

Town of Willington

Board of Selectmen
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Regular Meeting Minutes
Hybrid; TOB, Downstairs Conference Room & Virtual Meeting

October 16, 2023
6:30 PM

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM with the following in attendance: Selectman Bulick, Selectman Makuch in person, and residents in person and via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

Selectman Makuch moved to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2023 regular meeting.

Seconded by Selectman Bulick

3 Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

Present To Speak

No one to speak.

Correspondence

List of Correspondence is available in the Selectman's office.

First Selectwoman's Status Report

- A. **STEAP Grant for OTH Septic:** No new update
- B. **SBC:** Scheduled to meet on Wednesday, October 18, 2023 and will review the final report.
- C. **LOTICIP:** No new update.
- D. **ARPA:** No new updates. Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 6, 2023.
- E. **STAFF UPDATE:** We still have 2 openings for CIP and BOF for recording secretaries and have received a few applications and are reviewing those with the chairs of those committees and hope to have an appointment before our next meeting. Interviews for the Humans Services Director will take place this Wednesday, so we hope to see some forward movement from that soon.

- F. UPDATE:** Recreational Cannabis Shop opened this weekend in Phelps Plaza. A reminder that under the 2021 law there is a 3% municipal sales tax imposed on gross receipts which will become part of general revenue and must be used for specific purposes. The incoming administration will need to familiarize themselves with this new revenue and look for ways to use it.

Public Works

Things done at Public Works:

- Roadside Mowing is continuing around Town.
- Backfilling washouts around Town.
- Provided traffic control on Polster Rd.
- Chipped Brush around Town.
- Patched holes around Town.
- Grading dirt roads is continuing weather permitting.
- Polster Rd is complete. The paving is complete, and the town crew backed filled and seeded the edges of the road.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked the Public Works employees for keeping Polster Road in the best shape possible in the 3 months of the absence of the contractor while working with them to get a resolution. Polster road is complete, and it was not an easy process, but public works did a great job.

New Business

A. Hunting on the former Cadlerock Property

A resident has requested once again that we allow hunting on the former Cadlerock property that the Town acquired through a tax sale along with the Town of Ashford. The larger portion of the land is in Ashford. The request was previously denied by both Willington and the Town of Ashford. On 10/10/23 the Ashford BOS voted once again to deny the request. The Selectman agreed that this may be an allowable use but feel that some more research on the matter is warranted as to how that might work if they decided to allow hunting on the property. Discussion was had regarding information needed to begin a full discussion including towns with hunting policies, and liability concerns with possible obstructions on the property as final remediation as not been done. Currently the property is gated, locked & posted for no trespassing.

B. Tax Refunds

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Linda Schoen, for an overpayment in the amount of \$155.66.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

3 Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Financial Ser Veh Trust, for an overpayment in the amount of \$235.06.

Selectman Makuch seconded.

3 Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Honda Lease Trust, for an overpayment in the amount of \$927.82.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

3 Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund JP Morgan Chase Bank NA, for an overpayment in the amount of \$291.05.

Selectman Makuch seconded.

3 Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund James P. Rowley, for an overpayment in the amount of \$460.45.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

3 Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Ivanna Johnson, for an overpayment in the amount of \$33.35.

Selectman Makuch seconded.

3 Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

Old Business

A. Volunteer Firefighter Dept. Personnel Tax Abatement Ordinance Amendment

Draft ordinance that has been reviewed by our attorney. The changes made include updating the Public Act to current 19-36 that allows up to \$2000 and includes retired volunteers with 25 years of service.

- Eligibility #2 added item E retired volunteers with 25 years of service.
- Item #3 updated to meet current dates and to be effective to taxes payable on July 1, 2024
- Abatement Schedule A-D amounts were increased to stay in line with up \$2000 max compared to the last ordinance.
- Added item E retired volunteers with 25 years of service would be entitled to a \$1,500.00 abatement tax.

The previous ordinance was reviewed by BOF/Assessor. This did not go before BOF, but the Assessor reviewed and is comfortable with the changes as presented.

Discussion

Selectman Bulick thinks that a town meeting or public hearing would be a good idea to get some input from the townspeople. Selectman Makuch disagrees with the item requiring eligible members being current on your taxes back 2 years and believes that it should not matter if you are current with your taxes to get the tax abatement as that seems as if it is a punishment rather than a benefit. Chief Snyder weighed in with his thoughts on the tax abatement. First Selectwoman Wiecenski disagreed and felt strongly that this requirement put in place in the original ordinance was necessary. The abatement should not negate residents' civic responsibility to pay their taxes. No changes were made to the draft.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved that the Board of Selectman send the draft as Volunteer Firefighter Dept. Personnel Tax Abatement Ordinance as amended to public hearing.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

2 Yes (Bulick, Wiecenski) 0 No 1 abstain (Makuch). Motion carried.

Present to Speak

Peter Tanaka – Spoke about his concerns regarding brush drop off opening up again. Civic engagement would that be Willington Day for the weed money, Tolland Fire department mutual aid, hunting – difference between parks and forests. Is Cadlerock property a park or a forest.

Good & Welfare

- A. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that we are waiting for our open burn permit expected in the coming days. Once received the pile at the Transfer station would be burned and we can begin collecting brush again.
- B. Mobile Food Share will be here at the TOB next, Wednesday, October 25th from 11am - 11:30am. As of Wednesday August 30, 2023, **walk-up model**. Residents will need to park and bring their own bags. ACCESS Agency has a mobile food pantry that is at Willington Woods, senior center complex, which is once a month, the first Thursday of the month so November 2, 2023, 12:00 to 1:00pm it is open to all.
- C. Please continue to support our small businesses and restaurants if you can.
- D. If anyone is looking to make charitable contributions the Willington Fuel bank is in serious need of funds in order to be able to assist our residents outside of any federal or state funding. Donations can be sent to the Town Office Building marked Fuel Bank. NOTE: We are accepting applications through the Human Services department for the energy assistance program, we start with federal programs which are open and accepting applications. What people are hearing about on the news is Operation Fuel which is a state program and they have put a hold on applications until January as they had to many summer and fall applications, they hope to open again in January if funding permits.
- E. 10/22 Willington Public Library will hold 100-year Celebration at WPL in the community room downstairs from 2-4pm.

- F. Friday October 27th is the PTA Trunk or Treat at River Road Athletics Complex. Reach out to the PTA if you are interested in providing a trunk.
- G. A town meeting is shaping up and we are looking at November 2, 2023, and now include a public hearing for the Volunteer Firefighter Dept. Personnel Tax Abatement Ordinance and the Hurst tool purchase and depending on the action of the Board of Finance, there could be 2 Board of Education CIP projects could be added to that agenda.
- H. Tuesday November 7th is Election Day in the Upstairs Common Room. If you would like to register to vote, on-line or in person the last day to do so before election day is Tuesday October 31, 2023.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 PM.

Selectman Makuch seconded the motion.

3 Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Côté
Recording Secretary
Town of Willington

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2023 OCT 17 PM 1:59


TOWN CLERK