

TOWN OF WILLINGTON

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BOARD OF FINANCE

Regular Meeting
Hybrid — In Person and Online

June 15, 2023
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):

Stephanie Summers Chair	Geoffrey Prusak Vice Chairman	Christina Mailhos	Joseph Sherrell	Peter Tanaka Secretary	James Marshall	Jim Gilligan (ALT)	Elisabeth Woolf (ALT)
In Person	In person	In person	Via Zoom	In person	In person	Via Zoom	Absent

Also Present:

Alex Moore, Willington Fire Dept. No. 1, Chief – In person
James Knight, Willington Hill Fire Dept., President – In person
Donna Latincsics, Business Manager – In person
Erika Wiecenski, First Seletwoman – In person
Members of the Public

Chair Stephanie Summers called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Chairman Summers asked Vice President Geoff Prusak to Chair the meeting as she has laryngitis tonight.

SEATING OF ALTERNATES:

None needed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Peter Tanaka moved to approve the minutes from March 23, 2023, as written.

Seconded by Christina Mailhos.

Motion passed 6-0.

Peter Tanaka moved to approve the minutes from April 4, 2023, as written.

Seconded by Christina Mailhos.

Motion passed 6-0.

Minutes from the May 18, 2023 meeting.

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Jim Marshall had two comments on these minutes the first being under New Business Item 1 there is a note that Christina Mailhos clarified that there is a separate \$1 million from the \$1 million set aside for school projects, Jim thinks that the clarification was that was a separate \$1 million from the \$460,000 from CIP and Christina agreed to that point. Jim then made a correction to allow for clarity on updates for Old Business Item 2B, School Building Committee where a question from Peter Tanaka related to the SBC. Jim stated that the minutes read that the SBC is an advisory board to the BOE formed by the BOS. Jim said that the minutes should read that the SBC is a separate entity that collaborates with the BOE but is appointed by the BOS. Peter stated that is what he thought all along. Peter stated for clarification he didn't question the status of the funds, he didn't think that the BOF had the power to claw those funds back, that they had to be returned but they couldn't be forced back. Chairman Summers would like both Jim and Peter to send her what wording is needed for a correction. Peter stated that he questioned whether the BOF could recall the funds, or they had to be sent back. Chairman Summers suggested amending the minutes to read questioning the mechanism of returning the funds allotted to the SBC instead of questioning the status of the funds allotted to the SBC.

Peter Tanaka moved to approve the minutes from May 18, 2023 as amended.

Seconded by Christina Mailhos.

Motion passed 6-0

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

Nick Tella, 49 Mirtl Road, stated that he was stealing an idea from someone else who talked about the Hall's Pond pass being about \$65, and that person mentioned looking into ARPA money to offset the cost of the pass to some of the residents. Tella stated that he didn't know if that was something the BOF could entertain as far as sending some money over to help out the townspeople instead of giving bonuses to elected officials.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Chairman Summers mentioned for the record that the BOF's Recording Secretary, Samantha Sperry, has resigned effective July 1, 2023, so the BOF is indeed looking for a replacement for that job. It involves operating Zoom and capturing the minutes, there is a certain skill set to it to get the minutes accurately and fully. Chairman Summers stated that Samantha served them well and showed curiosity about the budget process as they have been going through it since Sperry started. Chairman Summers valued that about Samantha and said she was very easy to work with. Chairman Summers stated that there isn't much business for the July 20th meeting, and she will be out of town. She asked if the board wished to cancel that meeting or wait and see if something comes up. She also stated to be ready for a potential special meeting because there may be town matters that they will have to deal with in a Town meeting. It was decided to wait and see on canceling the July meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

1) Budget Status — Financial Report: May 2023

Donna Latinsics stated that on the financial report that the board receives every month, there are three key pieces of information that they can get from the report. The first one is the revenue budget, which is the budget that was passed compared to the actual budget as of May 31, 2023 (11 months through the fiscal year), and the actual numbers are in the third column on the report. Donna stated that the second piece of information is the expenditure budget compared to the actual budget through May 31, 2023, and the third piece of information is the change in the fund balance, so at the end of the year when the books are closed (around the middle of August), the budget will have either an operating surplus or deficit. If it

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has a surplus, that money gets added to the fund balance that was at the beginning of the year and if it is a deficit, it gets subtracted. She stated that the definition of fund balance is an accumulation and time of the operating surpluses and the operating deficits. Donna stated that this year she believes the Town is heading for an operating surplus because the revenues are overbudget by about \$600,000. She stated that the expenditure category (although not to the point that they are at the end of the year), shows that the expenditures are under budget right now by \$2.6 million (that will be spent by the BOE and the Town). The BOE will be spending all their forecasting except for \$125,000 which is their return after they request a transfer to the Non-Lapsing Fund of \$150,000. Donna believes the Town will give back \$50,000 and if you add the \$125,000 and \$50,000 to the \$600,000, the excessive revenue over expense would be \$775,000. Donna then explained the math starting with the beginning fund balance with additions and subtractions and the ending fund balance is projected to be about \$2.2 million.

