

TOWN OF WILLINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN Special Meeting Minutes

Board of Selectmen
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**Town Office Building
Selectmen's Conference Room**

**February 3, 2020
5:30 PM**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski called the meeting to order at 5:37 PM with the following in attendance: Selectwoman Boritz & Public Works Director, Troy Sposato. Business Manager Donna Latincsics and Selectman Blessington were absent.

A. Present to Speak

No one was present to speak.

B. Budget Workshop

Donna supplied the Selectmen with run #2 of the budget. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she and Troy worked on the Public Works' budget last week and were able to make some additional cuts from his original request; \$412,934 (11.8%) increase. Since then, the cuts have come in at \$350,873 or a 10.1% increase.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski referenced that a little over \$38,000 equals 1%. She also noted that the largest driver of the increase is the \$304,000 request from Public Works. These increases include an additional staff member; which would be a mechanic position and additional hours for the PW assistant from 15 to 25 hours per week. Troy noted that Jason doesn't just stay in the garage; he goes to retrieve parts and does other things throughout the day.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she added \$8,000 to the budget as well. The increase will be a one-time purchase for an upgrade to the camera system at the Town Office Building. Our IT vendor will be looking at the the existing system and offering suggestions what we can do to get them fully operational. First Selectwoman Wiecenski added that she is hopeful the funds will be able to come from this year's budget. Even so, she added that we might want to leave that line in the budget and start thinking of paying for video recording; which would cover equipment and a person to record. Right now, only a few boards are having their meetings recorded; which are funded by private individuals; not the town so the town has no control of them. The only Board that has funded the video recording is Board of Finance and to her knowledge, they have not implemented the service. Selectwoman Boritz stated that is one of the first conversations we have had and nothing happened with it. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that it would be nice to have something similar across the board. The problem is that we do not have one meeting room; and sometimes there are multiple meetings being held at the same time; so we might want to think about having multiple systems for that purpose.

The Selectmen reviewed the entire budget. Every Department has used the 2% assumed salary increase. The Selectmen's budget reflects a 2.6% increase overall – this includes the salaries, postage, moderator services (which is new) and advertising.

Accounting Services shows a decrease of -8.6%. Donna has removed the part time account analyst position; noting that she is confident that her staff should be able to handle the work load. They will also be implementing the new software; which should allow extra efficiencies.

Assessor's budget reflects a 7.5% increase – the bulk of the increase is due to the computer support (cloud hosting services that we have not had to pay for in the past).

Revenue Collector's budget shows a 10.5% increase; which is made up of an increase to the assistant's salary (additional hours during the busy tax collection seasons); DMV fees and the training/education line as both the Collector and Assistant will be attending classes.

The Town Clerk's budget reflects a 3% increase and this is for the upcoming presidential election expenses.

Town Hall operations shows a 13.1% increase (+ \$26,493). These increases reflect an increase in IT /computer support which was increased to reflect the increase of \$14,000 in the contract with our IT vendor; who is here 5 days per week (and is a shared service with the Board of Education). First Selectwoman Wiczenski noted that it is vital to have them here and they are willing to work with us within our budget. \$10,661 has been added to maintenance & misc. This is for the camera upgrade and truing up the maintenance line.

The Old Town Hall maintenance was increased from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

Legal and Engineering fees will remain flat. Senior Center Operations comes in a 0.8% due to an increase request for van maintenance and gas (+ \$709)

EHHD comes in with a 4.3% increase and the Building Inspector's fees come in at a 4% increase. Both are contractual.

The Public Works' budget was then discussed. The PW budget is currently at 26.6% increase (+ \$304,565). The bulk of the increase is due to a request for a new employee (a mechanic position at \$52,000 and an increase of the PW assistant's hours (\$11,095); an increase in chip seal (+ \$89,000) because the roads need attention. First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that Troy has said multiple times that we should have been doing small increments every year. She then asked Troy if we were not able to fund the roads the way he is asking, if we would still be able to offer a smaller increase to allow us to get to them. Troy stated that any money is better than no money – even if we cut it to \$20,000, it is still better than nothing. He noted that 5 miles of road was chip sealed last year and the mileage depends on how bad the roads are; is how much you spend. For example, one mile of chip seal costs \$1.59 per square yard. He noted that there are a few roads that also need paving attention as well. Chip seal only works as good as the road is paved underneath.

