

# TOWN OF WILLINGTON

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Board of Selectmen  
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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes  
Lower Level Conference Room

October 21, 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.

### Approval of Minutes:

Selectman Blessington moved to approve the minutes of October 7, 2019 as written.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

Vote: 2Yes (Wiecenski, Boritz & Blessington) 0 No

### Present to Speak

Peter Latincsics of Trask Road asked if there will be opportunity to speak under items 7 & 8.

Stef Summers of Y Road urged the Board of Selectmen to think about holding an upcoming Town meeting – if they really should hold so many large items in one meeting. It may be a lot to process all at once. It may be beneficial to hold more than one Town Meeting. Lastly she suggested that it might be helpful to add some of this information to the Town's website.

### Correspondence

A list of Correspondence was available for the Selectmen.

### Status Report

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she attended a Cadlerock update meeting last week in Ashford. Phase II has been completed and a Public Hearing is scheduled for December 9<sup>th</sup> to review the findings and discuss the next steps.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that we received a letter of resignation from our Assistant Zoning Agent, Emily Perko. Emily's last day will be November 1<sup>st</sup>. She will be missed but we wish her well.

### Public Works

Public Works' Director Troy Sposato was present. He went over the list of items the crew has been busy with

- Roadside mowing
- Curb repair/ Back fill curb

- Trash at RRRC
- Check sections do to the storm
- Installed new soap dispenser's in 'TOB
- The salt shed is full and we have been receiving sand
- Cleaned up tree that had fallen down on Town Farm Rd
- We applied asphalt rejuvenator on Hancock Rd and Eldredge Mills Rd
- Working on getting quotes for replacement of the oil tanks at the Old Town Hall
- Working on MS4 paper work

Mr. Sposato noted that he is seeking quotes for a new oil tank for the Old Town Hall as the current tanks have exceeded their life expectancy. Right now there are two 275 gallon oil tanks and he is looking to replace with one 330 gallon tank.

Lastly, Troy warned that there will be a detour at the end of Village Hill Road (at Route 32). The State DOT will be closing the intersection on Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 PM and will re-open at 6:00 AM on Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. They will then close it again at 6PM on Friday, November 1<sup>st</sup> until 6AM on Monday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. The state will be removing 60 feet of material 2 feet down; bringing in new process aggregate. They will be paving at another time. First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that residents on Village Hill should detour through Schofield Road. She added that we will put out a public notice tomorrow.

#### New Business

##### A. Appointments

**First Selectwoman Wiczenski moved to appoint Catharine Holcroft as the CIP recording secretary effective October 21, 2019; expiring June 30, 2020.**

**Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.**

Ms. Holcroft was in attendance. She currently lives in Columbia but will be moving to Mansfield in a few weeks. She is looking forward to assisting the CIP with their minutes. First Selectwoman Wiczenski thanked Ms. Holcroft for stepping forward.

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

**First Selectwoman Wiczenski moved to Move to appoint Timothy Blauvelt (TFV) as a regular member of the Willington Historic District Commission; effective retroactive October 21, 2019; expiring January 1, 2020.**

**Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.**

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

**First Selectwoman Wiczenski moved to Move to appoint Chris Brown (TFV) as a member of the Library Board of Directors; effective October 21, 2019; expiring November 21, 2023 (next municipal election).**

**Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.**

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

##### B. EMPG Resolution – Homeland Security

**First Selectwoman Wiczenski moved to adopt the following Resolution:**

**RESOLVED, that the Town of Willington 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 Wiecenski as First Selectman of the Town of Willington, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town of Willington 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.

The undersigned further certifies that Erika G. Wiecenski now holds the office of First Selectman and that he/she has held that office since November 21, 2017.  
Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that we receive this grant annually. It offsets the costs of the Emergency Management Director's salary. Stuart Cobb added that the \$10,000 grant funding that is passed down from the state can also be used to fund equipment if there are remaining funds. This year we are hopeful to allocate \$4,000 towards equipment (as long as it is on the authorized list and will cover 50% of the purchase) in addition to the salary offset.

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

C. Recommendation of Contract for Financial Software

First Selectwoman Wiecenski recapped half way through budget season, we learned that our current software vendor (Phoenix) will be sunseting and no longer supported after June 30, 2020. At that time we assumed it would be very costly. Superintendent Stevens received a quote of \$39,000; which was earmarked at the end of the last budget season, to only find that the quote was too good to be true. In the meantime, our Business Manager went out to bid and received 2 back on October 1<sup>st</sup>: EFinance Plus and Infinite Visions.

