

TOWN OF WILLINGTON

Board of Selectmen
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes
Lower Level Conference Room

June 3, 2019
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 then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

Selectman Blessington moved to approve the minutes of May 20, 2019

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

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

Present to Speak

James Makuch of 34 Old Farms Road stated that he is the applicant who is trying to connect to the water system. He said we have been at this for months and months – based on the last meeting minutes it is clear that this will never end. Now we are talking about an agreement and the minutes were totally wrong – the ball was in the Selectmen's court. Mr. Makuch stated that he sent the Selectmen a draft agreement on January 9th that spells everything out and it covers 325,000 people in Connecticut through CT Water throughout 56 towns.

Mr. Makuch told the Selectmen if they had looked at what he had sent them, notes that the State Regulations direct everything that they do; and the rules and regulations are available on the CT water website and states regulations are available on the state website. He then clarified that anything that the Selectmen are planning to do is going to be worthless, because the State is going to have the final word – just like they said it is the law that he has a right to connect to it and you don't have option to tell him he can't. Mr. Makuch then stated that he is so sick of this that he is having his lawyer sue the town tomorrow. He then passed out packets of paperwork to everyone in attendance, but not the Selectmen. Among the paperwork that he handed out has false statements listed on everything he has been told as well as a list of all towns in CT that is serviced by CT Water. Mr. Makuch then said that he is also going to look for reimbursement of all of his legal fees of what this has cost him as this has been a disgrace.

Correspondence

A list of Correspondence was available for the Selectmen.

First Selectman's Status Report

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she has not received any new information regarding the water connection and that had been forwarded to the homeowner. She added that she did receive a call from PURA today, but received the phone message after normal business hours.

Selectman Blessington asked if the memo from our Zoning Agent had been sent to the resident. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she had not sent that to the resident.

Public Works

Troy Sposato, who was present, reported that the crew is still sweeping and should be done this week or the beginning of next week.

- All dirt roads in Town have been graded.
- The crew has patched numerous pot holes around town.
- The brush pile at the Transfer Station was burned this morning.
- Mowing along site lines and roads.
- The parking Lot at the TOB has been line striped.
- A new “no-thru truck” sign has been placed on Polster Rd.

Troy stated that he has spoken with WFD#1 Chief Moore regarding the new radio system; which they found out is substantially more expensive than what was anticipated. He stated that if we put in a repeater, we are going to have the same difficulty and issues that we have now. the radios that we are currently using do not work properly and is becoming a safety issue. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that this an item that has been on the CIP for a few years; to put a repeater on WHFD’s fire station to help some of the trucks communicate a little better; but not totally. The project was put on the plan for this upcoming fiscal year; but the item was only put in for \$14,500 and it would only be a band-aid fix.

Chief Moore was in attendance. He stated that the radio system is off of the State of Connecticut State Police system; which has been opened up to municipalities. There is 98% coverage – there are repeaters at UCONN and in Tolland. The town would own the radios, but if anything breaks, the state fixes it. He added that this is the best application to move forward for Public Works and everybody.

Emergency Management Director, Stuart Cobb noted that the town of Coventry and Groton are moving towards this system; however the information regarding the system was broadcast after the CIP process ended. He noted that this would enable all of the systems (Public Works Fire Departments, Police from all towns) to be on the same channel – this would especially come in handy if we have a bad storm and need mutual aid. He added this is an investment of the future and the right way to go.

Chief Moore stated that the proposal that the Selectmen are looking at includes all of the Public Works vehicles with the exception of the grader and one of the mowers and there are a few portables that can be used with those vehicles and with the contractors during plowing season.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that this would be a better use for our funds than what had been planned for - especially because we knew the plan was still not going to give us full coverage. This is considerably over the amount anticipated; at \$42,000. She had spoken with Troy to figure out the best way to move forward and they decided to resubmit through CIP hold over the \$14,000 and ask for more funding as that would be the proper process.

Peter Tanaka asked if there are any drawbacks by going with this system? Chief Moore stated that the only downside that they have seen is the cost so far.

