

TOWN OF WILLINGTON

Board of Selectmen
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Special Meeting Minutes
Via web interaction (via Zoom platform)

June 15, 2020
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; Selectmen Boritz & Blessington and residents.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to move item A of old business to the next item on the agenda.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

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

Motion Passes.

A. Discussion - Creation of Emergency Communication Task Force

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated one of the things we talked about was a task force which would discuss what we thought we needed in Willington and whether we should go ahead and purchase something in the interim. I went to TN with Mary Mitta; Stafford's First Selectwoman to see everything in action and to see how it worked. Tyler Millix and Doug Racicot sat with us and explained how the system works and showed it to us. We talked about how many people in Willington are currently in the reverse 911 system and some general discussion about usage of it as well as specifically talking about the incident that we had in Willington and how it progressed. First Selectwoman Wiecenski asked Doug if he could tell everyone a little about the system at TN and how it works for Willington currently.

Doug Racicot stated I am the operations manager at Tolland County Mutual Aid Fire Service also known as TN. We are the 911 public safety contact point for the Town of Willington. We dispatch your fire and EMS units from WHFD and WFD #1. The question was asked, what resources are available at the state level. The state provides to every public safety answering point through a platform called everbridge which drives CT Alert. What is built into that is MSAG database for 911 which is all listed and non-listed phone numbers as well as contacts for those people who chose to opt in. They also have other methods by which they get community involvement such as purchasing various other forms of information to bring into everbridge to expand the platform. This is all available free to you right now. On the onset of Covid, we did use that technology to broadcast two messages in the Town of Willington at the request of the First Selectwoman. That platform costs you nothing. Use of that is at the availability of the State of Connecticut and any incident commander for any emergency whether it be police, fire, EMS, emergency management director, or the First Selectwoman. If there is a message that needs to go out providing it's in conjunction with the incident commander we can broadcast any message you need at no charge and you capture a relatively large audience. There are other platforms and applications you can now download on your phone from everbridge regardless of where you are located in the United States. If your phone is locating in an area where another agency uses everbridge you will get the message that pertains to that municipality for example a weather alert such as a tornado coming through. In response to the questions about the incident that occurred Memorial Day weekend any information that we would end up broadcasting is at the request

of the incident commander. For that particular instance the State Police were in charge so we would require their initiation of the system for us to be able to broadcast the message through the platform.

Selectmen Blessington asked if the First Selectmen would have to go through the State Police if he or she felt that it was an important enough issue to broadcast.

Doug Racicot replied correct. Regardless of if you choose to use the state platform or if you choose to buy your own that's really the workflow process that needs to be followed because you don't want to put out miss information or any information that could jeopardize the investigation. From a law-enforcement perspective that request would need to be coordinated with them. We can certainly broadcast a message we have a good working relationship with Troop C and in this circumstance if we were requested we would do so. If it is a fire related emergency it would be at the request of whichever fire chief was in charge of the incident through the process of unified command. You have everybody working together to craft a message that needs to go out and we would broadcast that for you.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated this answers their question of was there a platform that could have been used, the answer being yes. In the case that this was a law enforcement matter they had made the decision. So it wasn't that we couldn't use it or it wasn't whether or not it needed to be on our end I couldn't put out the message with that system without some cooperation from State Police and had I called TN and requested them to put out a message what would have been the answer Doug?

Doug Racicot replied their response would have been that we are more than happy to do that but let me check with the Lieutenant Palmer and verify that it can be done.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski Stated Lt. Palmer and I have discussed this and if we insisted on putting out a message they would work with us to craft something so going forward it is something for all of us to be very aware of. When it is not within the jurisdiction of my office and being a police investigation we do rely on them to make sure we are putting out accurate information and not information that's against their investigation or hindering it. While it is frustrating to us this is some of the reasoning why in this instance it was not used by this office. Correct me if I'm wrong, when I came down you showed we have 2,800 phone numbers currently enrolled in that system.

Doug Racicot replied correct. It is one of those things that does require some voluntary participation from the public. They need to go to the CT Alert portal where they have the ability to log in and get their cell phones registered as well as email address and text messaging.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated we learned it automatically pulls through landline so if I didn't go on and register my cell phone when we got rid of our landline I will no longer receive the messages. We had sent out some messaging at the beginning of Covid to encourage people to sign up for the CT alert and anytime the governor sent out a press release at the bottom of that one of the last items is encouraging people to sign up for CT Alert because it is an opt in for anything other than a landline.

