

# Town of Willington

---

## 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, Common Room

August 1, 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 Bortiz, Selectman Bulick and residents in person and residents via Zoom.

### Pledge of Allegiance

### Approval of Minutes

Selectman Bulick moved to approve the meeting minutes of the July 18th regular meeting.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded.

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

Selectwoman Boritz moved to approve the meeting minutes of the July 25, 2022 special meeting, as written.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

**Discussion:** Selectman Bulick mentioned that in the last meeting he had made a comment about CGS 7-7 paper ballots and First Selectwoman Wiecenski commented that she believes that the Town Clerk is preparing for that.

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

### Present To Speak

Nicholas Tella, 49 Mirtl Road: I wanted to touch base with the FOIA that was submitted which we had requested for the contracts with Mike, being a contractor with the town, contracts with John Guszowski if he has any with the town, contracts with Mike's company that they may have with the town, to know what they're being paid to him directly or to his business, and to have the emails in regards to this project. It's been probably a little over a week so I just want to follow up with that. I want to state concerns with people who we have on other boards and make it aware to the Board of Selectmen. I understand that some are elected during elections to the boards and when there are vacancies, the BOS may appoint through voting. I do want to mention that we have a member on the Planning & Zoning Commission that has said "I am Antifa like my father before me, he landed at Normandy, with a whole bunch of Antifa brothers in arms 78 years ago," which I'm guessing he's referring to D-Day and such. So that's the person on the Planning & Zoning Board. Let it be known that many youth organizations as a terrorist group with a bill that was introduced to the US Senate on 7/18/19 to volunteer. The domestic terrorist organization which still is an active bill on the floor so interestingly he relates American Soliders to what is maybe a terrorist group. You also have a Board of Education member claiming to be an activist. By no means am I saying she claims to be an activist to do harm, however when asked there was no response given as to what she is an activist for. One will typically address a situation if they're called out about it. If this member is ashamed of what they're an activist for... This is a person that is the chair of the Board of Education too. Activist movements, if any, are being pushed into our schools. Are they extreme right, moderate or extreme left? I

think the proper thing for Michelle to do is to come out and just state what she is an activist about, being a servant for the people's children. Conflict of interest: Mike being a contractor for the town as a Zoning Agent and sitting on the Economic Development Board. You have a person that is in the position of the influence of the zoning regulations or change, such as sitting on a board that states "Support business as they approach the Willington zoning regulations". Which I find interesting when you see the SDZ change and all of a sudden, this warehouse comes down to town. Sounds foolish and I can't believe I am even mentioning this, but as we know, times are different, communication styles are and have been changing. Again, Facebook is a method of communicating and many representatives in the area that serve us and communities around us, often communicate with residents through Facebook. Having Erika decide to block people from this town has limited one method of communicating. I personally have experience reaching out through email to her government address to then get no response lately now that I've been speaking out, which other residents have said is a common thing if she doesn't like you. This is just a point that I wanted to bring on record about limiting communication with the people you serve is not a wise thing to do when you're supposed to be representing everyone equally. I was made aware of some of the spending with ARPA money, which I personally think is embarrassing that bonuses were handed out when you had everyday people working with no bonuses but yet you thought it was wise to give yourself a bonus. I was told this was going to be under investigation. With what response, I know it's not back and forth but maybe at some point, what response do you have to the people you serve giving a bonus out instead of giving those funds to items that could have been dedicated under the ARPA guidelines. So the hot topic being, the hot topic going on is the warehouse at hand, however the attempt to build basically a new school is going on at the same time. I understand that state statutes limit how certain boards can have control over others, however there needs to be a way to make sure each board is able to have people vote on certain things such as the warehouse project for an example. I understand that my communications from the state that we can't do much about a charter without a charter, and put on it in place in regards to the warehouse situation. I think that the town should look into ways of developing a charter. That's not necessarily for more control over the people, but in order to keep these boards and local government in check. I hear the elections are the times that you can replace the people that are doing things you don't like, however, as we see with Biden, as an example, elected officials can do plenty of damage in between elections. Thanks.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski made a point of order that the town does not govern and she does not govern through her personal Facebook and she does not have to allow access to her personal side to anyone for town business. If someone wants to reach her at the town office building that's one thing, but Mr. Tella's unhappiness with her personal life is certainly a personal issue.