RFP Results: October 1, 2019

Infinite Visions

One Time Fee: \$180,681

Recurring Fee: \$24,476

Efinance PLUS

One Time Fee: \$123,121

Recurring Fee: 420,111 \* does not include any updates; those would be additional costs.

The Finance Department and Treasurer had sat through demonstrations of both companies and felt that Infinite Visions would better serve the town. Although Efinance PLUS was less expensive, the annual fees do not include any updates that may occur. With the Infinite Visions; we would be purchasing the software and the needed updates would be included in that one time cost/recurring fee. The Efinance software seemed to be geared more towards Boards of Education rather than the town as a whole.

Our Business Manager is recommending Infinite Visions and said it is a good investment for the town. It offers everything we need. The Board of Finance had met last Thursday and moved to recommend the appropriation of \$140,000 from the reserve fund, to cover the rest of the cost (because \$40,000 had already been appropriated and approved last budget).

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to recommend purchasing Infinite Visions Software for General Accounting and payroll HR software for the Town and Schools for \$180,681; pending Town Meeting approval.

Selectwoman Boritz seconded the motion.

Selectman Blessington clarified that we already have \$40,000 dedicated towards the purchase. First Selectwoman Wiecenski said yes; the total amount approved was \$40,341 and clarified that the only thing that would need to be approved at Town Meeting will be the additional \$140,340.

Selectwoman Boritz asked what happens what will happen if it doesn't pass at Town Meeting? First Selectwoman Wiecenski cautioned that we need the software because as of June 30<sup>th</sup> the software we currently have will no longer be supported. She added that it is a lengthy process to implement the new software – it will take approximately 9 months to be fully up and running. We have had Phoenix for over 26 years and is very antiquated.

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

#### D. Discussion – potential call of Town Meeting

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that Selectman Blessington wanted this on the agenda. Selectman Blessington said he originally thought we would call the town meeting tonight and the discussions would start. He then asked if we would be doing that tonight? First Selectwoman Wiecenski said that she had hoped to. She clarified that most of the items that will be called to Town Meeting are items the Selectmen have been discussing over the past few months. The Fire Department funding and School Building Committee have already been covered. She added that the Fire Department has been patiently waiting for us to call this meeting and because the call comes at a cost, we bundle a bunch of items on there to save money.

The first three items revolve around the School Building Committee; which are required of the Grant process and the next two are the Fire Department's funding request - The Board of Finance has already appropriated the funds. The other items that will be discussed will be adopting an open space ordinance, discussion of the water system and now the finance software. She said she is not sure what else we need to discuss. She cannot recall a time we read the call for a Town Meeting and held discussions on wording of each item. We would be moving to Town Meeting where the townspeople vote.

Selectman Blessington warned that usually the Board of Finance ask the Board of Selectmen to authorize the Town Meeting. First Selectwoman Wiecenski agreed; noting only when it involves items that require funding; in which all of the funding requests that will be called have come from the Board of Finance.

Selectman Blessington said that he agrees on one thing; that the Fire Department's funding request is ready to go to Town Meeting. He then asked about the School Building Committee – wasn't there a list of people who were going to be filling the membership within different functions of the town? First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that the BOE recommended to have the BOS form a committee for the purpose of exploring building a preK-8 school on a new site. The first item on the call of the meeting is to authorize the Board of Selectmen to appoint a School Building Committee for a period of 4 years and the next item is to see if the townspeople will authorize the Board of Selectmen to fill such vacancies as may occur during the life of said school Building Committee and the third item is to see if the townspeople will authorize the Board of Selectmen to prepare and present a charge to the School Building Committee on duties and functions and to appoint a committee chairperson. She then clarified at the last meeting, she moved to form an 11 member committee made up of those people and it was voted on by this board. Selectman Blessington warned that he is concerned because there was no dollar amount listed in the original motion when the board was created. Selectwoman Boritz clarified that there is nothing being purchased and we are not authorizing anyone to buy anything or spend any money. First Selectwoman

Wiczenski agreed; the dollar amount would be decided by the School Building Committee. Selectwoman Boritz then said that she had made the point at the last meeting and has reiterated several times that it is an exploratory committee that will be making a recommendation. That committee would then work with the Board of Finance and ultimately go to the entire town to vote.

