

# TOWN OF WILLINGTON

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Board of Selectmen  
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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes  
Lower Level Conference Room

November 18, 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, Superintendent Stevens and residents. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Selectwoman Boritz moved to move Old Business items A & B up to first thing on the agenda as she had to leave early due to a scheduling conflict.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.

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

### Old Business

#### **A. Discussion of Town Meeting – Set New Date and New location**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski recapped last Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, the Town Meeting was to be held at the old Town Hall. The Fire Marshall shut the door once the building reached capacity. The building was not labeled with the maximum capacity at the time (it is now). There was a significant number of people still outside. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she is unsure of how many people were there. The Town Attorney was at that meeting and gave First Selectwoman Wiecenski 2 options: hold the meeting with the doors closed (with people still waiting outside) or promptly adjourn the meeting. First Selectwoman Wiecenski chose to call the meeting to order and promptly adjourn. She said as a result, we will need to schedule the meeting with a new time and location that will be able to accommodate everyone. We worked to secure Hall School, which is very busy this time of year. We are looking at Monday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> as a potential date to hold the meeting. The gym will have more than enough room to accommodate the residents as the capacity is 560 people.

Selectwoman Boritz warned that December 2<sup>nd</sup> is the date of our next regular Selectmen meeting. First Selectwoman Wiecenski said we can cancel that meeting and hold a special meeting or just cancel it altogether. She noted that a few items on this agenda would have been handled at the regular December 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, but we pushed them up to this meeting anticipating a cancellation.

Selectman Blessington said he guesses that there were about 200 people at the Old Town Hall last week. (the capacity is 130). There seems to be a lot of interest and a lot of contention on the agenda items. It was poorly planned in the beginning; scheduling all of these items on one Town Meeting – we would most likely be there until 4am the next morning. Because there is so much interest and because so many people want to be involved- It might be best to move these things (with the exception of the Finance Software) to Referendum. Selectwoman Boritz then warned if we put all of the contentious items to Referendum, then it will take away any opportunity to hold any discussions on them. Selectman Blessington suggested holding a public hearing prior to the Referendum if you want to continue the discussions. First

Selectwoman Wiecenski then asked if you are going to go as far as holding a public hearing, why would you not just hold a town meeting and keep the same format we have already. Selectman Blessington said we could potentially be there all night and some people might have a hard time coming out to vote. A referendum will give people the opportunity to come out to vote during the day into the evening.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski told Selectman Blessington that this is the first time he mentioned this – the call has been out there and we all came into the room to have this discussion and now that didn't happen to no fault of our own. She said many questions have come up after the meeting adjourned. In speaking with the Town Attorney, the first three items regarding the school building committee actually do not need to go to Town Meeting at all. The Board of Selectmen is the Governing Body and can establish a school building committee – we unanimously did that on October 7<sup>th</sup> and as a result, the Board of Selectmen has authority to appoint members to that committee. She then clarified in the past, this Board established and appointed a WiSE and Flag Committee; this would be no different. She noted we were following past practice by bringing these items to a Town Meeting; noting it could have been a requirement back then. She clarified if and when a project is proposed and something comes out of the school building committee, there would be a town meeting and Referendum for multiple steps along the way. We are just looking to appoint people and get this committee started. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then noted that for those reasons, she recommends removing items I, II & III from the Town Meeting call.