### Correspondence

Correspondence list presented to the BOS; all correspondence is on file in the First Selectwoman's Office.

### First Selectwoman's Status Report

- A. **School Building Committee:** The School Building Committee will meet this Wednesday, August 3rd at 6:30pm. An appraisal is being worked on for a private site and environmental studies of that private site and the Hall School site are also being worked on to determine whether or not the town renovates to new or builds new, which will then go to a referendum before the townspeople to determine which project to follow. The chair of the SBC, the owner's project manager and the Superintendent had a meeting with OSCGR and their feedback was that one project should be brought forth. The Committee needs to continue working to determine the numbers for both types of projects before moving forward to the public forums.
- B. **Truck Lease:** DPW Director Sposato and First Selectwoman Wiecenski went to Putnam Ford to discuss the F350 that the town is still waiting on. They were told by Ford the build date is now set

for early December 2022. If this date holds, the town could expect delivery of that vehicle in January 2023. Business Manager Latincsics was concerned about the money that was in escrow for the leasing agreement but she has communicated with the lender and they have indicated it would not be a problem and they would share this information with the bank. A discussion was held on possibly needing to change the plan of this new truck, if it cannot be completed as currently the DPW director's truck is leaking oil and the truck is in disrepair. DPW Director Sposato will continue to follow up with the dealership.

- C. **ARPA:** The ARPA Commission met today and approved several projects including: walking track improvements at River Road Athletic Complex (that will include significant drainage repairs and the addition of lighting), a new furnace at WHFD, a direct emergency call line at Button Hill, archival storage for the historical society, a storage box for DPW for evictions, and a Skid Steer for DPW. The Commission also moved to have the Board of Finance hold a discussion to give an opinion on the two projects that includes one-time employee bonuses for the town and Willington #1 employees. No action will be taken on this until after the Commission hears from the BOF. The next scheduled meeting for the ARPA Commission is Monday, August 29th at 1:30pm.
- D. **TOB ARPA Projects:** There were computer upgrade projects here at the TOB: The network cabinet project is in progress; IT is just waiting on a few additional items. The Wi-fi upgrade is in progress; the wiring is complete but the access points will not be in until March 2023. The laptops & monitors are in and are being set up. The docking stations were delayed and are due in the middle of August.
- E. **Flooring in the Land Use Department – CIP Project:** The contractor started pulling up the old flooring last week and new carpet tiles were installed. There was an issue with the flooring underneath and when discovered today, DPW Director Sposato worked with the vendor to correct the issue. The vendor will need to pull up the tiles and put down a self leveler. The vendor will then re-do the main office and the two side offices. The back room was just a plywood subfloor so that room is all set.
- F. **COVID-19 Update:** As of 07/15/2022, the town is still at 69% fully vaccinated and there have been 12 new positive COVID cases; cumulatively that is 834 cases total.

### Public Works

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

- Continuing roadside mowing around town;
- Moved furniture out of the Land Use Office for the new carpet install;
- A plumber fixed two faucets at the downstairs TOB;
- Paved holes on Trask Road;
- Helped with trash removal/bulky waste at Hall Memorial School;
- Installed a new fan motor on the backhoe;
- Cleaned the shop;

- Washed trucks;
- Serviced/maintenanced trucks in the fleet that were due for maintenance;
- Tree removal is starting to take place around town on multiple roads (Lindon Tree Service is removing the dead/dying ash and oak trees); and,
- Crack sealing is taking place around town.

Chip sealing will take place starting on Wednesday, August 3rd and Thursday, August 4th. The following roads will be chip sealed: Hancock Road, Trask Road, Mirtl Road, Daleville School Road, Marsh Road, Cowles Road, Parker Road and then the two parking lots at Center School.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked the DPW crew for all of the work that Public Works is and has been doing.

