

# TOWN OF WILLINGTON

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Board of Selectmen  
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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes  
Lower Level Conference Room

January 22, 2019  
6:30 PM

*\*Minutes are not official until approved at the next regular meeting*

First Selectwoman Wiecenski called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM with the following in attendance: Selectmen Makuch & Blessington, and residents. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Approval of Minutes:

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to approve the minutes of the special budget meeting on January 7, 2019 as written.

Selectwoman Makuch seconded the motion.

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

Selectman Blessington moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 7, 2019 as written.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.

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

Selectwoman Makuch moved to approve the minutes of the special meeting on January 14, 2019 as written.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.

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

### Present to Speak

Kim Kowalyshyn of Lindsey Lane stated that she read the minutes of the last regular meeting from January 7<sup>th</sup> and found herself a little flabbergasted regarding the water situation. She said she had asked the Sanitarian what had happened and the Sanitarian stated that there were never any rejections on the residential property for the well permit; it just needed a special form filled out to proceed with the well. First Selectwoman Wiecenski agreed and said it was unclear where the resident thought the permit was rejected. Ms. Kowalyshyn then said that she was able to see the documentation that was sent between the resident, the well drilling company and the Sanitarian, and did not see any ruling of rejection anywhere. She then asked the Selectmen why they all voted in favor of it if there was so much controversy. She then asked the Selectmen the following questions:

Who is going to read the meter?

Who is going to set the rates and what is the water rate going to be?

What if the resident does not pay; or what if the home sells and the new owners do not pay? – how will it be collected if they are not paying?

Do we have an alternate source of water/back up plan if the water runs out or worse yet, if there is bacteria in the water?

Will the Town allow everyone else to hook up to the water? This person is allowed to hook up without a hardship – so that is setting precedence.

Ms. Kowalyshyn then stated that the town is not equipped for this and that money is going to come from our pockets eventually. She then stated Selectman Blessington was so hung up on it being a problem with the State that he was in favor of it. She added that the motion states that Mr. Makuch has agreed to pay for the hook up and any associated maintenance costs, however legally the residence is only responsible to pay from curb to house; and if he sells, the new owner might not want to take over that responsibility. Ms. Kowalyshyn asked if the Selectmen received a written opinion from the Town Attorney. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that nothing was in writing, it was all verbal.

In closing, Ms. Kowalyshyn asked Selectwoman Makuch if she is related to Mr. Makuch. Selectwoman Makuch stated that she believes we both know the answer to this; he is her ex-father-in-law. Ms. Kowalyshyn stated in her opinion, if it were her, she would have recused herself. Ms. Kowalyshyn said she is very disappointed and feels this is going to end up affecting us all – this person should never have been granted a hook up to the system; especially without even having a hardship. She then added that the town is not equipped to do so.

### Correspondence

A list of Correspondence was available for the Selectmen.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted an email that came in today at 4:02 pm regarding a house bill that was passed and signed regarding a loan program and municipal option to establish a program to defer the due date of specific property taxes owed by employees of the Federal Government. First Selectwoman Wiecenski warned that there is a process that must be followed and has had a lot of Tax Collectors in a frenzy. Because the House and the Senate passed HB 5765 today, it allows the municipalities Legislative Body (or if the legislative body is a town meeting, its board of selectmen) the option to vote to establish the program. She suggested that she feels the board is not ready to act on this and thus far, no one claiming to be a federal employee has reached out to us thus far. She then warned that the provision would only last as long as the shut down and added that it needs to be researched a little further before it could be considered for further discussion.

### First Selectman's Status Report

The front steps/ramp is now open. This has been a CIP project in the making for several years. We are hoping to have the temporary ramp on the side taken down this week. First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked everyone for their patience during the long construction process. This item will be removed from the list.

We received over 30 applications for the Public Works Director position. The interview panel will meet on Friday (will be warned as a meeting as the Selectmen will be included) to discuss the applicants. Interviews will be held in the next few weeks.

### Public Works

The Public Works crews have spent the last several days clearing snow and ice. First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked them for all they have done as this was not an easy storm.

### New Business

#### **A. Tax Refunds**

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$2,848.77 to Corelogic; Wagner on an overpayment. Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.**

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$722.16 to American Towers, LLC CT on a certificate of correction.

Selectwoman Makuch seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$47.99 to CCAP Auto Lease, LTD on a certificate of Correction.

Selectwoman Makuch seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$144.91 to CCACP Auto Lease, LTD on a certificate of Correction.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$481.74 to Nissan Infinity; LT on a certificate of Correction.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$187.97 to Honda Lease Trust on a certificate of Correction.

Selectwoman Makuch seconded the motion.

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

#### **B. Concrete Testing on Town Assets (Buildings, Bridges, etc.)**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that this was added to the agenda based on a letter received from the Board of Finance, with a recommendation to the Selectmen to make provisions to test the towns physical assets that were constructed since 1983 for the presence of the mineral pyrrhotite as soon as administratively possible.

This discussion came about because of a letter sent by Christina Mailhos and her concerns about testing the properties. It stemmed from the recent news of the town of Tolland testing Birch Grove School, which was found to have the mineral in the concrete foundation. First Selectwoman Wiecenski warned that a commercial building such as a school is very different than a residential home. The town of Tolland has begun planning for future scenarios in this situation.