Selectwoman Boritz cautioned that Selectman Blessington has a point – there is clearly continued desire to hold conversations about this. She added that she would hate to remove them completely and not have the opportunity to engage residents. Selectwoman Boritz noted that her concern is having it be on a Town Meeting to then having it fade away – especially when there has been so much movement and effort involved. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then suggested holding a Public Hearing on the items – that would give people the opportunity to speak out on it. Selectman Blessington stated a Referendum will also give people the opportunity to express whether they think this is the way the town should be going or not – it would be the same way a town meeting would be received. He then asked how many people want to vote on this thing – he is constantly in this argument; he thinks everyone should be able to vote on this and have their say – that is going to be hard to do at a town meeting. Selectman Blessington said you can't pull it (school building committee) back. It is like saying to the townspeople – you don't need to vote – we will decide for you.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski said she is not saying that – the Selectmen established a committee and our job is to appoint the people. She was going by past practice but it is not required to put this to the Legislative Body. She wishes she knew this before we got to this point and told Selectman Blessington that his proposal is to change the entire process. It is our role to appoint people to a committee that we have established. She warned that there has to be a town meeting held before we authorize a new school – for the Superintendent to apply for a grant – but we are a long way from that. This School Building Committee was formed to explore the avenue of building a new PreK-8<sup>th</sup> grade school – not to build a new school. The questions put before the town were authorizing to appoint people, to fill vacancies, to prepare a charge and appoint a chairperson – and we now know that we do not need authorization to do so.

Selectman Blessington asked if we are afraid that the vote won't go our way. First Selectwoman Wiecenski said absolutely not – she was ready to hold the discussions and vote last Wednesday. Selectman Blessington warned that we are prepared to vote now – and we can still hold a public hearing as well.

Selectwoman Boritz said there are a couple questions about this particular call that we need to figure out such as the date (will it be on December 2<sup>nd</sup>) and what will be on the actual call. She disagrees converting the most contentious items to be put to Referendum where nobody gets to have a conversation. She added that there have been a lot of concerns and questions regarding the Fire Department reimbursement that also need to be discussed at a Town Meeting – we should just make that happen. Items I, II & III;

given what we just learned – it is fair to have a public hearing – because there is no need to have the town vote on as it is not necessary – we recently voted on it. She would support getting the town's input via public hearing and disconnecting them from a Town Meeting. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then asked Selectwoman Boritz if she would want to hold the public hearing items on the same date as the Town Meeting; which is potentially going to be December 2<sup>nd</sup>? Selectwoman Boritz said no. Selectman Blessington said he is unhappy about the date being December 2<sup>nd</sup>. That does not give anyone enough time to petition a Referendum, if they so choose. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then asked Selectman Blessington if she is hearing this correct – he wants to push the time of the Town Meeting off so people have time to petition it to go to Referendum? First Selectwoman Wiecenski argued due to the pending upcoming holiday and the use of the facility, the December 2<sup>nd</sup> date is the best date possible.

Selectman Blessington said if we here decided not to go to Referendum; there is still room to petition to Referendum; but it would have to be turned in 24 business hours before the Town Meeting – which happens to be on the end of a holiday weekend – cutting the time down to a week and a half. Selectwoman Boritz argued that these items have been in discussions for 6 months – if someone wanted to petition, they have had plenty of time. First Selectwoman Wiecenski warned that it is not our job to decide if someone is going to pull a petition. She added that she doesn't know why we are discussing something someone may or may not do. Selectman Blessington said someone may pull a petition. First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that she tried to find a date sooner. The school has events prior to Thanksgiving and we also have to warn the meeting for a certain amount of days. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that these things weren't an issue last week and now that we couldn't have the meeting last week because over 200 people were there, now we need to have a Referendum?

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that we are in agreement that the only place we will be able to hold the meeting is at Hall School and a new date that we disagree on. She added that the other thing we need to decide is if we call a Town Meeting or Referendum. Selectwoman Boritz warned that she is not willing to consider a Referendum. She added the only question in her mind is if we are calling all of the items or taking the first three off and hold as a separate public hearing.

**Selectwoman Boritz moved to call a Town Meeting for items IV – VII (4-7) on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.  
First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.**

Selectman Blessington made a friendly amendment to change the order of the items – change item 7 to item 1, item 4 to item #2 and item #5 to #3. That will get the quick business out of the way. Selectwoman Boritz said she is fine with the suggestion. First Selectwoman Wiecenski cautioned that this is not the motion to call the actual meeting. Selectman Blessington warned that you have to call the Town meeting before you set the date and time. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then asked Selectwoman Boritz if she is suggesting using the date of December 2<sup>nd</sup> at Hall School – a new date and time for a potential Town Meeting. Selectwoman Boritz agreed and also pulled items 1-3 off of the Town Meeting.

