

# Town of Willington

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## BOARD OF FINANCE

**Budget Meeting Minutes**  
**Virtual Meeting via ZOOM**

**March 3, 2022**  
**7:00 PM**

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

Members Present (a quorum of 4 members is required to conduct business):

Mike Makuch – Chairman  
Geoff Prusak – Vice Chairman  
Peter Tanaka– Secretary  
Christina Mailhos – *Joined the meeting at 8:30pm.*  
Joseph Sherrell  
Stephanie Summers  
Lisa Woolf – Alternate  
Jim Gilligan – Alternate

Members Absent:  
None.

Also Present:  
First Selectwoman Erika Wiecewski  
Business Manager Donna Latinsics  
Department of Public Works Director Troy Sposato  
Human Services Director Jennie Arpin  
Revenue Collector Janice Clauson  
Town Clerk Robin Campbell  
Willington Fire Department #1 Chief Alexander Moore  
Members of the Public

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Makuch called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

### **SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

**S. Summers moved to seat Elisabeth Woolf in place of Christina Mailhos.**

**J. Sherrell seconded the motion.**

**5 Yes (M. Makuch, G. Prusak, J. Sherrell, S. Summers, P. Tanaka), 0 No. Motion carried.**

### **PRESENT TO SPEAK**

None.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

1) Previously tabled budget presentations  
Board of Finance & Board of Finance Contingency budgets will be addressed later.

## 2) ARPA Process Update

Chairman Makuch read an update from C. Mailhos: The last ARPA meeting was held on Monday, February 28th. A detailed letter from the Town Attorney will be furnished to the ARPA Commission and Board of Finance in regard to the wording of appropriation motions. The ARPA funding submission form was finalized and is being distributed to Department Heads and Budget Writers. A process for evaluating funding requests is being formed. The CIP Committee made a request to the ARPA Commission to fund five projects. If approved, these projects would not need to be funded by other means. These projects should be heard at the next meeting on March 7th and no formal action would happen until the next ARPA meeting on March 21st. There was only one request that was heard at the February 28th meeting and could be acted upon at the next meeting; it is a request for a second ambulance for Willington Fire Department #1 and the request is for \$100,000.00. Information will be sent out via a public notice so that residents and taxpayers are aware of what is being discussed and decided upon and to also apply for project funding if they represent a qualified entity. All of the funding request submissions can be viewed by anyone at any time and will include updates as they move along the funding review process.

Discussion followed on the pending information that is coming from the town attorney in regards to the ARPA Commission and the motions for funding appropriations, as well as the ARPA Commission review process for all projects that are submitted and discussed. S. Summers suggested the Board of Finance submit a guidance document to the ARPA Commission on funding projects that

**S. Summers made a motion that the Board of Finance recommend respectfully to the ARPA Commission that it first, decline to approve any projects or purchases that carry future ongoing costs on payroll, operating or capital budgets, and second, that it not approve requests until the legal issues for allocating funds are addressed by the town attorney and can be looked at or reviewed by the Board of Finance (not voted on, but reviewed), and three that it consider approving funds for qualifying CIP projects in order to free up capital money for other pressing needs.**

**S. Summers seconded the motion.**

**6 Yes (M. Makuch, G. Prusak, J. Sherrell, S. Summers, P. Tanaka, L. Woolf), 0 No. Motion carried.**

## NEW BUSINESS

### *1) Budget presentations:*

#### **a) Board of Selectmen**

First Selectwoman Wicewski presented the Selectmen's budget for the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year. The first budget the BOF received from the Selectmen's office was approved by the Board of Selectmen at the last BOS regular meeting (\$4,066,632.00); the second budget that was received now includes the current budget with the updated fuel pricing (\$4,078,735.00). The difference in the two budgets is an increase of \$375,259.00. Late last Thursday, the town was able to lock in fuel costs for the next fiscal year. The only changes that were made were related to fuel (diesel fuel or heating oil). It was originally assumed fuel would be \$2.50/gallon this year but the town locked in at \$2.94/gallon for heating oil and \$2.97/gallon for diesel fuel.

The union contract is still pending ratification. The salary amounts are placeholders that include a potential increase in the current fiscal year as well as next year. This increase presented is for two years, not just one. Some of the salaries that are included in the budget include steps in the union staff pay, additional hours for some positions, and salaries that are corrected to reflect the current staff in that position. There is one placeholder for insurance that is included in the insurance line item. The Worker's Compensation was capped at 3%, the health insurance premiums for medical will not be increased this year due to a collaboration, and dental and life insurance is assumed at 5% increase. IT Services are shared with the Schools and that increase was 3% this year. In the Selectmen's Office, the assistant is proposed to move from 30 hours a week, part time, to 35 hours a week, full time, and 40 hours per week for 5 weeks during budget season. There is also a \$3,500.00 increase for the CIP/SBC recording secretary line item. There is an increase in the advertising line