Selectman Blessington then asked to discuss Town Meeting item VI- Should the Townspeople adopt a PA490 Open Space Ordinance for the Town of Willington? If we all get there and vote yes, what kind of Ordinance do we have? First Selectwoman Wiczenski said she is sure he has been to Town Meeting before; stating that all of this information is shared with the public beforehand. She clarified at one of the last public hearings, we had brochures regarding the new mower so people could see what we wanted to purchase and what they were voting on. Selectman Blessington warned that a mower is much different than an Ordinance. He warned that we are not saying what the Ordinance is. First Selectwoman Wiczenski argued that she cannot recall when the entire wording of an ordinance was ever placed into the call of a Town Meeting in the past. Selectman Blessington cautioned to pass an ordinance the townspeople need to know what they are voting on – It needs to be made available on paper so they can read it.

Robert Testa asked if the Ordinance would be available for the townspeople to see and understand what they are voting on? Selectwoman Boritz clarified that it is available now – it is in the minutes of the last Selectmen's meeting; anytime the Selectmen vote on it; they incorporate in the minutes.

Peter Tanaka asked if the newly formed School Building Committee will be coming at a cost (recording secretary); how will that be decided? First Selectwoman Wiczenski noted once the committee is formed, they will have to go before the Board of Finance to set a budget for that.

Peter Latincsics stated that he has a number of concerns in the way in which we are proceeding and the need for transparency. He added that he is in agreement with Ms. Summers - there seems to be a large volume of issues that will be decided at this town meeting. He added that he is not concerned about the cost of a town meeting; particularly when deciding on a possible \$22million school and a public water supply connection need adequate time to be discussed. He warned that this is a lot to be discussed in one meeting; arguing that each of these topics could hold their own meeting in itself. Mr. Latincsics added that he also is very concerned with the haste in which we are proceeding with these items. It is important to the townspeople how the call is worded. The only discussion that can occur is based on what is in the call. The call needs adequate discussion on how it will be presented to the townspeople; who will most likely not be able to attend a special meeting at 9:00 on a Wednesday morning because they have work or school commitments and it will only give them one day to read all of the minutes prior to a special meeting. Mr. Latincsics stated that he objects to this and suggested that the Board of Selectmen call the town meeting at a regularly scheduled meeting that is properly warned.

Selectwoman Boritz clarified that the Selectmen will be calling the town meeting on Wednesday – not actually holding the Town Meeting. The Town Meeting will be held at a properly warned time. She then agreed that there might be a lot on this call and agreed that we do not want to have an 8 hour long meeting that begins at 7:00 pm. She clarified that the Selectmen have held lots of lengthy discussions on most of these topics; such as the fire department; and we have been holding the call off until we had a bigger meeting to attach to. This is not new information – it has been ongoing for months. She added that there are a few items that are newer – such as the school building committee; but they did warn at least 2 weeks ago that we would be going to town meetings. She added that this will be more of a formality that the town meeting will be happening and clarified that the town has been notified of at least the first five items on the call. Selectwoman Boritz added that there hasn't been an attempt at a lack of transparency. These are ongoing conversations.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she has had several special meetings held in the morning where a town meeting was called and she has never heard a complaint or concern about transparency over those times; noting that it has usually been just herself and Selectman Blessington in attendance. Selectman Blessington agreed that he has been to many meetings where a town meeting was called at 11AM but clarified that there might be just one item and that item would not be controversial. He then warned that these particular items may have interest to the townspeople. Selectwoman Boritz then said by calling these items will get to them so they can have their say. First Selectwoman Wiecenski added that whatever is called at a Town Meeting must be warned in the newspaper for at least 7 days.

Discussion was held with how the adoption of the Ordinance should be warned on the call of the Town Meeting. Selectman Blessington cautioned that people might not know what they are voting on. Peter Latincsics then asked what precludes us from holding the call of the town meeting at a regularly scheduled Selectmen meeting. Why would it be held with one days' notice? Selectwoman Boritz clarified that it had to do with timing. The call was not ready for tonight; but will be on Wednesday; if we don't call it on Wednesday, then we will have to wait 2 more weeks to call it. First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that she was hopeful to have called the Town Meeting tonight. The reason she decided to push it off was because she was notified on Friday that our Business Manager was looking to get information from the potential finance software vendor to see if she could split the payments over two fiscal years. The agenda question would need to be worded to speak of the split payment. By holding off, would give our Business Manager time to get an answer. Selectman Blessington asked why it was necessary to delay the item if it is still not ready?

