

Town of Willington

Board of Selectmen
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting Minutes
In person; TOB, Common Room

September 19, 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: Selectman Bulick and residents in person and Selectwoman Boritz and residents via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the August 3rd, 2022, special meeting were tabled until the next BOS meeting.

Selectman Bulick moved to approve the meeting minutes of the August 15th, 2022, regular meeting. First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to approve the meeting minutes of the September 8th, 2022, special meeting, as written. Selectman Bulick seconded.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

2 Yes (Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No 1 Abstain (Boritz). Motion carried.

Selectman Bulick moved to approve the meeting minutes of the September 12th, 2022, special meeting. First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded.

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

Present To Speak

James Marshall, 46 Fisher Hill Road: Mr. Marshall wanted to address the conflicts of meetings being held on the same night and asking if this could be coordinated so that meetings do not overlap. Mr. Marshall also submitted an email for the record for a complaint that he had related to the Economic Development Commission and their most recent meeting on September 14th. This email has been included in the record: Dear Mr. Maloney, I write this as a formal complaint in comment and response to the discussion by the Economic Development Commission (EDC) at your most recent meeting on 9/14/22 regarding PZ-22-13, which is an application currently before the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC). The application in question is a request for a text amendment to Section 12.15 of the Town's zoning regulations regarding the Strategic Development Zone seeking to refine its regulatory requirements. It additionally contains a separate request for clarification regarding the definition and regulatory requirements of a warehouse use throughout the entirety of the zoning regulations. As the applicant for PZ-22-13, I am incredibly disappointed, and quite frankly angry at the actions and discussion by the EDC on the topic at that meeting. It was blatantly apparent that not only did your members not have a clear understanding of any of the details of my application, but also that you hadn't even read it or have it available in front of you during the meeting. How does a town commission hold a serious and competent discussion about the merits of an application currently in front

of another town commission as official recorded town business without even bothering to read the application? Having not had the opportunity to even present my application before the PZC myself yet at a public hearing, I am floored by the fact that the EDC would speak about my application at all, let alone do so in such an inaccurate manner as to cause the potential for my application to be unfairly heard by the PZC. Additionally, I also find it incredibly unfortunate that although Mr. D'Amato attended that meeting and throughout that discussion, he never once spoke up to clarify the actual merits or intent of my application for the members of the EDC. Additionally serving as our zoning agent as I know you are aware; Mr. D'Amato is explicitly informed of the details of my application having received it and discussed with PZC counsel and myself at length previously. As a paid contracted consultant to the EDC through his business the Tyche Planning and Policy Group, advising the EDC is literally his paid role and not speaking up was simply a failure both in his advisory role to the EDC as well as in his role as our zoning agent. At a minimum, he could have advised the EDC to hold discussion until such time as the Commission at least had the details of the application available to them for discussion. Quite frankly, I believe it to be inappropriate for Mr. D'Amato to have been a part of the discussion at all and believe that he should have recused himself, as through his role as our Zoning Agent he will be asked to provide comment and input to the PZC during the public hearing for my application. His dual role, and by extension the Tyche Planning and Policy Group, is a conflict of interest for the Town of Willington and should be addressed separately by the EDC, the PZC, and the Board of Selectmen (BOS). Although unaware my application was on your agenda as email notifications do not appear to have been pushed out to the town per usual for this meeting for some reason, I watched the video of the discussion posted to YouTube yesterday and base my above comments on that viewing. For what it's worth, I was never contacted by the EDC as the applicant for PZ-22-13 to be made aware my application would be discussed or alternately with an offer to discuss with the EDC directly. I'd argue it would have been a reasonable conclusion to think that would have, and should have, been one of the EDC's very first steps. I would respectfully request the opportunity to speak before the EDC at the next meeting to clarify the inaccuracies in the way you have portrayed my application, as well as to have the opportunity to discuss the merits of my application with you all in detail to give you a better understanding of my reasoning behind its need. I've copied Mr. D'Amato, as well as the members of our Board of Selectmen as I do wish this to be noted as a formal complaint by both the BOS and the PZC as well regarding the above actions and discussion by the EDC. I look forward to the opportunity to clarify the merits of my proposal with you and for the record before the Town. Sincerely, James Marshall

It was a completely inappropriate discussion and I am floored at the fact that they hadn't read it; they didn't have a copy of it in front of them, which was acknowledged by Mr. Maloney after the fact of the email. The members had never read the topic they were looking to discuss.