item, as all legal notices are required to be posted in newspapers. In Accounting Services, there is a significant increase, but the main driver is the addition of the Assistant Business Manager position which began in November. There is also an increase in the operational programs (software, etc). In the Assessor department, there is a significant increase as there is a proposal to share an Assessor with the Town of Bolton for a full time position. This position would work 2.5 days in Willington and 2.5 days in Bolton. This department is responsible for assessing all of the taxes in town and the need for an assessor is vital. In the Revenue Collector's Office, there is an increase in salary that would bring the position in line with like towns, as well as an increase in operational products and supplies. There is not an increase in town counsel/legal fees. In the Town Clerk department, there is an increase to bring the salaries to reflect the current staff. With the TOB Maintenance budget, there is an increase in the IT support services, as well as an increase in the postage line item and the maintenance category (vault AC unit replacement). Some of the fuel increases are reflected in this budget under heating oil. The only increase in the OTH budget is for heating costs. There is no increase in the engineering/consulting line item for this year. In the Senior Center budget, the increases include the heating fuel and then maintenance (line striping and resurfacing of their parking area). In the Health District budget, there is a decrease due to the decline in population. There is no change in the fire main and hydrant budget. In the Building Official budget, there is an increase due to the software and a 3% increase in the building official contracted services. In the Public Works Department, there is one personnel adjustment; a laborer has been moved to a driver position. There is an increase in the road maintenance budget and vehicle maintenance (cost of materials, parts, and supplies), an increase for tree removal, an increase in the diesel fuel utilized, and an increase in the snow budget with the cost of salt rising. The chip seal program budget has been renamed to road maintenance and there are slight increases with chip seal and asphalt products, etc. There is no increase in the cemetery budget. The Transfer Station budget includes an increase due to the bulky waste and trash removal services. There is an increase in social security, but no increase in unemployment. There is a slight increase in the Miscellaneous budget due to staff recognition that should be occurring. There is a slight decrease in debt services; this includes the bond on the library lease/principal, the animal control vehicle, SBCA packs for the Fire Department. The departments that receive transfers are in the next portion of the budget. There is an increase of \$254,000.00 for Capital Reserve (CIP presentation). There is no increase in the Housing Authority budget. The Animal Control and Human Services budget were previously in the budget sessions. Human Services is an increase due to the phase-in of the assistant position in this department. This would be funded between ARPA and town funding, if approved. The total increase in the Selectmen's budget is \$375,259.00.

Discussion was held on the presented increased salary amount for the Assessor and the Revenue Collector positions. The Assessor position would be shared with the Town of Bolton and this line item includes half of the salary and half of the insurance benefits. Discussion was also held on the Public Works budget and the move of the laborer to the driver position, and the cost of maintenance and supplies and the salt budget. Discussion was also held on the position of the treasurer, the town clerk's office, and the tree budget in DPW. First Selectwoman Wiczenski explained the phase-in of the Assistant in the Human Services Department and the share of the salary with ARPA.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski began to share and explain the Capital Improvement Plan on behalf of CIP Chairman C. Mailhos. CIP Chairman C. Mailhos then joined the meeting and continued to explain the plan. The Year 1 plan includes investing into the Capital Reserve, paying on the bond for the Library, paying already arranged lease payments (for the animal control pickup truck, various public works trucks/equipment and fire department equipment), and then purchasing a replacement dump truck and a new excavator for DPW, pavement management software for the conditions of the roads, adding funding for various road replacement/drainage projects, an automatic generator for the DPW garage, radios for the fire departments, new SCBA air packs for Willington Hill, funding for engineering and driveway apron repair for Willington #1, possible lease payment for a new ambulance, Center Elementary School & Hall Memorial School sidewalk repair/replacement and a HMS band room air conditioning project, funding for a consultant for the school building committee, funding for the assessor revaluation, River Road workout pavilion and lights

around the walking track at River Road. There are many major school projects that need to occur at both schools, but at this time these projects are on hold due to the school building project. If the school building project does not move forward (whether it be a renovation project or a new build), there are many maintenance items that will need to be funded in the future years.

*2) Revenue*

Business Manager Latincsics discussed the projected revenue for 2022/2023 for the town. This revenue includes property taxes, interest and lien fees, intergovernmental funding, licenses, fees, and permits, investment income, and other revenues.

*3) Auditor's contract*

Discussion was held on the auditor's contract as it will expire on June 30th, 2021. Business Manager Latincsics asked the Board if they would be agreeable to extend the contract with Mahoney Sabol for additional years.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

All correspondence has been forwarded.

**PRESENT TO SPEAK**

First Selectwoman Wiecenski shared that the current tax collection rate is 99.62% for the year, which is well over the budgeted amount.

**GOOD & WELFARE**


First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that at the next Board of Selectmen meeting, the Board will be discussing the town building mask mandate.

**P. Tanaka made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:58pm.**

**S. Summers seconded the motion.**

**All in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Kelsey Allard  
Interim Recording Secretary

RECEIVED  
WILLINGTON, CT.  
2022 JUL 12 P 3:30  
  
TOWN CLERK