A proposal was sent to CIP to put funding aside for testing of various building structures and bridges around town over a spread of the five year plan; asking for \$30,000 for the first year; which will allow 6 structures at \$5,000 each to be done. We are also working on a list of bridges as well. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that the letter from the BOF references Senior Housing; but argued that the town does not own the structures of the housing; we only own the Senior Center and lease the property to the housing. She then said that we could communicate to them that they should look into testing them; but argued that the cost should be covered by ASHOW (Access Senior Housing of Willington). Selectman Blessington argued that he doesn't think the town should get into a little contest of who should be paying for the testing. First Selectwoman stated that she doesn't want to get into an argument over it either, but clarified that the town didn't build the structures; we only lease the land so it might be an assumption that we own them; but we don't. She then stated that if either building (Willington Woods or Button Hill) are found to have issues, the cost should fall to the owner, not the town. She added that she doesn't think the town should pay for the testing on those buildings, but rather share the information to the owners, to encourage them to have it tested.

Selectman Blessington then suggested of we contract with an entity to do the testing, this is something that should be relayed to the owners of the senior housing buildings and inform them as it is something that needs to be done. First Selectwoman Wiecenski said that is possible; but then clarified that the town takes no responsibility of these buildings, therefore the cost should not be burdened to the town.

Randy Belair suggested that the visual test is much cheaper than the core test. Even if they have a visual done, it would at least give the residents living there some piece of mind.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated this is at us to determine how we want to proceed. The guidance is to test for the presence as soon as administratively possible, but warned all of this comes with a cost. She added that the visual testing is much less but maybe that will give us some information that we will need to move forward. It would be a good argument to bring to CIP.

Selectwoman Makuch stated that a visual test will rule things in versus out. Christina Mailhos noted that a visual test can also set a benchmark to see if there are any cracks, and if so, how much they grow as time progresses which could give a rate of how fast the mineral is reacting. She added that it is just a good data point to get.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated this is not something we can ignore and many people have been concerned about some of these buildings when the news about this first broke. At first we were told that it was only found in residential buildings, and no commercial buildings were affected; which First Selectwoman Wiecenski always found odd, because concrete is concrete. She added that we need to protect our assets and know what to expect. She then warned that the library is looking to expand by finishing a portion of the lower level (basement) and recommends that they do not proceed until a test has been done. Ms. Mailhos added that we definitely know where the concrete came from when the library was built.

The CIP request that was submitted covers a 5 year span; requesting \$30,000 in each of the first 2 years; then \$15,000 each of the following two years. She added that we did not plan for anything in this fiscal year, but perhaps we can get some visuals done as the cost is much lower.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski asked Christina Mailhos if any of the town structures have been tested or looked at. Christina Mailhos stated no, because we were told that there shouldn't be a problem and all of the other towns were also under the impression that they would be exempt.

Randy Belair suggested that First Selectwoman Wiecenski contact CRCOG to explain what we are doing and also see what other towns are doing and how they are planning. This would be a good argument to the state to receive help for the smaller municipalities. Christina Mailhos noted that the town of Coventry has had a bridge tested that had failed last year. They are still waiting for the tests to come back. Selectwoman Makuch asked if we have an idea of the number of bridges. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that the Town Engineer is preparing a list of bridges for us and she is also looking at a list that we have here. She added that we should also look at the culverts; although most of those are prefab material.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that it is our responsibility to look at this and have a plan for it. We will start working on a plan going forward. She then referenced that the Board of Finance asked to have this done as soon as administratively possible; but they hold the purse strings. She added that we can say we will have all of the structures tested right now, but is trying to take the responsible path by putting into the CIP. We used the number of \$5,000 per structure; and noted that there was a short time frame between getting the letter and the deadline for the CIP submissions; so we did not have enough time to research and thoroughly plan it out.

\*a copy of the letters sent by BOF and Ms. Mailhos are attached to the minutes for reference.

## Old Business

### A. Update – Addendum for Cadlerock Brownfields Project with Town of Ashford

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that the Board of Selectmen had voted at the last meeting, to accept the addendum for the Cadlerock brownfields assessment by BL Companies. We found out later that the Ashford Board of Selectmen voted against it. (Noting that the Ashford Board of Selectmen held their meeting on the same date as the Willington Board of Selectmen); not knowing how Ashford was going to vote.

The town of Ashford is meeting tonight and holding discussions with BL Companies to get further information. First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that we are in this together, but the grant is in Ashford's name. The reason Ashford voted against it is because the First Selectman was concerned at first that the consultant came in with a low bid but would end up coming back asking for more money as things progressed; which seems to be the case. The consultant knew the scope of work going in and also knew the amount of documentation involved; which is what this addendum was for. When First Selectman Zambo had voted to go with BL Companies he voted with hesitation, hoping that BL would not come back asking for more money; in which they did. Even though there is still money left in the grant, it can be used for further steps instead of additional documentation.

Selectwoman Makuch stated that it is difficult for us to make decisions and vote when we are not in the loop. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that there is nothing for us to do at this point until we hear back from Ashford.

## Good & Welfare

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that we received a letter of resignation from Eileen Smith today. Ms. Smith is the Public Works' Administrative Assistant. Ms. Smith stated that she is looking to be fully retired. She was ready to submit her notice over the summer, but stayed on to help out. Sadly, First Selectman Wiecenski accepted the resignation. Her last day will be February 6<sup>th</sup>. The job will be posted shortly.

Selectman Blessington stated that he is happy to see that Dollar General has finally admitted to be putting a store in the old Phelps Garage site. First Selectwoman Wiecenski added that it will be nice to see a space being revitalized, although there seems to be a lot of feedback. She knows people will support it once it is established.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 P.M.**

**Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.**

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Robin Campbell  
Administrative Assistant

TOWN OF WILLINGTON, CT

Received for record January 25, 2019

At 10:35am Maire Waganick