Linda Hothan, 24 Pinecrest Road: Ms. Hothan mentioned that she had concerns with the Town Planning & Zoning documents being stored by Tyche and hosted on the online application portal. She also stated that she is concerned about her tax dollars being utilized to pay somebody who she believes is rude and disrespectful.

Joan Taraskiewicz, 15 Liska Road: Ms. Taraskiewicz mentioned that the library is turning 200 years old next year and that they will be planning a 200th anniversary party. The library is planning to do activities and incorporate all of the major groups in the town. They are looking for volunteers who are willing to help. She also mentioned that the area between the Old Town Hall and the Boy Scouts area needs to be cleaned up because there is poison ivy and bittersweet growing over. She is requesting that the Town crew try to take care of this. She also mentioned that the Town Green and Old Town Hall could use more Christmas decorations at Christmas time, if possible.

Mike Makuch, 50 Clover Springs Drive: Mr. Makuch stated that there have been a lot of concerns brought up in multiple forums about M. D'Amato and potential conflicts of interest. As the BOF Chairman, he stated he encourages townspeople who believe they have actual facts to bring those facts forward through the right channels, because at this time, there is no known evidence of M. D'Amato having done any wrongdoing. He stated there are many contracts in place for various town services, and the zoning services

is one of them. He stated that if people think there's something inappropriate to bring that information forward to the Board of Selectmen or the Board of Finance so that it can be evaluated. He also stated that as far as he knows, M. D'Amato has been an asset to Willington. He stated it would be nice to hear more people supporting him.

Nicholas Tella, 49 Mirtl Road: Mr. Tella mentioned the FOIA request that was filed; as well as mentioning that the town website directory should be updated and easier to use. He also mentioned the additional funding that the SBC may potentially ask for as well as the ARPA funding and reinvesting it back into the town. Mr. Tella also mentioned the scheduling of meetings and the conflict of some commissions/boards meeting on the same night.

Correspondence

Correspondence list presented to the BOS; all correspondence is on file in the First Selectwoman's Office. Some of the items will be discussed later this evening.

Selectman Bulick stated that all boards submit a schedule of meetings and First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that the Town Clerk compiles the list of meetings annually. All of the meetings are listed on the website and the town calendar. The meetings are the work of the boards or commissions at the times that they are available to meet. There is now the ability to record the meetings and there are minutes of all meetings. We can ask the various boards and commissions to be cognizant of when they schedule special meetings. This is not an issue that is only exclusive to Willington.

First Selectwoman's Status Report

- A. STEAP Grant for OTH Septic:** A town meeting needs to be held to appropriate the funding for the project. Currently working on an RFP for this project.
- B. School Building Committee:** The last SBC meeting was Wednesday, September 7th at 6:30pm. The Phase 1 environmental work was completed. The Committee is awaiting the formal report; the contractor is recommending a Phase 2 site survey on both the HMS site and the private site. The OPM is working with the Superintendent's Office and the Board of Ed as they compile numbers for the projects. Once the Ed Specs are finalized, the Committee can start to further the conversation regarding the costs of the projects. with numbers. The committee is preparing for a community meeting to be held in the near future, as well as an informational video. The next meeting for the SBC is this Wednesday, September 21st at 6:30pm and is still fully remote via Zoom.
- C. Truck Lease:** Nothing new to report; Still expecting the truck December 2022.
- D. ARPA:** The ARPA Commission met today and discussed expenditures to date. The Commission anticipates the remaining Tranche 2 funding on or before October 3rd. Due to this, the funding application process is still currently paused until further notice. The next scheduled meeting for the ARPA Commission is Monday, October 3rd at 1:30pm.
- E. COVID-19 Update:** As of 09/16/2022, the town is still at 69% fully vaccinated. There have been 22 new positive COVID cases since the last meeting of August 15th; cumulatively that is 880 cases total. Sadly, there has been 1 additional COVID-related death since the August 15th meeting. Our thoughts are with the family. A new bivalent booster shot is available at all Eastern Highlands Health District vaccine clinics. Please check their website for clinic times and locations; www.ehhd.org.
- F. Town Staffing Update:** The shared Assessor position with the Town of Bolton has been filled and that appointment will be later in the meeting tonight. Jennifer Miller is the current acting interim Animal Control Officer; interviews will be conducted to fill the position. Sadly, Michelle Cyr has given her notice in both positions as the Assistant Revenue Collector and as the DPW Administrative Assistant so those positions have now been posted to the Union first for 5 business days and then