The snow budget was then reviewed; it currently shows a \$27,000 increase but is really a little more than that. The salt will be increased by \$63,852; however the sand will be decreased by -\$14,244 because we are using a 2-1 mix. We are using more salt this year; 2-1 ratio. In addition, the 2nd contractor was removed (-\$23,365). Troy noted that the increase of salt may seem like a lot, but will eventually end up as savings; because we won't have to sweep as much. He gave an example stating that if we were not to have any more snow this season, the crew would be able to cut sweeping time in half; - it would take about a month in a half versus 3 months. In addition, you are saving money on fuel and accessories (brooms) on the sweeper, etc. as well as time for the crew; who will be finished earlier and able to move on to other projects. Selectwoman Boritz noted that it is important to document things like this because it should be able to justify the increases.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski noted that the other large increase she sees in the PW budget is maintenance. The increase for maintenance comes in at \$25,000. Whether it is parts or supplies but we are also asking for a mechanic as well. We would be spending more on personnel as well. Troy noted that he doesn't want to say that things have been neglected, but sees that things are starting to catch up on our equipment. This year has been very hard – one thing breaks; we fix it and then something else breaks. He gave an example that Todd's truck went in for a repair of one thing; and the garage found 6 things total that needed to be fixed. The turbo was blown for over

8 months. If it had been properly maintained, it might not have happened. Troy added that it has since been fixed and is now running like a new truck.

Troy noted if we were able to have a mechanic in house who would be able to do most of the maintenance and fixes for us, rather than sending the trucks out. Right now we are only able to do oil changes in house. First Selectwoman Wiczenski noted that currently we have a laborer who also does some maintenance. She asked how it would work if we were to get a new employee. Troy noted that the mechanic would be placed in a pick up to cover the smaller plowing events, unless there is a break-down then he would be pulled off to fix the vehicle that is down. Once we have the new truck, the hope is that we will have a spare truck for the driver to be able to use while their truck is being fixed.

Selectwoman Boritz then asked if the position would be able to be justified as full time; or would it be less costly to have someone come in on a seasonal or part time basis? Troy stated that currently he believes they could use someone full time; they are not just going to be changing oil here and there; they would be servicing the entire vehicle. If we could get a position where the person would be willing to go out on the road, when needed, would be ideal. He then noted this particular employee would be prepping the apparatus ahead of the events; (for example, in the fall the plow trucks would be getting prepped, instead of scrambling to get them ready in the winter) and in the summer we would be able to continue on because we wouldn't be limited when employees are on vacation.

Equipment rentals/purchases were then discussed. The rental line has been submitted for \$3,000 and purchase for \$25,000. Troy noted that they still need to purchase 4 more radios for the trucks and that covers the cost of them (and this includes the new truck).

The Transfer Station shows a 13.1% increase. First Selectwoman Wiczenski questions the ATSO (Assistant Transfer Station Operator); as the salary shows a large increase (+6.9%; really should be at 2%) because the added 8 hours (one day) per week was already added to this current year's budget. Troy noted that the Bulk waste disposal and trash removal both show increases as well (\$13,000 & \$9,000 respectively); but only thinks one of the amounts is correct. The General supply line item was increased by \$1,000 for upgraded cameras; which will be a one-time cost.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski noted that we have a not to exceed 7.1% increase in our insurance line.

The BOS budget is slated to go before the Board of Finance on March 5th. Since there are no more scheduled budget workshops, the Selectmen will have to approve the budget at their next regular meeting, which is scheduled for February 18th. First Selectwoman Wiczenski asked Selectwoman Boritz if she thinks we should hold another workshop – noting that somewhere between February 18th and 27th the budget will need to be approved; because the BOF would like to have the budget one week prior.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski said she is not doubting that everything in the budget is needed, but noted that a 10% increase is going to be tough to pass. Selectwoman Boritz clarified that she saw the letter that came from the Board of Finance; which stated to submit what you need. If this is what we need – we just need to be prepared to have solid justification that this needs to happen – long term savings are important. She added that people tend to be scared by original high numbers but don't take into account how it affects the long term. The BOF can still tell us that we need to cut and we will need to figure it out.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski said if we feel strongly about what is needed and been brought to us. She added she feels everything Troy is requesting is needed. She can see the need for a mechanic – especially with the amount of break-downs we have had over the past year – the number of things we could save on by doing in-house rather than sending out. She added that our roads need some work and we are going to have to start putting into these things. She added that she understood that the BOF did not tell us that we have to be at 0%; but rather request what we need with the justification. Lastly, First Selectwoman Wiczenski noted if we keep coming in at 0; we are only

hurting things. She then noted that Public Works is just over half of our entire budget and there is no doubt that this increase comes from that; however she has also been told several times throughout the year that we do not have what we need to adequately run Public Works.

Selectwoman Boritz noted that she has heard that from every department – this is the same conversation we have had multiple times – in different context. At some point we either have to fund Willington to be able to run it well or we have to understand that Willington is going to have major gaps in its service structure. Those are our choices.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that this is our last scheduled budget workshop and she is still not sure as to when Selectman Blessington will be back. She said we can hold another meeting at another time or wait to discuss further at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Selectwoman Boritz stated that it can be discussed at the next meeting. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that if there are any changes, they will be able to vote on at the regular meeting then submit to the Board of Finance.

The Department heads will be asked to attend the BOF meeting on March 5th to help defend their budgets.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM

Respectfully Submitted:
Robin Campbell
Recording Secretary

TOWN OF WILLINGTON, CT
Received for record 02-04-2020
At 1:25pm Amy R. Fan TC.