

# TOWN OF WILLINGTON

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Board of Selectmen  
40 Old Farms Road  
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## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes  
Lower Level Conference Room

September 16, 2019  
6:30 PM

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

First Selectwoman Wiczenski called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM with the following in attendance:  
Selectmen Boritz & Blessington and residents. First Selectwoman Wiczenski then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Approval of Minutes:

Selectman Blessington moved to approve the minutes of September 3, 2019 with the following correction: Page 4 – last paragraph regarding the Historical Society is a 501c3 has been paying \$15,000 - \$18,000 in taxes add: over the course of several years.

Also Page 5 under Tax Refunds – correct spelling of Joseph Csiki

First Selectwoman Wiczenski seconded the motion.

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

### Present to Speak

James Makuch of 34 Old Farms Road was present. He stated that he is just here to drop off some documents. The documents are a compilation of the redacted information from the Town Attorney. He added that the minutes from the last meeting reflect two things that Selectwoman Boritz stated that he believes to be incorrect. First; she said that there was a misunderstanding because he is allowed to drill a well. Mr. Makuch stated that he believes that to be incorrect. He handed out a rejection from the Health Department and a letter from his attorney. Second; he said Selectwoman Boritz stated that the proposed agreement is comparable with Tolland and he noted that it incorrect. Mr. Makuch met with the administrator for the Tolland Water Commission and asked her to review the hold harmless agreement and he was told that Tolland does not require a licensed engineer to design the installation; they do not make annual inspections on user's homes and would never inspect any areas where water connections were not present. Also, since water usage is metered, they would not worry about users exceeding the norms since the meters give a use data and users are billed for additional use. If Tolland feels the need for inspections, they would not charge the homeowner. They do not consider the line hooking up the service to a home an extension of the system and do not limit the rights of users to seek legal remedies if they have a dispute with the water commission. Tolland does require general liability insurance as specified in the Willington Agreement, nor do they require any other insurance. Tolland would not ever expect potential users to sign an agreement where two of the provisions are blank to be filled in later by the Town as in the Willington Agreement. Lastly, Mr. Makuch stated that the Tolland Water Administrator made it clear that she does not want to get involved in a controversy in Willington but his basic question about the similarity of the agreements; she told him "they have nothing like this"

Mr. Makuch stated that was all he wanted to say.

### Correspondence

A list of Correspondence was available for the Selectmen.

## First Selectman's Status Report

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that we are still waiting on a quote to do a visual and or core testing on the Library and the Senior Center. Troy has reached out to a CRCOG approved vendor to get moving on this. First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she was hopeful that he would have heard from the engineer already, but suspects that they are very busy and possibly booked out several weeks to perhaps months.

The General Government returned approximately \$184,000 back to the General Fund from last year's budget.

## Public Works

Public Works' Director Troy Sposato sent in a report of things the crew has done over the past 2 weeks:

- Road side mowing around town
- Sweeping of chip seal
- Trash at River Rd
- Installed rubber flaps at the dog pound for the dog doors
- Fixed washout at the Town Green
- Picked up couch and trash on Kucko Rd
- Cleaned Public works garage
- Dug out water ways
- Patch holes around town
- Graded Turnpike Ext
- Cleaned up Tree/ brush from storm

## New Business

### A. Present Government Finance Officers Association Award to Finance Department

First Selectwoman Wiecenski presented our Business Manager, Donna Latincsics and Tish Ignatowicz, former Treasurer; who were in attendance with the Award. Donna and Tish were responsible for the duties leading up to receiving the award for the 17-18 fiscal years. Tish has moved to another position within the Finance Department. The Willington Finance Department has received this award for 18 years.

The award reads: *Government Finance officers Association; Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Presented to the Town of Willington, Connecticut For it's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2018.*

First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked both Ms. Latincsics and Ignatowicz for their work to earn the award.