Selectman Blessington then suggested calling the town meeting for items 4, 5 and 8 (Fire Department appropriations; and the finance software at tonight's meeting. He stated that the town is not ready to adopt the open space ordinance and should not be putting the water connection on there either. Selectwoman Boritz stated that she was in agreement about #7 (the water connection) – she said she would like to get more clarity on that before we put to town meeting. She then warned the PA490 is time sensitive and if it is not taken care of it could go away for everyone. If the Selectmen don't call the question regarding the PA490 Ordinance, it will dissolve. She warned that our lack of action will be an action and that everything will go away; and those who have open space will lose it. Selectman Blessington said we have plenty of time as it wouldn't go into effect until next October. First Selectwoman Wiecenski warned that it is actually retroactive; effective this Grand List; October 1, 2019. She added that we have had several discussions with our Assessor regarding this of the past few months.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski then clarified that the State Statute is very clear – you can give the designation so long there has been a majority vote by the legislative body of the town. She then added that we have never done so; and the classifications have been given in error. Our Assessor has spoken to this many times about it being constitutional and statute. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then added we are trying to save the PA 490 for those who have been receiving; but without the ordinance in place it does not exist. Selectman Blessington said he would be in favor of it as long as those who have it are grandfathered.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that last week this Board voted to form a school building committee but she is hearing him say he doesn't want to move forward with it. Selectman Blessington stated that this has been clumsily prepared. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that the wording is language what has been used in the past. She added that the wording is what is required in order to have the School Building committee take any action. Brenda Abrams then asked for clarification regarding the building committee – why are we not calling it an exploratory committee? First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that the Board of Selectmen voted to form a School Building Committee at the last meeting – that is the name of it. She then read the motion that was voted on at the last meeting:

*To establish an 11 member School Building Committee to explore the building of a new PreK-8 school on a new site for an indefinite term. The committee will include: Member of the BOE, 1 member of the FOF; 1 Member of the BOE Staff; 1*

*Member with Construction Industry experience; 1 First Selectman or his/her designee; 5 Members from the community at large and the Superintendent as a member ex-officio.* First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified the motion was seconded and voted in favor unanimously.

Selectman Blessington stated that it isn't a bad idea to change the name to exploratory School Building Committee. First Selectwoman Wiecenski argued that the school building committee is the name of the committee for the purpose of exploring a building. One of the items is to give that committee the charge. In the charge is what they will be responsible for. First Selectwoman Wiecenski gave the Board a draft of the charge that will be reviewed later. She then reiterated that she would argue that the name of the committee be changed to anything different. Peter Latincsics stated this is exactly the reason for his concern. He added that is why this needs to be discussed beforehand because if it is brought up at town meeting (why the word exploratory isn't in the name of the committee) the topic will not be able to be discussed because it isn't on that agenda. Mr. Latincsics added this is why such items should not be discussed at a special meeting that is scheduled 48 hours from now. It is unreasonable and not the proper course of action. First Selectwoman Wiecenski cautioned that these items are from past practice; not items that were made up of thin air. She noted that there was a large building committee formed in a similar fashion in 1990 – and these items are identical to those from then. Mr. Latincsics stated that he sat on that committee and was much different then as the school employees were not allowed to vote on items back then. He stated that you are making changes and not allowing discussions and he objects.

Robert Testa asked why the Selectmen what would be the objection of the Board of Selectmen to have the meeting next Monday evening at 8PM? Selectwoman Boritz stated that it has to do with availability. A few of the Selectmen are volunteers on this board and have other jobs and families. We have to make it happen when we can make it happen. She added that she doesn't mind adding the word "exploratory" to the name of the committee; the charge will determine more of what the group does. First Selectwoman Wiecenski cautioned in order to apply for grants the wording of the committee must be very specific.