Chief Moore stated that he would hate to see Public Works go through another winter like they did last year. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she is concerned that it might not be available next year. Chief Moore stated that he would be more concerned that the cost will be higher.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that the Selectmen can discuss this further as a regular agenda item at the next meeting if they would like.

Mr. Sposato then stated that he received one more quote on the catch basin cleaning; Janet's Sweeping who has quoted \$60.00 per basin; or \$325 hourly rate; which comes out to be \$2,816 per day(not including fuel); averaging between 30-40 catch basins per day.

As a comparison; Mr. Sposato then referenced the Truax Clam Shell process; which is \$100 per basin; but it is not as thorough as a cleaning as the other process; which is why it is less expensive – it is a device (that resembles a clam shell) that goes down into the basin and only brings up what it can grab; it is not ideal . He added that he is not totally certain how many basins there are total around Town; as he has received conflicting numbers – he has seen between 750 to 876; and is not sure which is accurate.

Selectman Blessington then asked if we know how much fuel we would need to supply if we were to go with Janet's. Troy stated that he is not sure of that, but will research and get back to him on that as well as trying to get an accurate number of catch basins

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that regardless, we do not have enough money budgeted for it because the company that we had been using is no longer interested in working here any longer. Mr. Sposato added that we are in a catch 22 – there are a lot of basins that are almost filled to the top; while others are in good shape. He is uncertain of those that are almost full were cleaned out last year, or if only half of them were done; or perhaps some might not have been cleaned in a few years. He then stated that he would like to have them all done, whether they were done last year or not – that is the proper thing to do and that way he will have a baseline, if need be going forward to know which ones might be able to skip. He added that they all should be cleaned every year. Lastly, Mr. Sposato noted that every catch basin is going to need to be marked and labeled with piping for the upcoming MS4 guidelines.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that we need to know the actual numbers of catch basins – so we know what we are looking at. Selectwoman Boritz stated that we are looking at quotes that range from \$14,000 to \$75,000 but how much money do we have that we can spend on this – is something like the clamshell process (which is the cheapest) is that better than doing nothing or doing a partial job which is going to cost more money. She added that we would love to be able to do things the right way; (at the higher cost); but unfortunately, in our financial situation, we can't always do that. If doing something that is not the perfect job is better than doing nothing at all (because we can't afford it) perhaps that is the way to go. Mr. Sposato said yes and no – he believes the clam-shell process is a band-aid, but there are some basins that need to be totally cleaned out. He said that he will budget for it better for the next fiscal. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that we might have a surplus being returned at the end of the fiscal of up to \$100,000 – is this something we would consider asking the Board of Finance to cover? She added that it is not really ideal; as it wasn't budgeted for and there might not be enough time between the BOF meeting and the end of the fiscal; but it is just a thought.

Selectman Blessington then asked if we would also transfer \$20,000 for the radios? First Selectwoman Wiecenski said not the radios – as the funding is so far off, she would rather re-submit through CIP which is the correct way to do that. As much as she would like to see our trucks be able communicate with other, it should wait to go through the proper channel. She then noted that if we look at both of the items (radios and catch basins) we are looking at almost a difference of \$70,000. Selectman Blessington noted if we have money going back, it is probably better to keep it in the reserve; as neither of these items are life – threatening. He added that we should probably wait to see if anything else comes up.

New Business

A. Tax refund

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$251.83 to CCAP Auto Lease, LTD on a Certificate of Correction.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Boritz & Blessington) 09 No.

B. Appointment – Acting Revenue Collector

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that our Assistant Revenue Collector has applied for the position, which has been open for a little while now. The hiring committee met again last week and held interviews.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to appoint Janice Clausen as Acting Revenue Collector for the Town of Willington; effective June 4, 2019; expiring April 11, 2020. (this is filling a vacancy)

Selectman Boritz seconded the motion.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted because she is filling a vacancy; the current term is short; but will be re-appointed for a two year term. She added that Ms. Clausen is being appointed as an Acting Collector as she is currently not certified, but has 3 years to obtain the proper certifications, at which time will be appointed as Certified Revenue Collector. Ms. Clausen began with the Town in April and had very little training, as when she started, there was no one else in that department – she has done a tremendous job since she started.