### B. Tax refunds

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$582.84 to CCAP Auto Lease on a Certificate of Correction

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$302.85 to Toyota Lease Trust on a Certificate of Correction

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$471.21 to Toyota Lease Trust on a Certificate of Correction.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$259.97 to Vault Trust on a certificate of Correction

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$401.28 to Vault Trust on a certificate of Correction

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$17.75 to Eleftherias Moustakakis on a certificate of Correction

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$145.00 to Enterprise Fleet Management Trust on a certificate of Correction

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

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

#### Old Business

##### A. Memorandum of Understanding between the Town & Library Board of Trustees for Accounting Services

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that the Library Board of Directors met last Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup> and unanimously voted to approve the MOU. The agreement would begin on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Town and Library Board for accounting services.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

Selectman Blessington stated that he understands we have a new Library Director – are we going to allow him to have any input about this? First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that his first day was today and she is sure that the Library Board has made mention of this to him. She clarified that the decision is of the Library Board and most of the work that was done was by the members on the board and the treasurer at the time had a significant skill set. She added that it is not a requirement to have to be a member of the board and since that person left has become more difficult over time which has exacerbated in the absence of a director at the Library.

Selectman Blessington said he is rather upset that the outgoing board appointed a new director, but they did and he may not like the agreement; but will have to live with it. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that it is better to start it at the beginning of the month rather than putting it off. This is a decision of the Library Board of Directors; who voted unanimously. They worked closely with our finance department to make sure things go

more consistently and accurately. She added that the Agreement has language that speaks to a specific timeframe and if either party wants to separate if it is not working, they can at any time via the procedure written in there.

Selectman Blessington stated on those grounds, he will vote to approve it.

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

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski noted that she had spoken with the Town Attorney, who has added language into the proposed ordinance referencing that it would be only moving forward as of October 1, 2019 and not affecting those parcels that have been designated already.

Walter Topliff, Willington Assessor was present. He stated that he sees ambiguity in the application of the ordinance the way it is written. He is looking for a more strict procedure so it can be applied among all taxpayers across the board. Right now it is not being applied equally. There are certain parcels that have been erroneously given the designation. If they are allowed to be grandfathered, it is not just keeping inequity among the town; but the law allows people to transfer the property among family and it could stay that way for 100 years. The other issue is that we need to consider the intent of the open space purpose in town? He believes the intent was for larger tracts around town to keep the rural nature. By allowing smaller parcels to be designated, you are harming the goal of the intent.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated in the past, the assumption to some was that they would have to have over 5 acres (which is in line with the POCD) to have open space; but if it was granted to someone with less (for example, 3 acres); it was simply at the whim of the Assessor at the time. Mr. Topliff said yes, and believes it was done erroneously. He added by allowing the grandfathering would be asking the Assessor's office to carry it forward into the future. We have an opportunity to correct it with the October 1<sup>st</sup> Grand list.

Selectman Blessington said he is not sure what harm this would do to the town by changing this? If someone has been paying a lower tax rate on 3 acres for a number of years, now they have to pay more, what good is that? Mr. Topliff clarified it would be roughly \$30 per acre – there are also others who have applied for it and been denied. Now we have a have and have-not situation around town.

Selectman Blessington then stated that there are some who have 1.38 acres that are designated in Open Space; but now will be coming out therefore leaving them to pay more in taxes. (Mr. Topliff clarified that it would be approximately \$30 per acre). Selectman Blessington asked what that person would gain by having to pay that extra money? He said he is glad we are trying to be fair – but he sees every time we try to be fair, it always ends up affecting the taxpayer.

Mr. Topliff clarified that he has no skin in the game in this. He just wants a set of rules to apply to assessments. First Selectwoman Wiecenski added that the reason Walter came to us in the first place is because the 5 acres is what is written in the POCD. The Planning & Zoning Commission was also involved and was in agreement. First Selectwoman Wiecenski added that there are pros and cons to not grandfathering the parcels going forward and she has mixed feelings on this as well.

Mr. Topliff stated that in Somers they had a restructure of how their open space was designated; where some people were getting the designation after 1.84 acres and others were getting it over 1 acre. A notice was sent out to all of the affected residences in 2016 that anything over the .84 acres would be put back into open space. It ended up costing some of the taxpayers about \$40, but more importantly, we now have an open playing field and the rules are applied equally.

Selectman Blessington stated that he is willing to go along with this to create an equal playing field for future purposes; but for those who were deemed “lucky enough” to get this in the past, would be unfair to take it away from them. He will not go along with this without the Grandfathering clause.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski added that she does not think that the last part that was recently added (in italics) is clear.