Selectman Boritz stated that the Selectmen have been holding discussions on the town meeting items for quite some time. The call of the Town Meeting is just a formality and none of this should be a surprise. She then said if this call cannot happen on Wednesday morning, then it is going to have to wait another 2 weeks. Peter Tanaka noted that indeed most of this has been past practice but in this case several of the items on the call seem to be somewhat controversial. To have it during non-business hours where the public can attend would be helpful. He said he has been to many town meetings where it is 3 people and a moderator – with no controversy. This might not be the case.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski said she hears what he is saying but the conversation is not about the topic – it is about the items. We are saying that we believe the townspeople are warned and notified to meet. It is time for the townspeople to take the vote up. This is their time to speak on these items. We are simply calling a meeting in order for them to have a voice. She clarified that the Selectmen are not the deciding factor. Peter Tanaka warned if you are dealing with a yes or no answer, the question becomes more important; which is why it is important to get input from the townspeople on how the question is asked.

Selectwoman Boritz said if this is something that should be held on another date, then we can vote on that. Mr. Tanaka then suggested holding the meeting at another time that is more friendly to the residents; such a non-business hour. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then stated that perhaps we should put a policy in place where a town meeting is never allowed to be called in the morning again – ever. Mr. Tanaka said that is not what he is saying at all. First Selectwoman Wiecenski said the only thing being said at the special meeting is going to be the call of the town meeting that is going to be held. She clarified that some of the items are drafted by the Office Manager and the others are prepared by the Board of Finance.

Discussion then went back to the School Building Committee and having the word exploratory in the name. Brenda Abrams noted that she feels it very important to have that wording in there - it is important for clarity for the voters. First Selectwoman Wicneski clarified that the word is already in the committee that has been formed ("with the purpose of exploring") and the item to be called at town meeting is to appoint people to that committee. She then added that there is nothing hidden in any of that. Ms. Abrams asked why there is such objection to changing the name. Selectman Blessington said this is the meeting we had intended to have the call of the town meeting on. We are going to beat this thing to death. We don't have to accept it as written. We can make changes to it. This may be the last chance the people of town will have to make changes. First Selectwoman Wicenski said that the Board would be the one to make the call and vote on it. She added that we have already heard from the townspeople on what we bring to meeting. She believes people will come out to the meeting and they will get to have their say. First Selectwoman Wicenski asked why the change of the call, which is standard.

Selectwoman Boritz said we cannot call the town meeting tonight - at the point that we are voting whether or not we are voting to approve this call will be held at the special meeting. She then stated that she doesn't think that adding the word exploratory to the committee name will affect whether we get grant funding or not. First Selectwoman Wicenski stated that she wouldn't like to take that risk and disagrees. Selectwoman Boritz then said we should call it as it is and if it gets voted on or not is to be seen. She said she sees both sides of the argument. Peter Latincsics said this is one specific incident and we have had a 45 minute discussion - what is wrong with waiting another 2 weeks at the next duly noticed meeting to give everyone the chance to have their say or not. First Selectwoman Wicenski clarified that all three Selectmen will be at Wednesday's meeting and we would only need 24 hours to notice it. Mr. Latincsics clarified he understands they can do it; but questions why they won't push it out. Selectwoman Boritz said there is nothing from stopping us from doing it in 2 weeks - or even in a month. We can take as long as it takes - she added we can also choose to move things along, so the Fire Department for example who has already been waiting 9 - 10 months for us to call this meeting so they can actually get their answer. Every time we delay this, they are delayed - they are paying their loan with interest on that loan. She added that we are thinking about your concerns but we are also thinking about non profits and town servants who put up re-finances on their own homes so they can do something for the betterment of the town. She added that we are trying to encompass the needs of the entire town. She added that it is surprising that their standard course of business is now so upsetting.

First Selectwoman Wicenski warned that she isn't sure that asking members of the public to craft the language on the town meeting question is the appropriate step to take. They are very specifically called questions.

Stef Summers of Y Road said she feels the crux of the discussion whether to put in the word "exploratory" in the name of the committee. The Board of Education recommended that the Selectmen look at the one option of building a PreK through 8 school at a separate site - so the committee is exploring that option - not 20 options of what we can do instead of that. She added that maybe people here feel if we add that word "exploratory" opens it up to start over - that is not what the BOE recommended. Selectwoman Boritz agreed noting that the name is not the charge. Ms. Summers then clarified that there are time tables in place - she was not suggesting earlier that we delay into perpetuity. She noted that we are behind on some things and we need to move ahead because of the way the state handles the way they look at these things.