Doug Racicot stated when he started in the 911 business 80% of the numbers we had in the MSAG list were landlines were today it is 20% landline and 80% cellular. So this does require voluntary participation everbridge is also pulling some of this information from other places to help expand the database locally which is all included at the state level at no charge.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated I think one of our big discussion points earlier was we felt like we needed to get a system in Willington and go ahead and pay for one right now. I feel strongly that we need to know what we want to do before we go out and get a system. After visiting TN, I'm confident that we have a system to go widespread with at least the people who are enrolled and we can do some education to get people to enroll until we decide what if anything else Willington needs. I don't think we need to react

and go out and purchase something until we know what we want to make sure whatever we purchase fits into our needs. In the event of an emergency such as Old Farms Road being shut down because of severe accident that's going to take time for the fire department to clear the fire department could reach out to TN. I feel confident until we decide what we specifically need for Willington we are covered with a way in which to reach all of our residence without having our own platform.

Doug Racicot agreed and added when you have your own platform it is a managerial undertaking you really need to have people who understand the platform that are going to take ownership of it and help make it successful. If you don't use it you lose it and when you have things opted in at the local level if you have things occur on the town boundary and you launch a message that message is only going to affect the people of the Town of Wellington. The CT Alert platform is going to cross that town boundary and capture people that may be in the Ashford, Mansfield, and Tolland or Stafford area to help get the alert out. When you choose to do this internally you really need someone who's going to take ownership of it and be available almost 24 hours a day to help broadcast and craft those messages. Don't think that the incident that just occurred right now is going to have a message out in 30 seconds it is not an instantaneous thing it takes a little time to coordinate the information you want to put out craft a message and get it put into the program to actually broadcast. Using text to voice is an option but people don't even really listen to text to voice. There are a lot of small details that as an agency and a neighbor of Willington I would be more than glad to walk you through but as it stands today you have everything you need at your fingertips.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated it was enlightening for Mary and I to see Doug actually using it and testing it out while we were there. It's not as though 10 seconds after I say put out a message it goes out there are many steps even for someone who is as seasoned as Doug. First Selectwoman Wiecenski asked Doug if he has any suggestions on ways to get people to sign into something like this.

Doug Racicot replied in Tolland a couple of the techniques we used when we first purchased the platform is doing a big media blitz through our email campaign. They put it up on Facebook Twitter and really tried broadcasting it and even put messages in tax bills, water assessment bills, sewer bills and everything you're sending out from the Town Hall. What becomes the biggest advocate of the platform is actually using it and if you don't use it people aren't going to talk about it. What we have noticed in town as we broadcast messages using it as an emergency command platform that affects peoples life health and quality-of-life. When you start using it people will start posting the information on your town's Facebook page or forums and once people start to see that info they won't want to get it on Facebook or Twitter they will want to get it directly from the source. Other little things include making sure you're always sending from a consistent phone number which people can program into their phone and when the number rings people know where it's coming from. Very few people pick up on the first ring on a blind phone call. These are the kinds of things you need to adjust for and be able to publish out to people. You want a dedicated phone number that you can actually record a message to so when somebody does call back because they didn't listen to their voicemail, they can reach someplace that gives them actionable information. One of things that happens on the CT Alert page that we don't care for is it states if you have any questions about the message that is left, please call 911. If we broadcast the message to 10,000 people, about 400-500 people are calling us and saying they got a message to call 911. So you need to have a number they can reach that basically broadcasts the same message that you just sent to them.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski asked if we had our own admin-component, then we would have the ability to control that.

Doug Racicot replied yes, you pre-program that in so it's consistently there but you would have to have a voicemail box on your town's phone system that you can record that same message to, especially for actionable information such as evacuating an area of town. You want people to be able to call that number and have actionable information for them to respond to.

Selectman Blessington asked if the system would leave a message stating there is an alert.

Doug Racicot replied yes it will. When you broadcast a message we recommend that for immediate danger to life and health you send a voice message followed up by a text and email for those who are subscribed to all components. For things that may affect your quality of life such as traffic flow, you may not want to ring someone's telephone, you would send it out as a text message and email because it's not affecting their immediate life safety.