**Selectwoman Boritz amended her motion to make the new date of the Town Meeting December 2<sup>nd</sup> at Hall School.  
First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.**

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski made a friendly amendment to add the words of a potential date and time to a possible town meeting.  
Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.**

Ralph Tulis warned that the meeting that was postponed last Wednesday was called for 7 items. If you call a new meeting with only 4 of the 7 items, you are changing a meeting that is essentially still in progress. – can this become an issue? First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that we adjourned the meeting after it was called to order. We now have to set a new date and time. Mr. Tulis stated that he just wants to make

sure this is the correct way to handle this. Selectman Blessington said that he was hoping the Town Attorney would be here tonight. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she has been talking with him a lot over the past several days; most recently as of 4:30 today. This is where the information came from.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski recapped the motion on the floor: to change the potential date to December 2<sup>nd</sup> at Hall School.

Selectman Blessington said he has an objection to December 2<sup>nd</sup>. We have never held a town meeting on a Monday before. He then asked if there is a conflict to December 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> at Hall School? First Selectwoman Wiecenski said those other dates have conflicts. There is nothing from preventing us to having it on another date, but it is always a possibility.

Selectman Blessington said he still objects as he thinks it is too soon.

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

#### **B. Call Town Meeting**

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved the call of the meeting:**

### **TOWN OF WILLINGTON NOTICE AND WARNING SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

The electors of the Town of Willington and all persons who are entitled to vote in Town Meeting on the matters mentioned in the following warning are hereby warned and notified to meet in Town Meeting at Hall Memorial School Gymnasium, 111 River Road, Willington, at 7:00 P.M. on Monday, December 2, 2019 to vote by a certified paper ballot for the following purpose:

#### ITEM I

To see if the townspeople, on the recommendation of the Board of Finance, will appropriate \$140,000 from the Reserve Fund to capital project account 04-4036, for the purpose of purchasing Infinite Visions General Accounting and PR/HR Software by Tyler Technologies for the Town and the Schools.

#### ITEM II

Should the Townspeople adopt a PA490 Open Space Ordinance for the Town of Willington?

#### ITEM III

To see if the Townspeople, on the recommendation of the Board of Finance will authorize the appropriation of \$10,000 from the General Fund to provide in supplementary funding to Willington Hill Fire Department. Such funds will be in addition to those funds already allocated in the department's 2019/2020 annual budget and will be used to maintain property at 25 Old Farms Road.

#### ITEM IV

To see if the Townspeople on the recommendation of the Board of Finance will authorize the appropriation of \$50,000 in supplementary funding to Willington Hill Fire Department. Such funds will be in addition to those funds already allocated in the department's 2019/2020 annual budget and will be constitute the town's contribution to the department's repayment of loans received as part of the department's purchase of 25 Old Farms Road.

Dated at Willington,

This 18<sup>th</sup> Day of November, 2019. Willington Board of Selectmen

**Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.**

Robert Jellen asked for a point of order of the items from what they were on the original call and the order they are on the new call. First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that item #7 is now item 1; item #6 is now item 2; item #4 is item 3 and item #5 is item 4. Selectman Blessington said that is not how he asked

the items to be moved around. He added that he is still opposed because he did not want to see the first three items removed without giving the people a chance to vote on them.

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

Selectwoman Boritz asked if we can move to add a public hearing on items 1-3? First Selectwoman Wiecenski warned it is not on the agenda; so we would have to add it. Selectwoman Boritz then stated that she would like the discussion to be added to the next regular meeting agenda. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then asked Selectwoman Boritz if she would also like to hold off on the appointments until the hearing has been held. Selectwoman Boritz said yes, she would like the public to be able to comment and discuss. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that will be a good opportunity to inform the public that we are just looking to appoint people, fill vacancies set the charge and a chairman; not build a new school.