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 make 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, *and applicable to any and all new applications made from that date forward. This ordinance shall not apply to any parcels of record recorded prior to the effective date noted above.*

Robert Jellen asked if it would be possible to wait for the entire Board to review to make a decision on this? He then asked how many Willington residents would be affected. Mr. Topliff stated around 20. First Selectwoman Wiczenski said that this is the first time we are seeing this with the new language.

**First Selectwoman Wiczenski moved to table this item until October 7, 2019.**

**Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.**

First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that she is hesitant to table this because it would be effective as of October 1<sup>st</sup>, and once it is reviewed, it would still need to go to Town Meeting. Mr. Topliff stated that the applications are due by October 1<sup>st</sup>, but the Grand List is signed off on January 31<sup>st</sup>. there is a period of time where the decision can be made and carry out the determination.

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

#### Good & Welfare

First Selectwoman Wiczenski gave an update from the Flag Committee as submitted by Phil Monty, Chairman:

#### **Committee Report – September 1, 2019**

The Flag Display committee has met four times and was able to make contact with all the homeowners on the route from Senior Way to the Town Library / Rt. 320. A total of 36 flags were put up for Memorial Day and left up until after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

As of Monday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 32 flags have been ‘purchased’ by towns people or organizations. Four flags were purchased and displayed last year. In order for all poles along the route to have flags a total of 34 flags are needed. Contact was made with BJs in Manchester and they sponsored a flag and 24 additional flags were purchased @\$754.41. Later 6 more flags were purchased.

The committee assembled and put up the flags up on Saturday May 18<sup>th</sup>. A total of 31 flags were put up at that time with additional ones going up later. If additional funds are obtained then additional flags will be purchased and displayed.

A number of very positive comments were received while the flags were displayed. If additional funds are secured beyond what is need for the 34 poles consideration will be given to putting flags up from the library to the cemetery next year. A total of 16 more flags would be needed.

While flags were displayed a number were damaged – wind or vehicles going to close. Four flags were repaired and rehung and one flag was lost. We will 'raise' the flags up for the 10 foot height to 12 feet. Two of the flags on the town green were also damaged. One was able to be repaired and one was replaced with one of the newer flags. It would be best/easier if all the flags are the same. The ones on the town green and two on Senior Way have plastic based and those will deteriorate over time.

Respectfully Submitted – Phil Monty – Flag Display Chair; Joe Rondeau, Joe Csiki – Committee members

First Selectwoman Wiczenski noted that the flags will be put up before Veteran's Day for a few weeks. She thanked the gentlemen who serve on this committee

Our Animal Control Officer Tina Binheimer sent in correspondence reporting that Matthew Eastman of Boy Scout Troop 15 in Tolland, completed his project on August 11, 2019, to earn his Eagle Scout. Part of his project was to make and erect a sign for Willington Animal Control. Matt also did some landscaping in the area where he erected the sign. As part of the project, Matt had to attend meetings with Willington Board of Selectmen as well as work with the Willington Zoning Office in order to build the sign to town specs. I would like to thank Matt for his dedication to helping others as well as everyone who assisted him with his project. We wish him luck on all of his future endeavors.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski thanked Mr. Eastman and his fellow Scouts for their work on the sign and also congratulated him on his Eagle Scout.

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

12 Accidents	4 DUP's
17 Criminal investigations	175 Traffic Citations
2 Burglaries	2 Larcenies
66 Written Warnings	552 Non reportable matters

Robert Wiczenski asked how much money the Town receives from the State from infractions. First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that she received information from the Treasurer that we received \$13,130 last year in "fine revenue".

Mr. Wiczenski then asked the status of the "Welcome to Willington" signs and revenue that was received? First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated she would look into it.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski noted that Connecticut Water is looking for someone to serve on their Water System Advisory Committee. Willington had a representative from the Conservation Commission on that committee; but are now in need of filling this position. If anyone is interested, please contact the Selectmen's office.

Lastly, we are still in need of a CIP Recording Secretary. CIP meetings will begin in December. Please contact the Selectmen's office if anyone is interested.

**The Meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
Robin Campbell  
Administrative Assistant

TOWN OF WILLINGTON, CT

Received for record Sept 17, 2019  
At 1:40pm Mamun Naganter