Selectman Blessington stated that someone mentioned earlier if we try to get through all of these items it could take 3 days. Only one item on here is controversial. There are going to be a lot of people who might want to speak on these items. He then suggested splitting the meeting into two separate meetings. He noted that there are 3 items on the call that are written copacetic - item 4, 5 & 8. He then read the three items:



#### ITEM IV

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 V

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.

#### ITEM VIII

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.

Selectman Blessington said these are three items we can put on there and have a pretty good sized town meeting where many people will show up.

First Selectwoman Wicewski warned that all items are in need of holding a Town meeting and that's why they are on here. She noted that the only 2 items that were ready prior to this was the Fire Department appropriation. The Board of Finance had given them the motion in August.

Peter Tanaka then suggested splitting up the meeting because it will be extremely difficult for the moderator at that meeting.

Robert Wicewski of Adamec Road stated that all of these discussions have been held and asked everyone where have they been? These topics have been held on Monday nights at the Selectmen's meetings – he has been at every Selectmen's meeting to hear these discussions. Why don't you all come to these meetings when they have been discussing all along. Let's come together and get this thing done – whether it be done in one meeting or two.

Carl Pearson asked what the call of the town meeting will cost? Robin Campbell said the cost varies and they charge per word. It depends on when it is published and where it is published.

Don Berg said he understands the concept of wanting to add these items on one meeting to get it all done in one night, but that may not be possible. It may be better to try to split it up – pick and choose what makes the most sense.

Christina Mailhos of Hall Hill road said that it may be possible to adjourn a Town meeting and pick up at a later date.

First Selectwoman Wicewski said the conversation has evolved from should we have all of these items on a town meeting or should we only have the items that Selectman Blessington likes the way they are worded and the issue with calling it at a special meeting – there seems to be a lot of things that are not ok with someone because of the items as they are presented. She reiterated we are warning a town meeting for the townspeople to decide on the items. If the townspeople get there and don't like the way it is worded; based on motions that have already been made at Board of Selectmen meetings. It is now up to the townspeople to decide these items. She cautioned changing the wording changes the motion that was originally made by this board.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski added that there is no lack of transparency. This is not unusual practice to call a town meeting on a weekday morning.

Selectman Blessington stated he was under the impression that the call of the town meeting would be on this agenda. He was contacted on Friday afternoon saying that we are going to move the call of the town meeting to Wednesday morning because the financial software call wasn't ready. Selectman Blessington said now we still don't have the right information but are going to add it anyway. First Selectwoman Wiecenski said she didn't say we were going to put it on there anyway – she gave him a draft and we are not calling anything tonight anyway. She thought it would be best to have the correct information to put on the agenda. We could hold a separate special meeting that was warned and noticed in the appropriate time frame for the call.

Selectman Blessington stated that you wouldn't send out an agenda item for something that is incomplete but you still sent out an agenda. The agenda was sent to the Town Clerk today because they do not open until 9AM tomorrow and Wednesday's meeting is going to be at 8:30 AM; and they need 24 hours' notice.

Robert Shabot said he has been sitting here for 2 ½ hours and the way he understands this is the wording of how the new financial software is going to be paid because Donna is waiting for an answer. . If not, it will come off and that will determine how the question will be asked. If she gets the answer by Wednesday morning, the item will stay on the agenda.

#### Old Business

##### A. Review Proposed PA 490 Open Space Ordinance

Selectwoman Boritz said at the last meeting, she read one version of the PA490 Open Space Ordinance and realized after the meeting had ended that she moved to implement the version that she did not intend to. She added at the last meeting, the Selectmen were having conversations about grandfathering or not grandfathering and one of the versions of the ordinance grandfathered in all of the current (260) properties that are currently receiving the PA490 designation – some are receiving in error because they do not meet the 5 acre minimum requirement. She contacted First Selectwoman Wiecenski noting that she believed she read Ordinance with the grandfather clause, which is not the one she intended to adopt. The only recourse for this is for her to rescind her motion; vote on that and open up for discussion again – and vote on the Ordinance that she intended to implement in the first place.

Selectwoman Boritz moved to rescind her original motion of PA490 Open Space Ordinance from October 7, 2019.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.

Selectman Blessington then read the call as it will appear on the Town Meeting: "Should the Townspeople adopt a PA490 Open Space Ordinance for the Town of Willington". He stated he voted to move this to Town meeting because he agreed with the motion made by Selectwoman Boritz but now she wants to change the motion.

