS; all correspondence is on file in the First Selectwoman's Office. There is a new liaison at Troop C and there is a new Troop C Commanding Officer.

### First Selectwoman's Status Report

A. STEAP Grant: Currently awaiting an updated contract to be signed from CT DPH.

- B. School Building Committee:** The next meeting for the SBC is this Wednesday, May 4th at 6:30pm and will be a hybrid meeting.
- C. LOTCIP:** The design RFP has been posted and will be awarded in the coming weeks.
- D. Truck Lease:** Still awaiting the F-350; there is no new information available for a build date. The current situation is well beyond the dealer and is with the manufacturer.
- E. ARPA:** The ARPA Commission met today, May 2nd and heard one new project from the Historical Society. There was a project from Parks & Rec that was for lighting around the track as well as fixing drainage issues. The Parks & Rec representative stated the prices have increased significantly and the Commission has requested additional project information. The next public hearing for the ARPA Commission will be Tuesday, May 24, 2022.
- F. Town Office Building:** A quick update on recent maintenance issues: The hot water tank had to be replaced and a 30 amp breaker was installed, instead of the current 20 amp breaker. Today, the motor in the air handler also had to be replaced. None of these expenses were expected costs.
- G. Staffing Update:** Our DPW Director Troy Sposato has returned to work in his former role of Public Works Director. We are happy to welcome him back. Michael Fitzcordoba (previously the Account Analyst) has been promoted to the Personnel Payroll Coordinator position and began last Thursday. The Account Analyst position will be posted externally. The Assistant Transfer Station Operator position is in the interview process.
- H. COVID-19 Update:** As of 04/29/2022, the Town still has a 69.0% fully vaccinated rate. Since the last meeting, there have been 13 new positive COVID cases; cumulatively that is 653 cases and 74 probable cases total. Willington is now in the Red Category as the case rates increase. Willington is currently at a case rate of 17.1 cases per 100,000 as of last Thursday. Please continue to be cautious.

#### Public Works

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

- Continued sweeping the roads;
- Cleaned the garage;
- Continued with roadside mowing;
- Graded various dirt roads;
- Installed voting signs for the upcoming budget vote;
- Installed a new stop sign at Red Oak;
- Cleaned up the trees on the Town Green;
- Loomed around the monitoring wells at the Senior Center to be in compliance with the water system
- Cleaned off the catch basins; and,
- Cleaned the waterways.



## Old Business

### **A. Union Employees Contract – CBA**

The Collective Bargaining Agreement was ratified by both the Union and the Board of Selectmen and was finalized on Tuesday, April 26, 2022. The three-year contract is effective July 1, 2021 through June 20, 2024. It includes a 2.2% wage increase in Year 1 (the current year), and 2.75% in Years 2 and 3. A prescription co-pay carve out which will begin in Year 2. Juneteenth Day was added to the list of the holidays. There was an increase in the insurance waiver to \$1,200.00 for full time employees, as well as an increase in the boot allotment for the Public Works staff from \$200.00 to \$300.00. The Parks and Recreation Director and the Zoning Agent positions were removed from the Union and are no longer in the bargaining unit.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski shared her appreciation for Board members' work with the negotiations

### **B. Discuss Holiday – Day by Selectmen**

The holiday schedule needs to be adjusted as Juneteenth Day was included in the holiday calendar that was previously approved by the Board of Selectmen for this year, but this day is now included in the annual holidays after contract ratification.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to move Day by Selectmen to Monday, August 22nd.  
Selectwoman Boritz seconded.**

**Discussion:** There is not currently a holiday/day off in August and this was discussed with the Finance Department to confirm this would not contradict with any of their work.

**3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.**

### **C. Speeding on town roads**

Troop C has conducted speed enforcement regularly on Village Hill Road, Schofield Road, Spak Road, St. Moritz Circle and Willington Hill Road. The infractions in both March and April have both more than doubled within the town since February. Written warnings have increased significantly in March and April indicating significantly more traffic stops in town have been occurring. There is a meeting with the new Town liaison on Friday morning and speeding on town roads will be discussed. On the upper Village Hill section, the speed has been clocked as high as 74 miles per hour. The town sign has been placed on the Village Hill Road side, coming from the Town of Stafford. There are also signs on Pinney Hill Road and then another sign on Cisar Road. The State is doing a traffic study to collect data for Pinney Hill Road and Cisar Road.