Selectwoman Boritz stated it sounds to me like we already have the ability to do most of the things we've talked about wanting to do.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski replied correct for life and health dangers we have the reverse 911. The messaging part and whether or not we are in control of it, is what comes into question. This last incident was not something we were in control of as far as messaging.

Selectwoman Boritz agreed and stated this will always be the case and when the State Police tell us don't send out the message we wouldn't do so. It goes back to the question of it not necessarily being the system we need to purchase but the process we need to clarify. We need to clarify who within town makes decisions about whether we contact TN and who says this is something that affects the immediate health and safety and needs a phone call or this is something like a planned road closure on a main street in Willington which can just be an email. It sounds like we need to figure out the process for organizing our communication to TN for the use of the system that already exists.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated we have a pretty clear process with that and there are some other things we can talk about such as whether or not we want the admin component for us to be able to further utilize it. Anything we wanted to use if we felt that's what Willington needed, we wouldn't go to TN necessarily to do. We would have other components whether it is everbridge or another service. I did take a look at two other products which we can talk about later in the meeting. Right now if something were to happen again, we know we can utilize that system and the message would come from them. During Covid the messaging came from my office so I had jurisdiction over the message and could control it through our EMD. This is a rarity but when it is a law enforcement matter we work with them for messaging and the message in the last instance was that there was not a need for it. We want to make sure we are working with them which we did but if we had our own messaging component, would we have put a message out that would have hindered them? That's what we don't want to do.

Doug Racicot stated it seems the State Police have heard the public's out cry about being upset that the system wasn't used and I think that has driven some change within the State Police. Lt. Palmer has been a very proactive lieutenant and we have talked about everbridge on several occasions sometimes the decisions are not local in nature in terms of the Barracks Commander, I'm not speaking on his or the State Police behalf, but I think you'll see a change in how that gets leveraged moving forward.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski agreed and stated while our contact in this instant was the Barracks Commander, it was not his investigation it was a different departments. The information is coming from one source to another and he's giving us what he has been given for information. I think they have heard us and are definitely in tune to the needs of the public not just Willington but overall.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated we will take the discussion back up during old business so that we can hear from anyone else who is present to speak and might have wanted to speak on this subject.

Selectman Blessington moved to add to the agenda under new business prior to the appointments a discussion regarding combining the library and the recreation commission and moving the recreation committee to the library.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.

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

Motion Passes.

Approval of Minutes

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to approve the minutes of May 27, 2020 as written.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Selectman Blessington stated he would like to add a couple corrections. On page 2 the 2nd paragraph "extremely fluent" should be fluid. The 4th paragraph at the end should have the word distributed after widely. On page 5 the last paragraph I believe I stated "the CSP and the town" handled this very well and only CPS is written. First Selectwoman Wiecenski asked to vote on those in favor of approving with the correction noted.

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

Motion Passes.

Selectman Blessington moved to approve the minutes of June 1, 2020 with the following corrections: On page 2 the 2nd paragraph from the bottom everbridge should be a single word and capitalized. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated on the company paperwork the name is in fact all lowercase. On page 6 the last page it should read "the alumni will not be able to stand under the banner".

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.

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

Motion Passes.

Present To Speak

Janice Clauson, Revenue Collector for the Town of Willington was present to speak. She reminded everyone that tax season is fast approaching and the town office building still being closed, we are encouraging residents to either mail payments in, utilize the drop box (we will have two drop boxes in front of the entrance at the town office building), or make your payments online. If you have to come in to see someone, we are going to be doing this by appointment only. Please call the tax office 860-487-3111 to make an appointment.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski added the tax office is sending out a postcard that has all this information.

Michelle Doucette Cunningham was present to speak. She stated I am happy to see the BOS has on their agenda the BOE appointment. At the last meeting we were unable to come to a decision beyond the deadlock that's happened at the last few meetings. I believe you have a clear decision before you based on the merits of the candidates. This is not really a political decision as much as it is a decision to appoint a person to give us a full contingent of people on the board. It is important for us to have as much and as many resources and minds as possible at the table when making decisions. There have been a lot of changes in the school system in the past three months and we anticipate more over the coming year and I think that experience and knowledge about schools and how schools operate would be very beneficial to the board at this time.