2) Updates from BOF representatives:

a. CIP: Christina Mailhos

Christina Mailhos stated that she looked at the CIP report that was approved in April of 2022, which what was to be done in this current fiscal year ending June 30, 2023 to see what items need to get bumped into next fiscal year. Christina then gave a summary of where CIP is at with everything starting with Public Works. Their dump truck has been purchased and should be delivered sometime in August. The excavator has been purchased and is in use. The pavement management software purchase has been completed, they are still working on the final draft, but the CIP committee should be seeing a report from whatever this software generates. The Village Hill drainage phase II was planned to do with a grant that has not come through, however, Public Works will start the beginning stages of pipe installation and basin install regardless. Schofield Road drainage phase I is still being designed by the BETA Group and they should have that finished up in the next couple of months. The replacement of the Director's truck (approved in fiscal year 2021-2022) was not approved at the Town meeting, so they are still trying to figure out what to do. They are looking for a pickup with what money is allocated.

Christina stated that for the Fire Departments, WFD#1 has been looking for their new ambulance (price out the cost to remount the ambulance on a new chassis). Regarding WFD#1 fire station engineering, they met with the engineer and produced a scope of work to be completed, but unfortunately with inflation the cost to complete all engineering drawings has increased almost \$40,000 than what was anticipated. They are continuing to work with the engineering team to get the scope of work within budget. The apron project in the garage was put on hold because of the current mold situation at the station. All this work is coming out of Fund 17 and the money will stay there until it gets used. WHFD is still waiting for the Town to release the funding for their 1st response vehicle. The plan is to lease the vehicle, and Christina doesn't know what the holdup is. Donna stated that the RFP is prepped and ready to go after the BOS meeting on Tuesday, June 20, 2023, to approve the new vendor and new price for the vehicle. The refurbishment of WHFD's 1991 Engine Tank is nearing completion. It is having the final lighting package installed and it should be finished any day. It has been prolonged because of supply chain issues.

Christina stated that the BOE had two projects, the sidewalks at Center and Hall Memorial Schools. There was just a Town meeting where those funds were released, and those projects should be happening this summer.

Christina stated that the CIP is going to try to have several facility tours starting in September and they are aiming for Wednesday evenings early enough to have daylight for things that are outside. Alex Moore

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suggested that CIP invite the BOS and BOF to come on the tours at least on the emergency services side, they would like them to see what they have and do.

Christina stated that July 1 they start the next fiscal year, which is when the spending will happen under the CIP plan that was approved in May. They will encourage everyone who has projects that are funded to start the process of getting their projects done.

b. ARPA Projects: Christina Mailhos

Christina Mailhos stated that they have had to cancel the last several meetings as they are waiting for projects to close, so that the money they know is coming back to the Town is available and they can reallocate it to something else. The other projects can't be approved until they know what money is left. They plan to meet on Monday, June 26, 2023, to review projects that have happened and see where they are at with things.

NEW BUSINESS:

1) End of FY23 transfers of unspent funds

a. Board of Assessment Appeals Legal Notice Cost – Donna Latincsics, Business Manager

Donna Latincsics stated that the cost of the legal notice exceeded the budget, and a department cannot end the year in the negative.

Peter Tanaka moved to transfer \$168 from 01.1.0134 Assessor to 01.1.0135 Board of Assessment Appeals.

Seconded by Chairman Summers.

Motion passed (6-0).

b. Land Records Scanning Digitizing Project – Mike D'Amato, Land Use Agent

Jim Marshall stated that it is his understanding that it is just the transfer of funds within the Planning and Zoning purview to reduce the balance from \$84,000 to what was voted on at the last meeting.

Jim Marshall moved to transfer \$12,991 from 01.1.0171 Planning and Zoning to 01.O.004 transfers out-PZC Document Preservation (03.1.3090).

Seconded by Peter Tanaka.

Motion passed (6-0).

Jim Marshall moved to transfer \$850 from 01.1.0172 Zoning Board of Appeals to 01.O.004 transfers out-PZC Document Preservation (03.1.3090).

Seconded by Peter Tanaka.

Motion passed (6-0),

Jim Marshall moved to transfer \$1,646 from 01.1.0176 Inland Wetlands to 01.O.004 transfers out-PZC Document Preservation (03.1.3090).

Seconded by Peter Tanaka.

Motion passed (6-0).

Jim Marshall moved to transfer \$2,081 from 01.1.0241 Building Department to 01.O.004 transfers out-PZC Document Preservation (03.1.3090).

Seconded by Peter Tanaka.

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Motion passed (6-0).

c. Pandemic Bonuses for Elected Town Officials – Erika Wiecenski, First Selectwoman

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that back in the spring of 2021 a similar request went before the APRA Commission for regular staff of the Town. The BOS stated that if there were leftover funds (albeit that fiscal year unanticipated that it would be so many months later before a decision was made), they made a motion if there were funds left over to ask for the same one-time compensation to three elected officials (2 Registrar of Voters and the Town Treasurer). She stated that elected officials are specifically excluded from using ARPA dollars, which is why they were not included in the other request. The bonus program through ARPA for Town employees was passed at Town meeting within this fiscal year, so at the end of this fiscal year, with enough anticipated funds to cover this small amount, the BOS is asking that the BOF make a transfer from the BOS budget into the budgets of those elected officials. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that there was a Presidential primary in August of 2020 and the Presidential election in November during the pandemic. She stated it was a tremendous undertaking by the Registrars and could not be worked from home. Christina Mailhos asked if First Selectwoman Wiecenski knew of any other towns giving bonuses to elected officials. She did not.