Selectwoman Boritz said when you replay the tape of this meeting, you will hear her say that she made an error. She talked to First Selectwoman Wiecenski and was given the only option available – to have the conversation with the Board about the error that was made. She said we can vote to retract it or we cannot - but she would like to hold the conversation with the Board. She asked Selectman Blessington if they could hold a conversation without insulting her intention of being here. She stated that she is being transparent. She added that one of the reasons she felt important to have the conversation was because at the previous meeting with the Assessor, the Selectmen were told that allowing the properties under the 5

acre threshold to have the designation opens the town up to legal liability. She added that she is not comfortable with reading an Ordinance into the minutes that opens the town up to legal liability – especially when she had never intended to do it. She does not want Willington to be the subject of lawsuits as other towns have been.

Selectman Blessington said he doesn't know what to say. We already passed it. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that we are already aware of the number of parcels that fall under the threshold that are receiving the designation. We are not aware of how many were turned down because they did not meet the requirements. She added that none of them should have been granted open space because it should have been approved at a town meeting and it never was. She believes it was never done in malice – not intentionally and over the period of multiple Assessors over time. The Assessor had asked us to create an ordinance that speaks to what the Planning and Zoning Commission weighed in on – parcels that exceed 5 acres become eligible. There was no recommendation by either the Assessor or PZC to leave the designation on those that do not qualify.

Selectman Blessington referenced the last meeting minutes where the Town of Bloomfield was mentioned. He stated the way he reads it is that Bloomfield did not adopt a policy. First Selectwoman Wiecenski told Selectman Blessington the way he would like to see the policy with the grandfather clause is not the version Selectwoman Boritz intended to adopt. Selectman Blessington said he understands that – at the last meeting he was happy because he thought she agreed with him. Selectwoman Boritz said she does see both sides of the argument; but it takes one person who was denied the designation to put up a fight. She added that it is concerning.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that it has also brought attention to the Assessor's office that it was never addressed before now. We now have an Assessor that has made us aware that we are not following State Statute- one that is very clear. She added with that, it is her thought that we need to adopt an Ordinance – what that Ordinance says is up to the Selectmen to put forward.

Carl Pearson of Fermier Road asked if the Assessor has compiled a list of the parcels that are not eligible and what the loss would be in revenue if they were grandfathered. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she had asked for a list of the properties that are currently receiving the open space designation. In the list was total by parcel but not a total. She clarified that each has their own individual assessment.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that the Assessor had mentioned that there may be other options for residents to look at for assessment options.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that there is no longer a motion on the floor for the PA 490 Open Space Ordinance.

Selectwoman Boritz moved to adopt the following PA490 Open Space Ordinance:

Be it ordained by voters of the Town of Willington at Town Meeting one resolved each parcel of record, as recorded in the assessment records, shall be treated as a separate parcel. No tacking or combination of separately assessed parcels shall be permitted to determine the eligibility of parcels for Open Space. Any residentially zoned parcel that exceeds 5 acres is eligible for treatment as Open Space for assessment purposes. No property for which the assessment is determined pursuant to the terms of Section 12-76 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as it may be amended from time to time, shall be eligible. The property owner must may application for Open Space assessment as provided in the Connecticut General Statute 12-107e, as it may be amended from time to time. Effective October 1, 2019.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.**

Selectman Blessington said sorry taxpayers, we almost gave you a break. Selectwoman Boritz added, for a select few who got it inappropriately.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski argued that everyone is getting it inappropriately. It has been brought to our attention that it was done incorrectly and we need to fix it. She said we should agree that we need an ordinance. Selectman Blessington said he did agree until the grandfather clause was taken away. He added if we pass this, it means that the value of the land is not going to go up, but they are going to pay more in taxes. This is what we are doing – finding a back door way to increase taxes. Selectwoman Boritz clarified that we had an imbalance before because only some people are getting it. Selectman Blessington suggested we go the other way and give it to everyone who has over 1.84 acres. It would be costly to the town but be even. First Selectwoman Wiecenski said that would be 100% not in keeping with the POCD. Selectman Blessington said which is to tax the hell out of people. First Selectwoman Wiecenski disagreed that the POCD is for that purpose. Selectman Blessington said we should just vote on this already.