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

C. Emergency Services Efficiency Committee

This committee initially was set up in March of 2011 and members were appointed in January 2012; and meetings were held on and off until August, 2012; when it sort of fizzled out – although the Committee was never disbanded.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she has received letter from Willington Fire Department #1, expressing interest in a potential merger with Willington Hill Fire Department. In May, Willington Hill sent correspondence that they would be willing to meet. The only thing they differed on was what the committee would look like in make-up of members.

The original Committee that was formed in 2011 was made up of 7 members; 2 from each Department (a Chief or Administrator); 1 Board of Finance Member; 2 members at large and 2 members that would be out of town that has no affiliation with either Department (although no out-of- towners were ever found to sit on those 2 seats).

Willington Fire Department #1 would like the Committee to consist of the Fire Chief, Deputy Chief; Assistant Chief; President, Vice President a non-member of either fire department that is currently on the Board of Finance or Board of Selectmen.

Willington Hill had concerns with having so many people involved; noting that the meeting might not be productive. They countered with having 4 members plus an alternate from each department and a person from outside the fire service.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that these guidelines are good and a good place to start would be to have a person from outside either department that has no affiliation with either department but who lives in town. Having someone from out of town would be good, but not easy to find.

Chief Moore stated that both departments agreed on having three regular members of each department and one alternate member of the Board of Finance, who has already been chosen; Peter Tanaka. Selectwoman Boritz stated that she is fine with a 7 member Board. Selectman Blessington noted that he was always in favor of having 2 people serve that were from out of town, however it is hard enough to find people within town to serve.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she will let the Departments take the lead on this and asked that they set a meeting schedule and a charge of where they would like to go with this. That is the way we can measure how things are progressing. Ron Gantick, President of Willington F.D.#1 noted that several years ago, one of the Board of Selectmen served on a Consolidation Committee; and they served as a moderator – that is what the Board of Finance member would be doing this time. Mr. Tanaka noted that he is not a member of either Department and he has interest in both departments.

Robert Jellen asked for clarity of this committee – First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that it is for possible consolidation of both departments.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski commends both Departments for coming together on this. She then asked for candidates for appointment and the Selectmen will appoint them at their next meeting.

D. Roadside Mower Vendor

Troy Sposato had presented three quotes to the Selectmen at their last meeting for roadside mowers. This was on the CIP project list for this coming year. Because it will be a lease, it will need to go through a public hearing process. The public hearing process can be done either of two ways; The Selectmen can choose the mower vendor as well as the leasing company and present at the hearing or, at least present the vendor at the hearing and secure the leasing company afterwards. We might have timing constraints trying to secure the leasing company because Donna, our Business Manager has vacation planned, therefore the best option will be hold the public hearing with the vendor first.

The three bids that were sought were:

Bacher Corp of Conn. (State Bid list vendor): \$137,929
H.P. Fairfield, LLC (State Bid list vendor): \$131,618
Big Boy's Toys, LLC: \$124,433

The budget approved through CIP was \$154,000. Once we choose the vendor, we will move forward with the public hearing and then we can notify the Business Manager who will solicit bids for the lease. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that the ACO truck lease public hearing was held without having a bank in place.

Troy noted that our main mower is broken and we are left with the smaller one that only has a 40" head. The smaller mower is not able to reach far or cut brush back. The broken mower is a 1993 tractor and has received a quote of approximately \$25,000 to fix. He is recommending we go with Big Boy's Toys Diamond 22' rear cradle boom that includes a 50" HD flail mower head and a 50" rotary mower head. The vendor has noted that it will take between 2 – 3 months to build. The longer we wait, we will not be able to use it this summer. Troy noted that we will be able to trade the old tractor in and take a little more off of the price of the new tractor.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to award the roadside mower vendor to Big Boys Toys, LLC at \$124,433 based on the recommendation of the Public Works Director.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she believes that there will be one more item to call a Town Meeting for and that is the new phone system. The Board of Education will be meeting later this week to award the vendor (who is off of the State bid list). Because it is a shared purchase between the town and schools, the Selectmen

will also need to do the same; as well as bring to the Board of Finance; who will be asked to appropriate the funds. First Selectwoman Wiecenski said she is hopeful to call the public hearing/town meeting for July 9th.