**Christina Mailhos moved to transfer \$4,000 from 01.1.0111 Selectmen to 01.1.0126 Election Officials
Seconded by Chairman Summers.**

Discussion was had in favor of giving bonuses to these two elected officials given the circumstances of the pandemic and that it was a unique circumstance, it is a one-time bonus, and they are not setting a precedent here.

Motion passed (6-0).

Vice President Prusak moved to transfer \$2,000 from 01.1.0137 Revenue Collector to 01.1.0132 Treasurer.

Seconded by Chairman Summers.

Peter asked if this was the same situation as the election officials where the Treasurer was exposed to the public or was it during that time when everyone worked from home and the building was closed. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that the building was closed for a very short period of time and the Treasurer did work from both home and at the TOB as did the rest of the staff. The Treasurer had about the same impact with the public as the rest of the Finance Office did, but not the same impact as some of the offices that have more public traffic. She stated that the Treasurer had an incredible change in work conditions during this period. She stressed that all the individuals who are being considered for this one-time bonus had to work during a particular course of the pandemic including the Treasurer who stepped up during that time. Chairman Summers asked if there were any parts of the staff that did not qualify for a bonus and First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated it was just these three that they are voting on now except for new staff members who did not qualify because they were not working at the time of the pandemic.

Motion passed (6-0).

d. Pandemic Bonuses for Volunteer Firefighters – Tom Snyder, Chief WHFD

Chairman Summers is recusing herself from the discussion and vote on this item. Vice President Prusak stated that back in January, Chief Snyder, WHFD came to the BOF regarding the bonuses for the volunteer firefighters. WHFD President James Knight reiterated that volunteer firefighters were left out of the ARPA bonuses because they were volunteers and not Town-paid staff who were granted the bonuses. He feels the gesture is important, especially for morale and retention of firefighters. He stated that typically volunteers are no or little cost to the Town, but even though these firefighters did not ride the ambulance

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specifically, they were still front-line with the ambulance personnel, they were on scene at people's houses, car accidents, etc., so there wasn't much other than being directly in the ambulance that the volunteers did not face along with the paid staff.

Peter Tanaka moved to transfer \$3,000 from 01.1.0851 Insurance to 01.O.004 transfer out-WFD#1 and an additional transfer of \$13,000 from 01.1.0831 Employees Health Insurance to 01.O.004 transfer out-WHFD for a total of \$16,000.

Seconded by Vice President Prusak.

Chief Alex Moore stated that there was some confusion, and this is for EMS personnel only that are getting this bonus. They had to be medically certified to receive this bonus. It was clarified that there were 13 firefighters from WHFD and 3 firefighters from WFD#1 getting the bonus, which is \$1,000 each. Chief Moore stated that this was a joint project with himself and Chief Snyder.

Motion passed (5-0-1 Chairman Summers abstain).

2) Status on WFD#1 Mold Issue and Costs – Chief Alex Moore

Chief Moore stated that they finally got their last quote today. He stated that they were able to get the cost lower as this last quote came in at \$25,133 for the same amount and scope of work as the first company. A third vendor did come out and look at the building, but completely wanted to change what the other two companies stated needed to be done and didn't want to give a quote in writing. They have two hard quotes and are going to recommend the Servpro quote to the BOS on Tuesday at their meeting so they can get started with the work that needs to be done. Chief Moore stated that it will be a little higher than the quote because of plumbing, etc. He stated that their plan is for it to cost \$30,000 total with the hope of using the other money for engineering, trying to figure out what the next step is. They do have a contractor that both fire departments have used quite a bit coming out early Tuesday evening to start working as their general contractor as to what their next steps should be. Both fire departments trust this contractor and would like him to point them in the right direction. It was noted that up to \$37,000 was voted at the last BOF meeting for this mold issue and that if the whole project costs less than \$37,000 that money will be returned to the BOF. Chief Moore stated that anyone who has questions or wants to know anything about this issue to please reach out to him.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1) Letter of Resignation from BOF Secretary Samantha Sperry

Jim Marshall wishes Samantha Sperry luck in her position on Region 19. Vice President Prusak stated that he enjoyed having her as a secretary, she was very competent, did very well and she left the position in a good way with forwarding her templates and notes on the job.

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

None

GOOD AND WELFARE:

Jim Marshall congratulated the Center School, Hall Memorial School and E.O. Smith graduates. First Selectwoman Wicewski reported on the Hall Memorial School graduation that she had attended prior to this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Pete moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 pm.

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Seconded by Chairman Summers.
Motion passed (6-0).

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Smith

Eileen Smith

Recording Secretary

RECEIVED
WILLINGTON, CT.

2023 AUG 15 P 1:31


TOWN CLERK

10/10/10