### Old Business

#### **A. Job Description for Senior Center Coordinator – Possible Action**

We still have not received communication from the Seniors Inc. This job description was formulated using multiple like towns' job descriptions and incorporates the needs of the Senior Center. First Selectwoman Wiecenski recommends moving forward with the job description and that the Board ask a member of the Seniors Inc. Executive Committee be on the hiring committee. If this job description is approved today, it will still need to be approved by the Union and a salary will need to be negotiated.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to approve the Senior Center Coordinator position, as drafted.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded.

**Discussion:** When the job description is approved by the Union and the salary is negotiated, the Board will ask for a member of the Seniors Inc. Executive Committee to sit on the hiring committee.

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

### New Business

#### **A. Tax Refunds**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Raymond Voorhies a Certificate of Correction in the amount of \$23.23. \*Amended to the corrected amount of \$23.38.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Paul W. Weigold a Certificate of Correction in the amount of \$73.79.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded.

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

#### **B. Appointments**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to appoint James Marshall as an alternate member of the Planning & Zoning Commission; effective immediately, expiring December 3, 2023.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded.

**Discussion:** Selectman Bulick asked if the Board had heard from the Planning & Zoning Commission on this appointment. James Marshall spoke and thanked the Board for the consideration. The Board has his

credentials and he is an architect. He has an interest in helping the town in any way he can. He also has an interest in the SBC but the current open position was for a staff member.

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

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to appoint Chris Tillona, as representative from the Board of Education staff as a regular member of the School Building Committee; effective immediately; expiring once the charge of the committee has been completed.**

**Selectwoman Boritz seconded.**

**Discussion:** First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that the Superintendent had reached out to his staff and asked for interest; Mr. Tillona is a Special Education teacher and the president of the Teachers union WEA and was the representative who came forward and was interested in this position. Selectman Bulick stated that he doesn't believe teachers should be assigned to the Committee and other parents/town members should be on the Committee instead. Selectwoman Boritz stated that she was very glad to see someone with special education expertise on the committee; the teachers are invested in the schools and in the children and their voices are very important, as they are in the buildings and teaching our children every single day. Whether they live in Willington or not, they're the ones in the building teaching our children. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that a voice for the staff is important so that the Committee can make sure what is needed in the school is on the right track. Prior to developing the Committee, the town looked at many school building committee makeups, including our prior committees, to determine what the town's would look like and could not find one that did not have a school staff representative on it.

**2 Yes (Boritz & Wiecenski) 1 No (Bulick). Motion carried.**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked Mr. Tilon for stepping forward to serve.

#### **C. Talmadge Estate Property – Management Authority**

The Town recently acquired the 16 additional acres of the Talmadge Estate on Mason Road through the CT DEEP grant. The Commission is asking that the town give the management authority to the Conservation Commission to assist in the work that they do.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to authorize the Conservation Commission to act as the Management Authority of the Talmadge Estate property on Mason Road.**

**Selectman Bulick seconded.**

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

#### **D. Award Contract – Forest Stewardship and Wildlife Management Plan**

ARPA project 26 was specifically earmarked for the 10-year stewardship and wildlife management plan for the three town-owned parcels on Mason Road. The Conservation Commission has recommended Connwood as the vendor for this project.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to award the Town of Willington Forest Stewardship and Wildlife Management Plan in the amount of \$2,800.00 to Connwood Foresters, Inc.**

**Selectwoman Boritz seconded.**

**Discussion:** Selectman Bulick inquired if Connwood was licensed foresters and stated this is the recommendation from Conservation Commission. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that Connwood has held the prior town contracts from 2012 forward for other town parcels as well.

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

#### **E. Public Meeting Ordinance – Discussion**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that Selectman Bulick asked that this item be included on the agenda for the meeting. Selectman Bulick stated that he is proposing an ordinance for meeting times.

Selectman Bulick made a motion for the following ordinance: All public meetings of town boards, commissions, and committees shall be conducted no earlier than 5:30pm, Monday through Friday.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded.