Matthew Clark was present to speak. He stated I spoke about this subject a month ago about the BOE appoint. The agenda lists this as a subject for tonight. Apparently the Democrats on the BOE still won't

agree to appoint a Republican to replace a Republican whom resigned from the BOE this is unfortunate. Tonight we will see if the BOS will honor the will of the people of Willington and elect or appoint a Republican to fill this seat. Willington residents elected four Republicans and three Democrats to the BOE in the last election. It's wrong for the BOS to overrule the people of Willington by appointing a democrat to the BOE a seat vacated by a Republican. As I stated last month at least two neighboring towns in our area have statutes or policies against what the Democrats on the BOE are trying to do. Tonight we'll see if the Democrat majority on the BOS will be partisan or fair. Nothing has changed since the last meeting at that time the BOE discussed a statue for filling volunteer committee vacancies and I support that we need one. Unfortunately this is political which is sad. I call on Ms. Rodriguez to withdraw her name from consideration and I call on the BOS to appoint Brenda Abrams to fill the BOE vacancy and join the other 658 Willington residents to vote Ms. Abrams into fill the vacancy on the BOE. Lastly I call for a debate and passing of an ordinance on filling vacant committee seats.

Elena Testa was present to speak. She stated she wanted to ask the BOS to not overrule the results of the election which were very clear as Mr. Clark just stated. Overruling the results of the election would be an extreme horrible thing to do for the BOS.

Stephanie Summers was present to speak. She stated I want to speak up as to who I think is the strongest candidate and that is Laura Rodriguez. She's a talented educator and has vast experience as a teacher in Willington and now at the college level. I think that helps prepare kids for what is ahead of them to have someone who is also a college professor. In addition her kids went through the schools in Willington with great success and I think it's important that board members have direct experience and insight to the schools in Willington in order to serve the best interest of the kids today. I think Laura has the rigor of a scientist and she is equipped for the challenges in education today which are quite different from even last semester. I think times call for hard work, innovative thinking, and also showing up. She speaks knowledgably in town meetings and all the meetings she has been at. I don't feel that anywhere in our protocol there is a revisiting of a ballot in past votes and I don't think we should start that now.

Donna Cook was present to speak. She stated I would like to recommend that the board appoint Brenda Abrams to the BOE for a multitude of reasons. In addition to being known to the community because she did run. As a member of the board I know there are two retired teachers and one active teacher currently serving on the BOE and it would be nice to have a perspective outside of education in a formal manner so that we can think outside the box. One of the things that's hard with being on the BOE is that we are only allowed to work through Superintendent Stevens so any wonderful qualities that Laura has for teaching teachers how to teach, we are kind of prevented to do that kind of thing. We can't get involved with staff, how to teach lessons, or specific curriculum selection all that stuff is brought to us by the teachers and by Superintendent Stevens and we make a decision on it, ask questions, and get informed. It would be nice to have someone who has expertise outside of formal education to bring something different to the table and the discussion in addition to all of her other wonderful qualities.

Brenda Abrams was present to speak. She stated the Willington people did vote 658 votes for me which is just a handful away from what the other votes were. I think this speaks volumes to what the people of Willington want. I want to speak for myself that I do have a level of teaching at the college level, I taught at MCC for three years and my children did go through the Willington school system so I am familiar with it and have been here for 18 years. I feel I could bring a lot to the BOE. I feel that I have very great communication skills and the skill of working as a team with others and working in unity with others and I hope that everybody would take that into consideration.

Correspondence

A list of Correspondence was available for the Selectmen to view.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated one of the letters had to do with allowing signs on the green. We don't want the green to become unruly and we want to make sure we still manage it with signs but in these times of uncertainty there may be a need for some businesses to post items. We can either have a formal discussion here or I can go ahead and draft an addendum to the current policy.

Selectman Blessington asked how we are going to make the decision on which businesses get to go up there.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski replied I would think we would do it the same way we do now. Someone would contact our office and we know what should be up there. Maybe we don't go the full two weeks maybe a week at a time someone could have a sign if there is a lot of demand. I can tell you, except for one business we haven't had a demand or even been asked about putting out a sign but that is not to say if we put something out that people wouldn't take us up on it.