will get posted publicly if not filled within the Union. We wish Michelle well in her new position and we will miss her.

Public Works

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

- Cleaned off the catch basins around town;
- Roadside mowing is still continuing around town;
- Chipped brush from the recent storms;
- Hole patching is still occurring around town;
- Public Works and the Transfer Station was mowed;
- Assisted the Fire Department with installing the covers back on the fire truck;
- Line stripped the Transfer Station parking lot;
- Cleaned around the shop;
- The dock at Halls Pond has been moved for the winter; and,
- 3 new cross culverts, 300-feet of 6-inch underdrain and 160-feet of 8-inch underdrain were all recently installed on Kucko Road.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski recognized the DPW crew and the amount of work that they have accomplished with the new excavator in a much more efficient manner in the last few weeks.

Selectman Bulick inquired about the work on Moose Meadow Road and DPW Director Sposato stated that the contractor should be back to complete the work in early October.

New Business

A. Recognition of P. Andersen – Conservation Commission

First Selectwoman Wiczenski moved:

Peter Andersen's Public Service to the Town of Willington

WHEREAS, Peter Andersen has served on the Conservation Commission for 26 years; and,

WHEREAS, Peter Andersen served as Chairman of the Conservation Commission for 19 of the past 26 years; and,

WHEREAS, Peter Andersen and his wife Judy have lived in Willington since 1972 and have raised two children in Willington; and,

WHEREAS, Peter Andersen managed the Fenton Ruby Park and facilitated the acquisition of several key open space parcels including the Talmadge Conservation Tract, Knowlton Preserve and the new Talmadge Estate parcel on Mason Road; and,

WHEREAS, Peter Andersen has also volunteered in several capacities for Joshua's Trust and developed and maintained the trails on their Chenes Roches Preserve located on Blair Road; and,

WHEREAS, Peter Andersen has also served on other community boards; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Willington Board of Selectmen and residents in the Town of Willington proclaim September 19, 2022, to be Peter Andersen Day.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the Town of Willington this 19th Day of September 2022.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

Discussion: First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked Peter Andersen for all of his work for the town and wished him and his wife well in Maine. Mr. Andersen stated that Willington has been good to his wife Judy and himself for over 50 years, but stated that every half century you should change the view a bit.

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

B. Tax Refunds

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Alejandro Capo a Certificate of Correction in the amount of \$59.70.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund CCAP Auto Lease LTD a Certificate of Correction in the amount of \$691.07.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded.

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

C. Appointments

a. Kara Fishman – Assessor

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to appoint Kara Fishman as Willington Town Assessor; effective October 3, 2022; expiring October 2, 2024.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

Discussion: The town has been without an Assessor since February; this is now a shared position with the Town of Bolton. Kara's first day with the Town of Willington will be Monday, October 3rd. The Selectman's Office works with the Town Clerk's office for all terms of appointments for appointed officials; the current ordinance reflects an old statute that has been repealed and the Town Clerk is researching on how to update that ordinance. The term will currently remain for 2 years at this time; from October 2022 to October 2024. Moving forward, the plan is for Kara to be in Willington for two days on Mondays and Fridays and then in Bolton for two days. We look forward to working with Kara.

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

b. Christina Mailhos – Capital Improvement Program Committee

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to re-appoint Christina Mailhos as a regular member of the Willington Capital Improvement Program Committee; effective November 29, 2022; expiring November 28, 2025.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded.