**Discussion:** Selectwoman Boritz stated that the accessibility to public meetings is important and with being that rigid of an ordinance, during busy times, that might limit the availability to conduct meeting business. A third of the year from January to the approved budget, there are weekly meetings and other boards and commissions are having meetings. This could pose a challenge of doing business in a reasonable time frame and we don't want multiple meetings going on at the same time, if possible. The second issue is not everyone works a 9a to 5p schedule. It's a challenging prospect that an ordinance will accommodate all of the people that want to attend a public meeting that is efficient and accommodates everybody. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated typically, the Board or Commission determines when they are available and can meet for a meeting. All meetings are open to the public, they are recorded and there are meeting minutes. The CIP meetings are in the evening, with the exception of a Saturday for a field trip to see the projects that were up for debate. Residents could come onsite with us for those meetings as well. First Selectwoman Wiecenski has reached out to CCM to inquire if there are any other towns in Connecticut that have such an ordinance that have limited the times for boards and commissions to meet. This limits not just access to some public but limits the potential work of boards and commission. There would need to be input from the town attorney before moving forward, which is typical for any ordinance. Discussion continued on the times of meetings and how this could potentially limit the availability of special or emergency meetings.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski made a motion to table the motion.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded.

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

### Present to Speak

Nicholas Tella, 49 Mirtl Road: The AC in town hall for boards that are trying to go remote; there's AC in here, they could come here. Talking about taking away access from people; that's fine with the Board of Education or maybe it was the SBC, to go remote for their convenience because of the heat, instead of putting the people first. If you're not advising that board with the same opinion then I find that very hypocritical. Hopefully we are hiring people, they're hired as a town employee, give preference to those that live here. I understand you don't want to communicate through your personal page, which to me shows a lack of dedication to communicate with people especially when government officials in town will communicate and even other towns have communicated through such media. Can't communicate with social media, don't respond through email, then how would one have a correspondence with you as a selectwoman of the staff. I don't want elected officials to think that when I speak out, it is because I have personal issues with them or even town contractors or employees. It's called holding government officials accountable. Like I think it's good to hear you say that's why they have a diverse board; good to hear you praise the Conservation Commission. Again, my speaking out has nothing to do with.. it has to do with holding government officials accountable and not personal. But you just voted on a contract without knowing their current licenses, insurances, qualifications. Going by, oh they did work for us therefore, they're good, is a completely irresponsible way to go about business. What if their insurance is not up to date and you just carelessly approved money to them without verification for example. That's what I am talking about when needing to speak out to hold elected officials accountable. Congrats to James with the selection.

Thomas Pippin, 46 Schofield Road: I would like to first start off by saying that I'm against the 5:30 restriction that was just brought up a few minutes ago because I work retail and that would put me at risk of not being able to fully understand or even be able to speak on my behalf if something were to come up in the town, like with the current warehouse going on. I would also like to ask, I'm not really sure how this works, because this is my first time being here, but we do have a dead tree right across from my driveway

that was struck by lightning. I was just wondering if somebody could come over and just have it taken down, as well as some kind of speed watchers on my street because a lot of people do go very fast on my street. Thank you.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski asked Mr. Pippin to please reach out to either Public Works or the Selectman's office with that specific information.

#### Good & Welfare

First Selectwoman Wiecenski recently met with the current CSP Troop C Liaison Sgt. Strogoff and discussed issues such as speeding in the Schofield/Village Hill Road area and is working with public works to get information from the speed sign. As much as possible, they are willing to do some additional patrols in that area.

As a reminder, there is a primary election on Tuesday, August 9th from 6am to 8pm for registered Democrats and Republicans here at the TOB.

Mobile FoodShare will be at the TOB this Wednesday, August 3rd from 11:00am to 11:30am as a drive through model. This is open to all residents.

As always, if you can, please support our small businesses and restaurants in town.

The Summer Concert Series is still going on on Wednesdays from 6:30pm to 8:30pm at the River Road Athletic Complex.

Summer camp is now entering Week 4 and has been successful.

Congressman Joe Courtney will be visiting the town tomorrow, Tuesday, August 2nd to discuss some of the ARPA funding that has been spent and take a tour to visit the Fire Department, Public Works and Hall School.

Selectman Bulick stated that on Tuesday, August 16th Planning & Zoning is going to continue their public hearing on the distribution center at Hall School.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 PM.**

**Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Kelsey Allard

Recording Secretary

Town of Willington

RECEIVED  
WILLINGTON, CT.

2022 AUG 11 P 1:02

  
TOWN CLERK