Selectman Blessington stated he is afraid of we put one up everyone is going to want one up.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski replied that is why we would still control it through the Selectmen's office. It would be a way for us to really help some of our businesses and again it would only be during the Covid emergency.

Selectwoman Boritz stated as long as they have a cap on the number of signs up at a given time she doesn't think there will be any issues. It will only benefit Willington in the long run to make this temporary exception for local businesses.

First Selectman's Status Report

First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated the fuel tank is still out there and waiting. This morning Troy was told they think in the last two weeks of June or the first week of July the tank should be completed and ready to schedule a date which would most likely be the end of July or early August. So while we jumped on it to get moving thinking it would be fast, lots of things started to shut down. While we thought they would be open and able to get that tank to us soon, things are slowly coming back on board and it took longer than we had hoped. Before the end of August we should have that new tank in at the Public Works garage.

Public Works

Things done at public works:

- Roadside mowing
- Installed touchless paper towel holders in the bathrooms at TOB
- Fixed/ replaced two catch basins tops on Laurel Drive
- Backfilled curb around Town
- Tree removal on Mihaliak Rd, Schofield, Luchon and Tinkerville Rd done by contractor
- Installed 800 feet of perforated under drain on Fisher hill Rd
- Fixed/replaced orange fence around play scape at RRAC

New Business

First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated Selectman Blessington wanted to have a discussion before the appointments.

Selectman Blessington stated I heard that the Recreation Director is going to move into the library and that she is going to use the downstairs common room for storing her equipment. She and the library director are going to combine. Is this true?

First Selectwoman Wiecenski replied the Library Director and the Library Board spoke with the Parks and Recreation Director at the Parks and Recreation Commission about them using space to move her office into the library. There is no combination of boards it's just using space. Space given in the library downstairs and a space for storage of items. The library director is working on a grant that would bring some funding into the library to be able to make some changes, part of that grant is working with the Superintendent and the Parks and Rec. I see this as a benefit; you have an underutilized library and a thriving Parks and Rec Department. If they occupy the same office space, the people who come to the library are opened up to Parks and Rec and vice versa. They each respond to a commission and those commissions/boards were fully aware of the move which I will say has not started yet.

Selectman Blessington asked what gear will be stored at the library.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski replied the Parks and Rec director has a storage space at the TOB and that would go into the library in a space behind the big common room.

Selectman Blessington stated when I went to go look at the minutes from the Parks and Rec Commission, I notice they have not posted any since January and the Library Board hasn't since February so we have no idea what is going on. The library director has been spending an awful lot of time looking for grants and we haven't seen anything and now I understand he has resigned.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski replied I was not at the last Library Board meeting which was on Friday evening and I have not seen a video posted. I can tell you there was discussion and yes he has been looking for a lot of grants but I don't see this as a bad thing. He has started working on grants but Covid did slow things down. I think funding from grants takes some pressure off the town.

Selectwoman Boritz added that the library has been closed for months so he is working by trying to secure grants.

Selectman Blessington asked if he ever applied for a grant.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski replied I believe he is in the process but you would have to take those questions to the Library Board. The grants don't have to come through me.

Selectman Blessington stated the library chair doesn't seem to want to talk to me or anyone else and seems to run things by herself in my opinion. When we have a new library director come in will they have anything to say about parks and rec department moving over there?

First Selectwoman Wiecenski replied I would have to say it would be part of the conversation. This agreement was made by a library director who is currently on staff and I can't speak to what will happen in the future with someone else. I don't understand why you see this as a negative to draw people into the library.

Selectman Blessington stated the library director made these changes and left, he announced his resignation at Friday's meeting.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski replied he doesn't need to resign to the town clerk it goes through the library board as he is not considered a town employee.

Selectman Blessington asked what they should do about the library board and the parks and rec not filing their minutes.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski replied I would suggest you speak to these board chairs. The town clerk files them once she receives them but she does not chase them down. I can communicate with the chairs and ask them regarding their minutes.

Selectman Blessington stated as I understand the library director has appointed one of his interns as the interim director and if they are paying them this is not a legal appointment.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that is a matter for the library board as a director is paid through the library grant funding it's not a matter for the BOS.

