

# TOWN OF WILLINGTON

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Board of Selectmen  
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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Special Meeting Minutes  
Via web interaction (via Zoom platform)

February 1, 2021  
5:30 PM

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

First Selectwoman Wiczenski called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM with the following in attendance;  
Selectwoman Boritz, Selectman Blessington and residents

### A. Present to Speak

### B. Budget Workshop

First Selectwoman Wiczenski started the discussion with reviewing remaining budget departments. The discussion was prefaced stating that the current budget information presented is incomplete. The Business Manager Ms. Latincsics is still tabulating data, the first run of the budget will be ready for February 8, 2021. We will be discussing some line items reflected in the budget however some lines are subject to change with updates still being quantified.

A discussion was held on the Town Counsel, the line item will remain flat. The previous fiscal year we appeared as though we were going to over the budgeted line item. A transfer of funds was facilitated however in the end we didn't need to utilize all of the extra funds. Most of the additional were COVID related as it was not previously planned for. As everyone is well aware COVID forced us to be flexible in unforeseen events and expenses. As of late we have been consulting less with our attorneys as we have all found our footing in this changing environment. Legal expenses are usually unforeseen we don't want to cut this line item in our operating budget to account for any unforeseen events and or legal situation that may arise at any point in time. The discussion continued on as this is a union contract negotiation year, will the Town counsel budget be enough to cover that negotiation. It was understood that the budgeted amounts will be enough to cover as we can move funds around with Town Counsel line items as the negotiation is in the current budget.

A discussion was held on the Town Office Operations. It was noted that there are blank entries, as indicated above the full budget is still being crafted. Maintenance & Miscellaneous will remain flat, Computer expenses is incomplete, and the \$111,748.00 reflected does not include some additional IT services and necessary software upgrades. The \$111,748.00 only represents the TOB portion of the NOVUS IT service. Under our contract NOVUS is a shared service, the TOB pays 53% and the BOE pays 47%, the \$111,748.00 reflects the 53% the TOB is responsible for. The additional services that will be included in the Town Office operations under computer expenses will be a required system upgrade to Microsoft365. Currently we have some licensing issues and this project will be larger than anticipated. The licensing is currently under the BOE which is problematic, the TOB will require separate licensing to be compliant. It was advised that our IT will have to rebuild existing hardware, clean up our domain which includes the TOB will have to move to [Willingtonct.gov](http://Willingtonct.gov) whereas the BOE will remain with [Willingtonct.org](http://Willingtonct.org). The separation is required for compliance. The project will cost \$37,000.00 for year 1 which includes a separate licensing fee that we had not had to pay up to this point. The fee includes IT

service time to transition, the infrastructure and cloud hosting which holds less risk. With the cloud service there are annual subscription fees and annual fees for the Cloud option. Year 2 the cost would be \$14,000 annually. TOB Telephones will remain flat. Postage has increased to .51 effective 1-25-21, the increased budgeted line reflects the postage increase and additionally legislature absentee voting requirements. Fire Alarm monitoring line item has increased due to TN no longer monitoring our Fire Alarm monitoring as of June 30, 2021. We have to find a new vendor for this service. We received a quote from a State approved vendor which will include 1 panel vs. two separate panels, \$720.00 will be the total cost. Currently we pay \$500.00 between fire and security. The new Vendor will be one bill for both services to one vendor. The remaining lines items will remain flat.

A discussion was held on the Old Town Hall Operations, Maintenance will remain at \$2,000 however electric and oil heat have not been updated. As indicated previously we should have that updated information on Monday February 8, 2021 when Ms. Latincsics provides the BOS with the first run of the budget.

A discussion was held on the Consulting Engineers budget. This budget directly correlates with Land Use and Public Works. Currently in our operating budget the BOF cut the budgeted line item to \$7,500., we are asking for \$10,000.00 currently we have a STEAP project that will require Engineer services and Land Use has some projects in the works requiring these consulting services. During CIP some items were cut with the hope that they would be included in our operating budget. The Liska Rd. project has an engineering fee of \$4,500.00 because of that coming right off the top on 7-1-21 the recommendation is to increase to \$10,000.00 which was initially requested and cut BOF. Another project in the works with Public Works is our bridge project that requires engineering services. There are always unexpected projects that are not foreseen and or planned for having the resources is integral to our operations.