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

#### B. Discussion – School Building Committee

First Selectwoman Wiecenski recapped at the last Selectmen's meeting, this Board voted to pass a School Building Committee for the purpose of building a new PreK-8 grade school. There are 3 items to potentially be on an upcoming Town Meeting. First Selectwoman Wiecenski and Superintendent Stevens drafted a charge for the committee and language has been taken in part from past school building committees here in Willington. She noted that the charge is something this board will vote on and present to the SBC.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that this board voted on what the SBC will look like. It was decided that the Superintendent will be Ex-officio but not a voting member. All other members will be eligible to vote. We had asked for the people to send in a letter of interest and qualifications that were due on Friday.

We received 19 submissions on Friday and Superintendent Stevens & First Selectwoman Wiecenski reviewed them. All of the submissions with the exception of one came via email. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that they came up with a list of what they believe to be highly qualified candidates. This Board will then appoint those people.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that there are only a handful of member at large seats on the committee (5) one school staff member, a BOF member who will be chosen by the BOF, one BOE member and one member who will have construction experience. – That is a new state requirement. She noted if the Selectmen would like to decide as a whole on who to appoint would have to be in a meeting. She told the Selectmen if they would like to offer another way to go about this, she is open to suggestions.

Once the Committee members have been appointed, First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she would like to share the bios of those who were appointed. She noted it is important for the public to see who has been chosen and why. We received a strong pool of candidates that represent various groups around town. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that once we figure out who will ultimately choose the candidates, this Board is who will appoint them. She then thanked all 19 candidates who submitted interest.

Selectman Blessington asked First Selectwoman Wiecenski if she will give the names of the people who were not chosen. First Selectwoman Wiecenski said we (she & Superintendent Stevens) haven't chosen anyone yet. They just went through the submissions so they could easily suggest the people who is appointed; unless there is another process by which he would like to look at them – or the three Selectmen can look at them and decide, we can do that. She added that one of the items on the call of the Town

Meeting is part of the process to move this forward. If we get to the point where we are applying for grants from the State would be that SBC must be approved by the legislative body. – it is a housekeeping item and would not be appropriate to appoint anyone until it has gone through the town meeting process.

For transparency, First Selectwoman Wiczenski said she and Superintendent Stevens know most of the people who applied. For that reason, she stated that she asked a staff member, who has no skin in the game and does not know many (if not any at all) of the submissions – to review them. The same candidates were chosen by the staff member; but First Selectwoman Wiczenski reiterated that no one has been chosen or appointed. – The Board of Selectmen will be appointing and they can do in whichever manner the Selectmen feel best.

Selectman Blessington asked First Selectwoman Wiczenski when would we plan on having the meetings and what the date of the Town Meeting would be if we call it? First Selectwoman Wiczenski said that she was thinking the Town Meeting would be held on November 13, 2019, due to the upcoming election. It makes sense to push it out a bit. Selectman Blessington noted the Board of Selectmen could be different at that time. First Selectwoman Wiczenski clarified that the Board of Selectmen would be the same on that date. Selectman Blessington then stated at that point they would only have 8 days left and we could have a new Board. First Selectwoman Wiczenski said whoever is sitting on this board whenever the decision is made will make the appointments. Selectman Blessington then asked why you wouldn't wait to make the decision until the new Board takes over. Selectwoman Boritz stated an amazing amount of politicking is going on right now. She said we have jobs of what we were elected to do until the point they are unelected any longer – and at that point if she is no longer on this board, that is the point she will drop her responsibilities. Until that point, she will work as hard as she can for the Town of Willington.

Selectwoman Boritz said that she would like to see the submissions of candidates.

#### Good & Welfare

First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that we still have 2 openings on the Capital Improvement Program Committee. If anyone is interested in serving on the Committee, please contact the Selectmen's office.

We received the monthly report from Connecticut State Police Troop C for the month of September:

6 Accidents	2 DUI's
14 Criminal investigations	148 Traffic Citations
0 Burglaries	2 Larcenies
35 Written Warnings	395 Non reportable matters

This Wednesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> from 5:30 – 7:30 is the PTA's annual Trunk or Treat at Center School. The PTA is still looking for trunks. There is no cost to host a trunk. Contact the Willington PTA if anyone is interested.

Troy reported that the radar signs are working out well. One has been placed in front of Hall School. One of the speeds recorded was up to 86 MPH. The data will be sent to Troop C

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
Robin Campbell  
Administrative Assistant