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

E. Appointment – Deputy Fire Marshalls

Our Fire Marshall, Dick Palmer sent correspondence to the Selectmen regarding the deputy Fire Marshalls; who are both looking to resign from their positions. The Town Ordinance states that they are at the pleasure of the Fire Marshall. Charlie Cosgrove, has been serving the town since 1995 and Second Deputy, Fran Raiola has since 2005. Dick has reached out to two other individuals; knowing that Charlie and Fran were planning to resign. Dick's recommendation is to appoint Trevor Gantick, who is the Deputy Fire Marshall in Tolland and Shane Schaffer, who is a member of the Hamden Fire Department fill those vacancies. Mr. Palmer was planning to be in attendance; but had a family issue and is out of town. Selectman Blessington stated that he believes Dick knows what he is doing.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to appoint Trevor Gantick as Deputy Fire Marshall

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to appoint Shane Shaffer as Second Deputy Fire Marshall.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

Old Business

A. Award 2019-2020 Propane Contract

At the last meeting, there was a question on the service calls and how much we paid last year. Robin Campbell researched last year's activity for deliveries as well as service and found that we had an unusual year for service calls. The waste oil tank at Public Works had broken down and at the same time, the propane tank failed, thus having to call in service. In addition, the Dog pound had one service call. The total repairs from last year totaled \$2,103.96. There were no service calls made the year prior to that.

Robin Campbell ran a synopsis between the two vendors: High Grade Gas Service at \$1.90 per gallon with 1 regular hour of service @ \$69.00 and 1 hour service at holiday rate @ \$125.00 & Hocon Gas at \$1.249 per gallon; 1 regular hour of service @ \$55.00 and 1 hour service at holiday rate @: \$75.00 based on a prior delivery of 378.9 gallons.

High Grade Gas Service total: \$607.01

Hocon Gas total: \$603.24

Because the price per gallon of propane is lower and need of service is not a guarantee, the recommendation is to stay with the current vendor.

Selectwoman Boritz moved to award the 2019-2020 Propane Contract to High Grade Gas Service as per their bid of \$1.90 per gallon; 1 hour of regular service at \$69.00 and after-hours/holiday/weekend hour rate of \$125.00 per hour.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

B. WHFD Property Purchase Request & BOF request to call a Town Meeting

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she was hopeful that the Selectmen would have received new information to share at this meeting; but hasn't seen anything. WHFD Chief Snyder stated that he just received a final revision at 5:30 this afternoon and was not able to review before this meeting but is hopeful to forward it to the Selectmen tomorrow. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she will forward to the Selectmen as soon as she receives it.

Selectwoman Boritz asked if that information is also going to contain direction of what line items the funding will come from as well. Chief Snyder stated that his end of that information is to inform what the funding will be used for; the BOF will direct where it is coming from. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that the Board of Finance's next regular meeting is scheduled for June 20th.

Selectwoman Boritz then requested to leave this topic off of any further agendas until we have such information so we can properly move forward and take some action. BOF Chairman Jim Bulick was in attendance and confirmed that they will be meeting this Thursday and then meet again on June 20th. He added that the last meeting, the BOF made a defective motion and that needs to be addressed. He then asked the Selectmen to notify him if they are not ready to vote and need further time to process and review before moving forward on the Board of Finance side. Selectwoman Boritz clarified that the pending question from the last meeting was – what is it that is being asked to fund and where is the money coming from. Selectman Blessington added that they are looking for legal ramifications on who will own what if we do this. Selectwoman Boritz noted that the Fire Department should be working on that. First Selectwoman Wiecenski added that discussions have also begun with the Town Attorney to look at what an agreement would look like between the Town and the Fire Department.