## New Business

### **A. Tax Refunds**

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Eliot M. Ryan an overpayment in the amount of \$130.26.  
Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.**

**3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.**

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Eliot M. Ryan an overpayment in the amount of \$153.28.  
Selectman Bulick seconded the motion.**

**3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.**

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Financial Service Vehicle Trust a Certificate of Correction in the amount of \$140.42.**

**Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.**

**3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.**

### **B. Tax Office End of Year Preparation**

After discussion with the Revenue Collector, the Revenue Collector has proposed to close the Tax Office to the public on Thursday, June 30th and then re-open Friday, July 1st for the beginning of tax season. This will allow for the closing of the month and the closing of the fiscal year to be uninterrupted. The office would be closed

but the Revenue Collector would be in the office to finalize the end of the fiscal year taxes. This is a common practice with many municipalities.

Revenue Collector Clauson stated this closing will be beneficial to the office, as it will allow for enough time to close out the year and then prepare for the July 1st tax collection date.

### **C. Award Contract – Moose Meadow Road repairs**

At the April 19th Town Meeting, the project for the Moose Meadow Road repairs was approved for \$350,000.00; this amount includes a paving contractor and then drainage work to be completed by the DPW. This project also has an approximate 15% contingency to cover the fluctuating market.

The first proposal is from Allstate Materials Group is estimated at \$236,000.00 and was priced by the estimated tonnage. If the tonnage is more, it is charged by the load. Any additional work to be performed would be additional fees; any saw cutting performed would need to be removed by the DPW. The second proposal is from Charles Pasteryak Jr. Inc. for \$256,145.00 and includes reclaiming the road; this is a fixed cost price. The third proposal was from P. Willis Construction for \$341,100.00 and was a fixed cost as well.

DPW Director Sposato recommended Charles Pasteryak Jr. Inc. Paving to the Board.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to award Charles Pasteryak the contract for Moose Meadow Road paving in the amount of \$256,145.00**

**Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.**

**3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.**

For a Moose Meadow Road update, DPW Director Sposato will meet with the Engineer next Monday to finalize the plans with a tentative project start date of June.

### **D. Non-Union Employee Wages – Possible Action**

The past practice is to offer the same general wage increase to the Non-Union staff that is given to the Union staff by the CBA. This was budgeted for, and the current wage increase is 2.2%, beginning retroactively July 1, 2021.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to provide a 2.2% general wage increase retroactive to July 1, 2021, to current Non-Union permanent full time and part time staff and compensated elected officials.**

**Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.**

**Discussion:** If this motion passes, the Business Manager would suggest the proposed transfers that will be necessary as each budget does not currently include the increases.

**3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.**

### **E. Personnel Policy Updates – Possible Action**

The Personnel Policy needs to be updated to reflect the newly ratified Union contract. The proposed changes are:

- Cover Page - Approval and effective date - (change the retroactive date to July 1, 2021; the adoption date to May 2, 2022; and the First Selectman name to Erika G. Wiecenski);
- Footnote on all pages: Reflects the effective date;
- Page 16, the holidays list is updated to reflect the union contract;
- Appendix A: Changes to insurance and vacation section have been updated to reflect the union contract;
- Appendix B: Made a change to delete the language that referenced the former elected Town Clerk.

**Selectwoman Boritz moved to make the suggested changes to the personnel policy and to make it retroactive to July 1, 2021.**