Discussion: Christina is currently the chair of CIP and brings tremendous knowledge to the Committee.

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

c. Stuart Cobb – Capital Improvement Program Committee

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to re-appoint Stuart Cobb as a regular member of the Willington Capital Improvement Program Committee effective November 29, 2022; expiring November 28, 2025.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

Discussion: Selectman Bulick inquired how often CIP seats are filled, First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that there are six appointed members and there are typically two seats that need to be renewed each year.

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

D. FOIA Request

Selectman Bulick asked for this to be on the agenda to determine the status of the request.. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that all of the documents are being gathered and should be available by the end of the week.

E. Award Contract – Propane Tank Replacement

The current propane vendor noted that the tanks can no longer be serviced and filled. It has been determined that the funding can come from this year's budget, per the Business Manager. Pricing was requested from HOCON, Amerigas and High Grade Gas. High Grade is our current propane vendor. HOCON did not submit pricing. Amerigas: 1,000-gallon tank at the DPW garage, their bid is \$5,450.00 and a 500-gallon tank at the dog pound, their bid is for \$3,750.00. High Grade Gas: a 500-gallon tank at the DPW garage, their bid is \$5,490.00, a 1,000-gallon tank at the DPW garage, their bid is \$8,990.00 and a 500-gallon tank at the dog pound, their bid is for \$5,490.00. DPW Director Sposato's recommendation is to keep the 1,000-gallon at the DPW Garage and a 500-gallon tank at the Dog Pound because the DPW generator will be on propane from the DPW tank so a reduction in size wouldn't be feasible. The DPW tank currently has 600 gallons in it and the Dog Pound tank has roughly 15% left in it.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to award Amerigas the contract for the propane tank replacement at the Town of Willington DPW Garage in the amount of \$5,450.00 and the Town of Willington dog pound for \$3,750.00.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

Discussion: Selectwoman Boritz asked about the funding within the existing budget that will be utilized; First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated we expect to have unspent funds in the health insurance line item. that
3 Yes (Boritz, Bulick & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

F. Town Clerk Preservation Grant – Assign Designee

This is the annual State Library Preservation Grant, for the Town Clerk to be authorized to sign the documents, which is in the amount of \$5,500.00. This year the funding would be used to purchase two of the tall roller shelves to put the land records in and the minutes. In addition, a map case could be purchased as well. Last year, the grant was used to upload the maps digitally, which has proven to be successful.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to authorize Town Clerk Robin Campbell to be the designee for the State Historic Preservation Program Grant for FY 2023.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded.

Discussion: First Selectwoman Wiecenski congratulated Town Clerk Campbell for her efforts in this matter.

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

G. CT DOT Master Municipal Agreement Right of Way Resolution

The Town received two copies of the Master Municipal Agreement Right of Way from the State. In 2015, the State DOT had reached out to the Selectman's Office, asking the town to sign the documents. The key is that this is tied to funding that the town receives for LOTCIP for the pedestrian streetscape improvements. In order to receive reimbursement once the project is complete, the MMA has to be signed.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved the following resolution: Resolved, that The Honorable Erika G. Wiecenski, First Selectwoman, is hereby authorized to sign the Agreement entitled "Master Municipal Agreement for Rights of Way Projects".

Selectwoman Boritz seconded.

Discussion: The Selectmen discussed what was in the MMA.

2 Yes (Boritz & Bulick) 0 No 1 Abstain (Wiecenski). Motion carried.

H. ARPA Region 19 Funding Discussion

Back in July, the Town Manager in Mansfield approached Willington and Ashford as Mansfield was developing a plan to recognize town staff, Region 19 staff, and Mansfield Public School staff for their work that was done during COVID. They used returned funds from the last fiscal year for bonuses. Mansfield had reached out and wanted to see if Willington and Ashford wanted to partake in this with ARPA funding. That decision would start with the BOS first. The portion would be 18% or \$10,224.00. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she would have a difficult time only moving forward a package to Region 19 staff without also considering Willington Public Schools staff. A discussion would need to occur where the funding can come from, whether its ARPA funding or returned funds in the fiscal year; which would result in going to a town meeting for fiscal funds or to the ARPA commission for ARPA funding, when applications open again. At this point, we can work with the Superintendent's Office to draft a package for the Willington BOE and decide if we want to move it forward from previous funds or wait and see if we can put it through ARPA funding. There is no doubt that teachers at Hall Middle School, Center Elementary School, and EO High School all worked through extremely difficult circumstances through COVID. More information can be gathered for a future meeting discussion.