A. Appointments

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she received a letter from the Library Board with a nomination for to fill the current vacancy.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to appoint Sarah Jean as a regular member of the Library Board of Directors; filling a vacancy; effective June 16, 2020; expiring on November 2, 2021 (next municipal election)

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Selectman Blessington stated the Republican Party is waiting on our town committee meeting to act upon this. Here again as I hear from one of the library board members, they were not allowed to ask any questions of Ms. Jean. Is she present tonight?

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated all she has is the letter dated June 9th and nothing has come from anyone else. I know the seat was vacated by Liz Perry some number of weeks ago. Nothing else has come before either the library board or this office to the best of my knowledge.

Selectman Blessington stated our meeting is next week and we hoped to get there. We have a good candidate but there are some things we need to straighten out. Ms. Jean has not run for the board since at least 2011 so I'm not sure why that's there and it makes me a little nervous. I would like to table this until our next meeting.

Vote: 2 Yes (Wiecenski & Boritz). 1 No (Blessington)

Motion Passes.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated as you know we discussed the BOE appointment at our meeting last month and we sent it back to the BOE and asked them to work together as a board. I attended that meeting and that absolutely did not happen. The conversation was almost all but shut down when a member wanted to speak about the candidates and talk about the candidates which is what we as a board asked them to do. They were told to speak only about the candidate they were supporting. I was incredibly disappointed that they couldn't work together to find a common ground and come up with someone who was best suited to fill this role. One of the things I hear over and over from one political party is that we are not respecting the will of the voters. I couldn't disagree more. Liz Perry was on the ballot, she was voted in, and she was seated on that board. She vacated that seat. The policies in place were followed and not one of those policies mandates how and who is replaced. That is not something that this town has wanted so the voters in this town didn't express their will on only being able to fill it with a person in a particular political party. To say otherwise on something we have yet to vote on or have a conversation about and that we are not respecting the will of the voters is a little presumptive. I've heard several people here discuss the number of votes someone who wasn't elected got, there was one vote between two candidates so again we are following the policies that say if the BOE does not fill the vacancy it comes to the BOS. It is the same with many other vacancies this is the process that is in place for the Town of

Willington. If the town's people want to change that it is something that comes down the road but these vacancies need to be filled and we need functioning boards. I don't understand why everything needs to be us and them; we couldn't be doing less of a service to our residents in my opinion. Now it's back to us to fill a vacancy so that the BOE is a functioning appointed/elected board and can move forward and do the business for education in Willington which couldn't be more crucial especially in these unusual circumstances. We had two names before us Brenda Abrams and Laura Rodriguez. We were able to hear from both at our last meeting. I heard Brenda speak earlier and I see Laura is here. If either of you want to hear from either candidate before any motion is made now is the time. Laura Rodriguez Spoke regarding her interest on being appointed to the BOE.

Selectwoman Boritz moved to appoint Laura Rodriguez as a regular member of the Willington Board of Education; filling a vacancy. Term is effective June 15, 2020 and will expire on November 2, 2021 (next municipal election).

First Selectwoman Wiccenski seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Selectman Blessington stated he agrees Ms. Rodriguez is very qualified and if she were looking to become Superintendent of Schools around here I'd probably vote for that but this is BOE. The Superintendent runs the schools and the BOE finds the person to run the schools and set policies. I keep hearing we need teachers on there because teachers understand the systems but I think non-teachers understand the system too. Members of the teachers union are dealing with the union and I was really upset at one of the recent BOE meetings when someone came up with the suggestion that because of the economy under the current time the teachers should forgo their annual raise this year and the proposal was to send a letter to the Governor asking him to issue an executive order doing so, it was open to discussion and one members gave a speech stating something to the effect of we are teachers we work hard and we deserve a raise and this is basically the argument that I heard. Is this a conflict of interest I would say so. It's not about what classes were going to teach or which teachers we should hire it was all about the pay. I feel it's a conflict of interest and has not been good for a long time. I know it's good for teachers and administrator to get paid and yes I would love to see them all get paid everything they want but where does the money come from and who make the decision.

Selectwoman Boritz asked for the connection between this statement and the motion on the table.

Selectman Blessington replied as Mr. Clark stated earlier we have two retired and one current teacher serving on the board and this would make it three retired and one active and these teachers are voting constantly on pay and it's always a big argument every year.