**Selectman Bulick seconded the motion.**

**3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.**

### **F. Potential ARPA project – Employee Retention**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski would like to propose a potential ARPA project for employee retention. This would provide a one-time bonus to current permanent fulltime and part time staff. Since March 2020 the staff has worked tirelessly to maintain all services to the Town. This included a change in working conditions as well as a



concern with working with the public amidst a public health emergency. Many private businesses are offering sign-on bonuses to attract employees. I would say it's equally as important for us to retain the staff we have and show them our appreciation. The proposed plan includes all staff prorated for their time here. The current outline would be \$2,000.00 to department heads and \$1,000.00 to general staff. There are also two contracted employees included in the plan. The Final Rule is clear on not providing premium pay or other pay incentives to Elected officials. I would propose that we do not include their (the elected officials) payment from ARPA dollars but from surplus (if any) at the end of this fiscal year. The exception I have is the amount for the Town Business Manager; her work includes the BOE as well as the Town and the influx of state and federal grant money has increased the reporting she has had to do and this had a large impact on her ability to work within a normal work schedule. The last component of the request is to allow for a whole staff (Town and Board of Education) appreciation event. The total current request to ARPA for consideration would be \$34,250.00. Currently the amount for the elected officials that has been included is \$7,250.00.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski asked the Board to discuss this during the meeting in length, and for discussion to continue if needed at multiple other meetings, prior to being presented to the ARPA Commission. Selectwoman Boritz inquired about the current funds available in the ARPA process and First Selectwoman Wiczenski estimated there is roughly \$225,000.00 that is not currently allocated for future projects as of yet. Discussion followed in regard to employee retention and contracted staff and elected officials. First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that she wanted to include everyone in the plan; the contracted staff are department heads and the work done by the elected officials was above and beyond what anyone thought would be necessary when they ran for an office. The work the registrars did in the early months of the pandemic went above especially in the uncertainty of the public health situation. The countless hours that were put in by some was tremendous. Discussion continued with the inclusion or exclusion of elected officials with the stipulation of there being surplus money at the end of the fiscal year, as well as reducing the amount the contract staff receive to half of what was proposed and excluding the Selectmen at this time. The new amount for the proposed funding would be \$32,250.00 with the proposed changes. First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that this allows us to recognize the staff for the work they have done but not carry over into continuous years and is a one-time bonus that will not affect their annual salaries.

**Selectwoman Boritz moved to approve the ARPA employee bonus proposal of \$32,500 to move on to the ARPA Commission.**

**Selectman Bulick seconded the motion.**

**3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiczenski) 0 No. Motion carried.**

The discussion in regard to the elected officials will need to occur closer to the end of the fiscal year and First Selectwoman Wiczenski will submit the ARPA proposal for the June meeting for consideration.

### **G. Town Meeting Discussion**

Selectman Bulick stated that at the Town Meeting, the CIP plan appeared to be confusing to some and suggested having a simpler format of the budget impact and the leases/bonds that are to be paid for. First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that the entire CIP plan was voted on at the town meeting and the CIP chairperson was there to explain the different items and the dollars being spent in the plan. First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that she will bring this back to the CIP committee for discussion.

Selectman Bulick stated that he believes there is risk management of having a public hearing/town meeting/referendum with a minimal gap of time in between them and there could be snowstorms in April so a potential buffer of time should be considered if needed. First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that there are statutes that dictate the timelines; Town Clerk Campbell stated there are statutes to follow and a basis of a timeline once the Selectmen call the town meeting. The annual town budget referendum is held at the same time as Region 19 and that date is set by statute.

Selectman Bulick stated that at the town meeting there was an issue that arose about paper ballots. Discussion was then held on the use of paper ballots and the warning of town meetings that utilize paper ballots.

Selectman Bulick mentioned the school roof project and the two phases of approval prior to funding being canceled; Selectman Bulick stated that there seems to be a mixed message amongst the townspeople. First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that the mixed message comes from our selectman, amongst others, who at town meeting suggested "that those who were in charge of the project went out and found themselves someone who would then cancel the project". The Board of Education had a project that they put before the town, it went