Cemetery will remain flat at \$2,000.00

Insurance we expect no more than an 8.2% increase. Past practice has been that the insurance expense is not often received before the budgets are finalized.

Some items that will be included on the first run of the budget that Ms. Latincsics is currently working on is fire main, compensated absences, employee insurance, pensions. We will leave unemployment at \$1,000. We know of no specific claims however with that said it is possible due to COVID that we may have some claims. We did have one claim due to COVID this current fiscal year.

### General Discussion

First Selectwoman Wiczenski started the discussion stating that without the first run of the budget we do not have a big picture view of the budget, there will be a lot of changes as we discussed. The biggest increase will be with the Town Office Building with the computer expenses. The other area where there will be an increase presented is with Public Works. The charge with budgets is to give department heads their forecasts of what they need to efficiently run their department. It is the Towns' responsibility to get work done and to get that work done correctly, unfortunately that comes with a cost. Because we are meeting during a snow storm, The Public Works Director cannot be here to answer questions. As indicated in previous meetings if any of the Selectmen have specific questions for any of the department heads to reach out to Heather Sharpley. She will coordinate getting answers to your specific questions and provide them if possible at the next scheduled meeting.

The discussion continued that it is difficult to make decisions and or have questions without having a full picture. As discussed we are hopeful that Ms. Latincsics will have at least the first run of the budget ready for February 8<sup>th</sup> 2021. The discussion was brought back to the consulting engineer line items.

Selectmen Blessington was concerned that based on currently what was spent in the current operating budget doesn't justify the increase to 10,000.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski responded by saying that Land Use currently has several invoices that have not been paid which will increase that expenditure. We have a project under way for LOTCIP design that will be spoken about at the Regular BOS meeting. Additionally we need to a lot for unexpected costs. LOVES is still an ongoing project, it is likely they will be ready to submit their permits before June which may require engineering. Reviews and sight plan reviews for wetlands and PZC are done on an as needed basis. There is potential that the remaining budget will be absorbed through planned projects before the end of the fiscal year. Currently the \$437 does not reflect invoices that have not been finalized. The BOF made the decision in FY 19/20 to cut this line item and I am recommending that we request the \$10,000 as originally requested to accommodate for all of the projects we are in the midst of currently. With that said we already know we need to facilitate the Liska Rd. project out of our operating budget and not at CIP. The budget increase is necessary as the Liska Rd. project is \$4,500.00 and will already be encumbered on July 1 2021.

Selectwoman Boritz inquired about anticipated funds such from the grand list. Additionally she recalls in past years that BOF gave money back to operating budgets due to overages or rainy day fund etc.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski responded to say she does not have that final report available to reference at this moment. She recalls from the auditor's report that the Town is required to save in a rainy day reserve fund that is set at a threshold amount of 12% of our operating budget. If we exceed what the 12% threshold amount is there is some flexibility to transfer some of those funds back into the operating budget. It is possible that the BOF could use some of those funds to balance the budget. CIP also incurs a line item in the Selectmen's budget however CIP is not complete. It will be recommended next year to have CIP complete their work prior to budgets so the two very labor intensive projects are not run simultaneously. With that said as it stands currently we will not have a full budget picture until CIP has completed their work. The Governor's Budget is supposed to come out in February, once that is presented we will have a clearer picture of what State funding will be available. It was noted the COVID funds took a lot of time to facilitate with our finance department between the school and the Town. Our Finance Department is working diligently to complete all the required tasks with additional stumbling blocks that have not been experienced in previous years. Again, if any of the Selectmen have questions for a specific department it was encouraged to get in contact with Heather and she will facilitate sharing your questions with the department heads.

**First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:02 PM**

**Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.**

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather Sharpley  
Administrative Assistant  
Town of Willington