Selectman Blessington asked if we are now going to discuss holding a public hearing? First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that Selectwoman Boritz stated that she wants to discuss at the next meeting. She then stated that the next regularly scheduled meeting, which was supposed to be on December 2<sup>nd</sup> will now have to be canceled because of the new Town Meeting. The topic will be discussed on the 16<sup>th</sup>, unless the Selectmen want to hold a special meeting on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

Selectman Blessington asked why we would want to hold a public hearing on something people are not able to vote on. Selectwoman Boritz clarified that people have shown a lot of interest in this so we should let them hold conversations. If someone wants to hold a referendum that will give them ample time to push that as well. First Selectwoman Wiecenski warned if it were pushed to Referendum, then there would be no opportunity to hold discussions. Selectman Blessington then said that we can talk about it but not vote on it, or vote on it but not talk about it? Something is very wrong here. The whole idea of going to Referendum would be to have a public hearing on it first – that is the way we do things. He then gave an example of how the annual town budget hearing is held; it adjourns to Referendum.

Selectwoman Boritz left the meeting at 7:12 PM.

#### Approval of Minutes:

**First Selectman Wiecenski moved to approve the minutes of November 4, 2019 as written.**

**Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 2 Yes (Wiecenski & Blessington) 0 No**

#### Present to Speak

Robert Jellen said he would like to comment on what just transpired – his view is that the Board of Selectmen do have the Governing power to discuss the school building committee. He added that Selectwoman Boritz's point is also well taken – anything the Board of Selectmen can do to widen the audience and participation is positive.

Peter Tanaka stated that he asked at the last regular meeting why there is a 5 acre minimum on the open space. He was told it is written in the Plan of Conservation and Development – but is unable to find it in there. He asked if someone could refer him to a page number. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she can have someone from the Land Use Department can assist him with that. Ralph Tulis added that it is most likely not written into the new version of the POCD; but is referenced in the one prior which is still active along with the newly adopted updates.

#### Correspondence

A list of Correspondence was available for the Selectmen.

## Status Report

First Selectwoman Wiecenski said we are still looking for an Assistant Land Use Agent. The deadline is Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## Public Works

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that Troy emailed an updated reported of things the Public Works' crew has been busy with since the last meeting:

- Roadside mowing is still going on we have change the mowing head to the rotatory head for heavier brush removal
- Storm clean up at Halls School there was 7 large trees that had falling in the lower soccer field and we mowed all around the field
- Picked up voting signs around town
- Trash at RRRC
- Set up for public meeting/ take down
- Burnt brush pile at Transfer Station
- Installed new poles at Hall School for their crosswalk and new traffic sign
- Swept Eldredge Mills Rd
- Installed new speed limit sign on Village Hill /Stafford town line
- Started to grade dirt roads
- Winter road sand is all hauled in
- Fixed heating issues at Senior Center

## New Business

### **A. Appointments**

- a. – Conservation Commission: Peter Andersen & Julia Cartabiano

Selectman moved to re-appoint Peter Andersen as a regular member of the Willington Conservation Commission; effective December 2, 2019; expiring December 1, 2022.

Selectwoman seconded the motion.

Vote: 2 Yes (Wiecenski & Blessington) 0 No

Selectman moved to re-appoint Julia Cartabiano as a regular member of the Willington Conservation Commission; effective December 2, 2019; expiring December 1, 2022.

Selectwoman seconded the motion.