Old Business

A. Public Land Access Roaring Brook Concern

There was a concern from a resident regarding access to Roaring Brook from the East side. There is orange fencing that was put up that is prohibiting access to the area. The Conservation easement is not to the Town of Willington; it's believed to be through CT DEEP. We are working to potentially link the resident with the correct state agency and help facilitate this matter in that manner.

Present to Speak

Nicholas Tella, 49 Mirtl Road: Mr. Tella shared concerns about folks speeding on Village Hill Road and questioned if the town has looked into speed bumps or speed control in that area. He also mentioned he was curious about the process of the town receiving emails and how emails are routed. Mr. Tella also mentioned he was concerned about the EDC denying a business ARPA funding but allowed URCommunity Cares funding. He also stated that Mr. D'Amato's role should be reevaluated.

Robin Campbell, Spak Road: Ms. Campbell thanked Peter and Judy Andersen for their many years of service to the Town of Willington and wished them well.

Bob Shabot, 17 Jared Sparks Road: Mr. Shabbat spoke about Mr. Andersen's tenure on the Conservation Commission and all of the good that he has done for the town over the years.

Kathy Demers, 48 Mason Road: Ms. Demers thanked Judy & Peter Andersen for their years of service to the town.

James Marshall, 46 Fisher Hill Road: Mr. Marshall mentioned his concerns with the EDC and Mr. D'Amato again, as mentioned in the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Marshall stated that he is concerned about the involvement Tyche Planning has with the town and that there is no way to confirm there is a divestment of their personal or business relationship with the role they serve in town. Mr. Marshall stated the BOS and BOF should look at this position carefully and stated he is representing the town inaccurately in his role.

Thomas Pippin, 46 Schofield Road: Mr. Pippin wanted to reiterate about speeding in the Village Hill area and surrounding neighborhoods and asked the town to look further into this.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that the town works regularly with the State Police regarding speeding in these areas and the town has put up radar speed signs and is collecting the data and working with the State Police. Schofield Road is a concern and it's an ongoing problem that is being discussed with the Troop.

Good & Welfare

Mobile FoodShare will be at the TOB next Wednesday, September 28th from 11:00am to 11:30am as a drive through model. This is open to all residents. Every Wednesday morning, the Senior Center provides bread and pastries in a drive through open model as well to all Willington citizens. Thank you to the Seniors who volunteer for that.

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

July Troop C Report: 320 calls for service; 10 accidents, 11 criminal investigations, 0 burglaries, 1 larceny, 201 non-reportable matters and 14 arrests. 92 total traffic stops. 0 onsite DUI's, 0 arrests, 0 misdemeanor summons, 26 infractions, 8 written warnings, 34 verbal warnings.

August Troop C Report: 353 calls for service; 8 accidents, 12 criminal investigations, 1 burglary, 3 larcenies, 230 non-reportable matters and 9 arrests. 97 total traffic stops. 2 onsite DUI's, 2 arrests, 2 misdemeanor summons, 42 infractions, 18 written warnings, 32 verbal warnings.

There is a continued public hearing at Planning & Zoning for tomorrow night, Tuesday, September 6th at 7:30pm; Troop C will be in attendance at that meeting. I know our residents feel strongly about this particular topic but there are different ways that we can speak up. There is never a place for violence in any aspect.

Next Monday, the Board of Assessment Appeals will meet here at the TOB at 7:00pm for motor vehicle appeals. No appointment necessary.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 PM.
Selectman Bulick 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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WILLINGTON, CT.

2022 SEP 29 A 11:41


TOWN CLERK