First Selectwoman Wiccenski stated there is no conflict of interest in my opinion. You can't be a member of Willington's BOE if you are a teacher in Willington so she's is not in the Willington teachers union and can therefore sit on the BOE. I think both of these ladies bring something to the table and either would be beneficial to the board but we only have one seat to fill. I believe Ms. Rodriguez is extremely qualified as a resident to fill that seat that is not to say I don't think Ms. Abrams is qualified because that is not the case at all. Statements made by other board members don't reflect the motion on the table.

Selectwoman Boritz stated I would also like to address that statement that has been made about respecting the will of the voters. Let's be honest John, Erika and I are the will of the voters. We have been casted for making these decisions. The three of us are responsible for making this decision because the process didn't succeed down at the BOE level so this is our job. The voters voted for us and I take that job very seriously. I looked at both candidates and we heard from them last meeting and I've read their statements as well as statements from both political parties. Given all that information my job is to make the decision I believe is best for the Town of Willington and be at a slight margin I do believe this is the decision that is best for the Town of Willington. I am speaking on behalf of those who voted for me, those who have

been in contact with me and I confidently make this decision given all the information that has been present to us over the last several weeks.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated I do agree with Selectwoman Boritz and once again this board, Liza, John and myself all hoped that the BOE would make this vote and that we would not be back in this position but we are and it is our job to move forward and make a decision.

Vote: 2 Yes (Wieccnski & Boritz) 1 No (Blessington)
Motion Passes.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated she would like to thank both Ms. Abrams and Ms. Rodriguez for their willingness to serve their community and I encourage Brenda not to walk away from wanting to serve in Willington in some capacity.

B. Acceptance of Additional Agreement #2 for the Cadlerock Brownfields Grant

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to accept the Additional Services Agreement #2 to BL Companies for the preparation of a remedial Action Plan for the Cadlerock property in the amount of \$6,500 to be covered by the existing Brownfield Grant with the Town of Ashford. Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

Discussion:

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated you should have each received a letter. With the monies in the current Brownfield Grant we had applied for this which will allow for a remediation plan to be developed and then you'll see later in the agenda the plan is to apply for a remediation grant to cover the expenses that come out of the plan. We are using some of the leftover funds to be able to develop the remediation action plan.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Boritz & Blessington)
Motion passes

C. Cadlerock Phase III remediation Grant application

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to apply with the Town of Ashford (Willington) for phase III of the Cadlerock Remediation Grant Application once the grant process is open. Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Boritz & Blessington)
Motion passes

Old Business

B. Discussion - Creation of Emergency Communication Task Force

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to form a committee called the Emergency Communications Task Force consisting of ten members. One member of law enforcement that is non-voting, one member representing Willington EMS, One member that is the Willington EMD, The First Selectman, one member from the BOF recommended by the BOF, one member from the BOE recommended by the BOE, and four members at large/town residents. The BOS will appoint the chairperson of the committee. Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

Discussion:

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated we heard Mr. Racicot talk to us a little bit about the process. It was enlightening to go there and see it in action. It was even more encouraging hearing him say we have the ability to send out a reverse 911. Whether or not we have messaging to go with came up in the most recent

discussion. We talked on this board about until we have this task force let's go ahead and purchase something. I hesitate to say we should spend money on something we don't have a plan for and whether it fits the needs we want. I feel confident we have a system we can use. I still want to pursue this conversation and see what it is we want and then see if there is a product that fits into that or if what we already have suits our needs. If we are going to spend money it is an annual cost not a one-time cost and I want to make sure we are going to use it and that we have some protocol in place. We do have quotes that we received based on our conversation last time from a product called Code Red as well as everbridge which was discussed earlier. Everbridge is currently used by Tolland and Stafford and Code Red is used by the Town of Mansfield. One is definitely cheaper than the other but I do have questions about the cost. You may not have the quote from Code Red yet. Robin and I saw a demonstration today and we just got the proposal. It had some great capabilities for community messaging as well not just emergency messaging. They both have features about opting in and so it's important for us to do a lot of PR work regardless of what we use. One of the things that stood out to me in the demonstration from Code Red was their talk about what our SOPs are. If we don't have those how do we know how we are going to utilize the system? For instance if there is a missing person do you send out a call after 9PM that would go to everyone? Or is this something that would go out as a text and an email. While I still agree that we need procedures in place I would like to make sure whatever funding we put out there meets those needs.