through the process; the Board of Education's project was canceled by the state. They have taken this up, they have touched on this many times. I don't know that there's any more confusion that the Board of Education has touched on the topic. The more people who like to muddy the water and insinuate that there was some negligence done or some intentional harm done, that to me is where people don't understand or want to continue the conversation. There was every intent by the town to move forward with a school roof project. It went before the town to get funding and the state and the head of OSCGR at that time, removed that funding. The town at town meeting (the townspeople) voted on the spending that included a significant reimbursement. Our town manager indicated then that we did not have the funding to pay for it in whole. I would say if the Board of Education wants to once again propose that project and go back through the process, they'd be asking for the town to spend the entire dollar amount with zero funding from the state because we know at this point, the state, as far as we know, has no intent on continuing that project so long as we have the school building committee project in the manner that it is. This is not a project from the Board of Selectmen; this is a Board of Education matter, and the superintendent has put out explanatory texts at multiple occasions. I don't think it helps when factually incorrect statements and inflammatory statements are made to suggest otherwise, that folks went out and found themselves a bureaucrat, according to former Selectman Blessington. These comments were addressed by the chairman of the Board of Finance at the town meeting. This is not a matter for the Board of Selectmen at this time. There is no project and there are no funds from the state. From the Board of Ed's standpoint, they have shared on multiple occasions the roofs are not leaking and they have put patches on it. Depending on the school building committee, if a renovated project does not happen or no new school project happens, the roof life expectancy will need to be discussed but that is a matter for the Board of Education.

### **Present to Speak**

John Blessington, 29 Mason Road: I stand by what I said at that meeting. You're saying that what I'm saying is incorrect; I'm saying that what you're saying is incorrect. Let the people figure that out. But I'm not very happy with I'm wrong, you're right. That's a matter of opinion on both of our cases.

Matt Clark, 42 Burt Latham Road: I would like to see someone on the Board of Selectmen make a motion and have discussion about having public meetings for the Town of Willington in the evening and not during business hours when the public can't attend. There's various: the ARPA board (I don't know, maybe), the CIP (I don't know, maybe), they have various subcommittee meetings and things like that. So I would like to see that so people can attend. I would like to commend the board on a very good contract; I was involved with the contract for the teachers. I thought that 3 years at 2.6% that the teachers were getting is good. I have to say that this contract that you guys have seems wonderful, so good job everyone. I would like to see also if we can talk about some no dumping signs; I've heard many times that different dead-end roads in Willington have dumping problems where people dump crap/junk. Maybe we can put a sign up that says no dumping with a camera on it. It's horrible. We have a beautiful town and people dump stuff on the roads. I didn't go to the town meeting so I don't know, I have no clue. I was working at the time so I couldn't go. Pete Latincsics was very mad at me for not going, but I didn't go. I would say that it should be practice that all meetings have paper ballots. We're a little tiny town, everybody knows everybody and we should be able to vote in private. And that's why that's there. My interpretation of the statute for the check-in process for town meetings is that you have to check people in. I'm not a lawyer, I read it, that's what it seems like to me. Thank you.

Robin Campbell, Spak Road: Regarding the project for the ARPA Commission, first of all thank you for that, it's wonderful. But I just wanted to recommend that if you guys discuss the elected officials, to please consider the Registrar of Voters who had to in-person handle a primary and a major presidential election, who were probably out of their comfort zone; as well as the first selectman who was thrown into the fire. I am sure you all know, I worked closely with her when "the world shut down". She still had to go and do a lot of things and she had to be out there and put herself out there. Just my piece.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that she was going to take a point of privilege and for the record to show that she vehemently disagrees with former Selectman Blessington and that there was no town official who sought out a bureaucrat to cancel the roof project. I think it's important that the facts actually be on the record.

Good & Welfare

Mobile FoodShare will be at the TOB next Wednesday, May 11th from 11:00am to 11:30am as a drive through model. This is open to all residents; it is regional. Thank you to our seniors who come out each week and volunteer.

Once again, please continue to support our small businesses and restaurants in town.

The budget referendum is tomorrow (Tuesday, May 3rd) from 6:00am to 8:00pm, here in the Town Office Building, upstairs.

As a reminder the May 16th, Board of Selectmen regular meeting has been canceled.

Executive Session – Personnel Matter

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to enter into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter and invite the public works director.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

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

Executive Session began at 7:54 PM.

Executive Session ended at 8:28 PM.

Selectman Bulick made a motion to award a retention bonus in the amount of 3.5% of the current salary to the Public Works Director, Mr. Troy Sposato.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

Discussion: First Selectwoman Wiecenski amended the motion to include that this be funded from surplus in the Selectmen's budget at the end of the fiscal year 2022.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 PM.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Kelsey Allard

Recording Secretary

Town of Willington

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2022 MAY 11 P 3:03

  
TOWN CLERK