Chief Snyder noted that the Fire Department was tasked with notifying the Selectmen of what the money will be used for (so they can call a Town Meeting) and additionally, to clarify that the Association is not separate from the Department. Chief Snyder said it does not change in terms of the Fire Service Agreement as the funding is the same. First Selectwoman Wiecenski cautioned that the Town Attorney did have some questions about the difference between the Association and Department as written in that contract. Chief Snyder stated “there is no legal entity that's the Association and there is no legal separation. He then stated on the legal end, the money belongs to the Association and there is no separation” – it all falls under the Department. He then added that the Association only exists to keep separation between funding from the town (taxpayer money) and funding they receive in donations, grants and fundraising. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then asked for clarification – the Association is not a legal entity; but that is where their funding is housed? Chief Snyder said yes. Selectwoman Boritz stated that is why there are questions and what makes it complicated. Selectman Blessington said at some point there might be a question on who owns what money that will need to be settled by a court or a negotiation. The town is not involved right now, because we haven't added any money but if we do, then our lawyers are going to get involved. Chief Snyder then stated that it was presented to him that it should be no different than if they needed funding to replace an engine for one of their trucks; the town would just give them the money in the benefit of the Fire Department to fix it. First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that the Town looks at the purchase of land differently than repairing a piece of apparatus.

BOF Chairman Bulick noted that their charge changes with the fire service once you purchase land and are able to rent out the house. He doesn't think that it is a big deal on the financial end of it; but the legal end may need to be looked at more closely. As long as the Selectmen check with their legal counsel and work with the Department and everyone is happy with that then we are ready to move on. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that the Selectmen have not. Chief Snyder stated that their lawyer has tried to reach out to the Selectmen's office but has been successful. Robin Campbell clarified that an Attorney did call the office, but was unclear who he was representing - at first it appeared he was representing the Diocese. Then he was asking questions of where she thought the funding should be coming from. She was not comfortable answering any questions via telephone and referred the attorney to read the minutes of the last Selectmen meeting. Selectman Blessington asked Chief Snyder if he had their attorney call the Town? Chief Snyder said they called on their own. Selectman Blessington asked if they hired them? Chief Snyder said they did not hire them; the Attorney is

representing the Department for free – he is unsure of the name of the firm and did not have any documentation with him. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that our office will need to know who we will be working with. Selectman Blessington then warned if their attorney has any questions, they must come to the attention of the Selectmen in writing.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski then clarified that the Selectmen are certainly not ready – we have a lot of work to do – in the normal course of events we would have gotten all of the information about a project to decide whether there is interest on the town side to move forward with – none of that has been done; there is no basic information on how the Department intends to spend the funds. Chief Snyder said he has been telling them the same thing over and over. Selectwoman Boritz then clarified that we need the language in order to call a town meeting. We don't have that so there is no need to have any further conversations.

Good & Welfare

Willington Day was held last weekend and was very successful. First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked the entire committee and commended the new members; Chairman Sarah Reis and Maria Kennedy who stepped forward and made it another successful year. She has been asked how many people were in attendance – but there is no way to tell, but she stated that it seemed like a lot of people. Robin Campbell thanked Jacob Wiecenski for taking the lead with setting up and cleaning up – as well as several other things during the day. He was a tremendous help!

First Selectwoman Wiecenski extended congratulations to the HMS Band, Chorus, Jazz Band, Treble Chorus and Select Chorus for performing at Great East. The Select Chorus received Platinum and the others all received gold – great job!

June is Dog Licensing Month; the cost is \$19 or \$8 (if spayed/neutered) through the Town Clerk's Office.

This coming Saturday, June 8, our Animal Control Officer will host a low cost vaccination workshop from 10AM-12PM. The Town Clerk will also be on site for licensing on that day as well.

HMS graduation will be held next Wednesday, June 12, at 7PM and E.O. Smith graduation will be held on Monday, June 17 at 6PM. First Selectwoman Wiecenski wished those graduating students well.

The Willington Garden Club has been working hard beautifying the grounds at the TOB and Old Town Hall. First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked the Garden Club as everything looks beautiful.

The Fill – A – Truck food event during Public Works' Week was successful. Residents donated 561 items for the food pantry during the event. Thank you to everyone who donated.

This year's Memorial Day Parade was successful. Congratulations to Ed D'Agata, the newly appointed VFW Commander who oversaw his first Parade. It was a wonderful event to honor those who have served our Country.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 PM
Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Robin Campbell
Administrative Assistant