Vote: 2 Yes (Wiecenski & Blessington) 0 No

### **B. Resolution – 2019 Homeland Security Grant Program**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adopt the following Resolution (which we adopt annually for Homeland Security purposes):

**RESOLVED**, that Erika G. Wiecenski may enter into with and deliver to the **State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security** any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate; and

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Erika G. Wiecenski, as First Selectman of Town of Willington,

is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Willington Board of Selectmen and to do and perform all acts and things which he/she deems to be necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

**Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 2 Yes (Wiecenski & Blessington) 0 No.**

#### **C. Approve the 2020 Holiday Schedule**

**The Town Office Building will be closed in observance of the following holidays for the year 2020**

<b><u>Holiday</u></b>	<b><u>Day Closed</u></b>
New Year's Day	Wednesday, January 1, 2020
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Monday, January 20, 2020
President's Day	Monday, February 17, 2020
Good Friday	Friday, April 10, 2020
Memorial Day	Monday, May 25, 2020
Independence Day	Friday, July 3, 2020
Labor Day	Monday, September 7, 2020
Columbus Day	Monday, October 12, 2020
Veteran's Day	Wednesday, November 11, 2020
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 26, 2020
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday, November 27, 2020
Selectmen's Day	Thursday, December 24, 2020
Christmas Day	Friday, December 25, 2020
New Year's Day 2020	Friday, January 1, 2021
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Monday, January 18, 2021

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to approve the holiday schedule as presented.**

**Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.**

**Vote 2 Yes (Wiecenski & Blessington) 0 No.**

#### **D. Approve the Board of Selectmen 2020/2021 Regular Meeting Schedule**

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to approve the 2020 meeting schedule as presented:**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING SCHEDULE - 2020**

1<sup>ST</sup> & 3<sup>RD</sup> MONDAY (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS) @ 6:30 P.M.  
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING

Jan. 06, 2020  
Jan. 21, 2020 (Tuesday)

Jul 06, 2020  
Jul.20, 2020

Feb. 03, 2020  
Feb. 18, 2020 (Tuesday)

Aug. 03, 2020  
Aug. 17, 2020

Mar. 02, 2020  
Mar. 16, 2020

Sept. 08, 2020 (Tuesday)  
Sept. 21, 2020

Apr. 06, 2020  
Apr. 20, 2020

Oct. 05, 2020  
Oct. 19, 2020

May 04, 2020  
May 18, 2020

Nov. 02, 2020  
Nov. 16, 2020

Jun. 01, 2020  
Jun. 15, 2020

Dec. 07, 2020  
Dec. 21, 2020

Jan. 04, 2021  
Jan. 19, 2021 (Tuesday)

**Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 2 Yes (Wieczenski & Blessington) 0 No.**

**E. Approve the Board of Selectmen 2020/2021 Budget Meeting Schedule**

The Selectmen will hold budget workshops on the following dates: 1/6/20, 1/13/20, 1/21/20, 1/27/20 & 2/3/20 at 5:30 PM

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to approve the 2020-2021 budget meeting schedule.**

**Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 2 Yes (Wieczenski & Blessington) 0 No.**

**F. Tax Refund**

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$275.66 to CAB East, LLC on a certificate of correction.**

**Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.**

**Vote: 2 Yes (Wieczenski & Blessington) 0 No**

**Good & Welfare**

We received the October report from Troop C:

Total calls for service: 467

Accidents: 7

Criminal Investigations: 9

Burglaries: 1

Larcenies: 1

Traffic Stops: 181

DUI's: 2

Infractions: 140

Written Warnings: 16



First Selectwoman Wiecenski reminded everyone to lock their cars and remove any personal belongings from their vehicles as we have had another rash of car break-ins recently in multiple areas in town. A car was also stolen.

Robert Jellen stated that there was an incident during the middle of last week where he heard at least 10 gun shots in the middle of the night. He was disappointed with the response from the dispatcher at Troop C. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she will reach out to our liaison.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that we received a resignation letter from Karen Warner, who served on the WiSE committee and has since moved out of state. She thanked Ms. Warner for her service. In addition, First Selectwoman Wiecenski reminded everyone that we still have 2 vacancies on the CIP Committee.

Robert Wiecenski asked if the Selectmen were able to determine how much revenue is brought in by the State Police from the infractions on I84. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she gave him the figures at one of the previous meetings and did not have the info readily available at this time.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that we recently had our Election. She congratulated the Board Members who will serve a new term and thanked those who are ending their terms.

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Robin Campbell*  
Administrative Assistant