Selectwoman Boritz agreed and added I don't think now is the time to spend the \$6,200 and plan on \$6,000 for the next three years especially now that we know we have something in place that can get an alert out to people during an emergency. We can now put procedures into place for using that system and accessing that system. Then the committee can discuss whether we need more to fit our needs.

Selectman Blessington asked how the four members of the public (residents) would be chosen for the task force.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski replied we would probably put the word out there and let people who are interested come to us. I did get some names after our May meeting and I would imagine some of those people are still interested. Then we as a board would decide on those four members. I also want to add that the EMS member of the task force would be chosen by WHFD and WFD #1.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiczenski, Boritz & Blessington) 0 No.

Motion passes

First Selectwoman Wiczenski moved to have the charge of the Emergency Communications Task Force be as follows: to explore usage and cost implications of an emergency response system for the Town of Willington, to develop protocols of usage of an emergency response systems including a regional approach and make recommendations to the BOS.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiczenski, Boritz & Blessington) 0 No.

Motion passes

C. COVID-19 Update

First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated Willington is still at 13 positive Covid cases. Fortunately we have had 0 deaths as a result of Covid here in Willington. I think our town's people are doing a good job at keeping themselves safe. We are moving forward with opening things. We now have some staff at the TOB. Beginning Monday June 29th we will have everyone back here working with the exception of some possible circumstances here or there. We are still not opening to the public at this time although we are getting set up to do so. If you make an appointment to come here you may see some new things such as a drop box for the tax collector out front, eventually the town clerk and registrars will be getting something that is coming from the Secretary of State for the absentee ballots, and there will be markings on the floors that

mark out the six feet. We will be doing things by appointment for the foreseeable future. Our Public Works Director plans to open up everything at the Transfer Station with the exception of the swap shed on July 1st.

Selectman Blessington asked about the Boy Scout returnables.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski replied I will reach out to them and see if they are ready to do that so I don't suppose that will come back until they are ready to take them. Until we have a clear procedure for the swap shed that will also remain closed. We also host the MidNEROC site where chemicals can be returned, Troy is reaching out to them because since we are a host site people have left things. This Wednesday begins phase 2 so there will be some indoor seating at restaurants, gyms will begin to open, tattoo parlors, up to 50 person outdoor events, some sporting events can take place and potentially opening up some more things at River Road. We hope people continue to support local businesses. Approximately July 17th will be phase 3 and then potentially four weeks after that into August would be phase 4 but I don't have any information on those two phases at this time.

Selectwoman Boritz asked about the online tax payer system and is there a fee to use it.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski replied yes there is a convenience fee to use it of 2.9% for credit cards or if you use an EFT payment it is a flat rate of \$1.95. We did ask about waving the fee during these times and unfortunately the answer was no. You can also pay with a check in the mail, place your payment in the drop box, or if you do need to pay with cash in person you will have to make an appointment to do so.

Present to Speak

No one was present to speak.

Good & Welfare

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated we had a dog rabies clinic here this weekend with a little over 30 dogs receiving the vaccine. We also had many others who came to register their dogs. Dog registration which usually goes through the end of June without a penalty, will now go through the end of July.

I would also like to congratulate our 4th graders who are getting promoted and moving on to Hall School. If you are on Facebook, on the Hall School page they will be live streaming their ceremonies.

Congratulations to the 8th graders who have finished their time at Willington schools. They had their ceremony on Friday and it was all live streamed. Each student received a word from a teacher and an ice cream truck was following the teachers. It was wonderful to watch.

Congratulations to all of our high school seniors who are graduating within the next week. I wish them much success and happiness in the future.

Jenny in Human Services held a food distribution on Friday which served 53 people/families. Thank you for everyone who volunteered and donated. Jenny will continue to take food donations so please feel free to reach out to her.

Thank you to Doug Racicot for speaking to us today and our EMD for getting us quotes.

Finally thank you to all those who stepped forward to fill various appointments. I always encourage people to serve their community in any way they can.

First Selectwoman Wicinski moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 PM.
Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Catharine Holcroft
Recording Secretary