

Town of Willington

Board of Selectmen
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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

**November 6, 2023
6:30 PM**

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM with the following in attendance: Selectman Bulick, Selectman Makuch in person, and residents in person and via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

First Selectwoman Wiecenski made a motion to add to item A (c) under new business the appointment of the new human services director to the ARPA commission.

**Seconded by Selectman Makuch
3Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes

Selectman Bulick moved to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2023, regular meeting.

**Seconded by Selectman Makuch
3Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.**

Selectman Makuch moved to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2023, special meeting.

**Seconded by Selectman Bulick
3Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carried.**

Present To Speak

Peter Tanaka – In the capacity of the Chair of the Emergency Efficiency Committee regarding old business, the fire department tax abatement ordinance proposal. Chief Snyder has revised the proposal for review. Mr. Tanka shared a document with the board.

John Tehan – voiced concerns about comments made on social media by a board of education candidates running under the republican ticket. He stated the Democratic party is committed to a fair and equitable government for all of Willington residents.

Correspondence

No Correspondence.

First Selectwoman's Status Report

- A. STEAP Grant for OTH Septic:** No new update
- B. SBC:** Voted in the affirmative to send on the draft report to the Board of Selectman as well as the Board of Education and wait 2 weeks incase of any response from either board. Once the 2 weeks is up the Final report will be issued.
- C. LOTCIP:** No new update.
- D. ARPA:** No new updates. Meeting was canceled for Monday, November 6, 2023. There are no new in projects funds to close to allow us to take action on.
- E. STAFF UPDATE:** Currently have 2 vacancies, Public Works Administrative Assistant which is 15 hours per week position and closes on Thursday November 9th, 2023, at 4:00 pm. First Selectwoman Wiczenski is happy and a little sad to say that Karen has been hired as our Human Services Director and is looking forward to the work that she will be doing there, Karen has been assisting in my office since May when that position became vacant in order to continue to keep the office running. First Selectwoman has a good sense of what we have in store for us and think it will be great for our residents. I wish Karen the best of luck in that position. Karen has also agreed to assist in the Selectman's office and stay on until a replacement can be found. It is an unusual time as none of the board is seeking re-election and we have a new First Selectman and board coming in. The Administrative Assistant position has been posted and closes on November 16th, 2023, at 4:00 pm.

Discussion

Selectman Makuch stated that he has been approached by several people in town regarding FOIA and would like to discuss the FOIA requests to gain a better understanding of how it works. We want to assure the taxpayers that we are responding to FOIA requests correctly. First Selectwoman Wiczenski shared that Mr. Tella's request was filled many months ago, the items are always available for viewing. Mr. Tella requested them in electronic form but because of the amount of work done it does come with a cost which Mr. Tella has not been willing to pay. Mr. Tella filed a complaint with the FOIA commission and lost at that hearing, our understanding from the attorney is that he did not show up at the hearing. There has been no other movement through the FOIA commission as we understand it, we are still within compliance. If Mr. Tella would like to come in and view the documents there would be no issue with that. Not willing to pay does not mean that we have not fulfilled our obligation. There was an FOIA request sent to the Board of Selectman and the Board of Education. First Selectwoman Wiczenski responded immediately to that request as we did not have any responsive documents to that request. We are in compliance.

Public Works

Things done at Public Works:

- Roadside Mowing is continuing around Town.
- Patched Holes around Town

- Fixed Washouts around Town
- Blow leaves around Town.
- Fixed Floor tiles at TOB
- Burnt Brush Pile at Transfer Station
- Put out Voting signs for the upcoming election.
- Cleaned up shop.
- Jet pipe on Lohse that was done by the Town of Putnam
- Chipseal roads have been sweep.
- Backfilled at the Fire dept.
- Set up Old Town Hall for the Town Meeting

We have been having problems with the front door. It will be replaced on November 17th, 2023. First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked Troy for arranging that.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski thanked the Town of Putnam for coming in with the assist on Lohse Road and the fire Dept. It is greatly appreciated.

New Business

A. Appointment

- a. Willington Board of Finance recording secretary

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to appoint Lisa Pascuzzi to the Board of Finance beginning 11/16/2023 and expiring June 30, 2024.

Seconded by Selectman Makuch

Discussion: Stef Summers , BOF Chair– Stated she interviewed Lisa, and it was a great interview, and she has great sense of humor which is always important on the Board of Finance. Impressed with Lisa regarding the school situation in Tolland as her minutes were used as a careful reference for investigators on that case. Lisa tailors her minutes to what the needs are of the Board.

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

- b. Willington Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) recording secretary.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to appoint Lisa Pascuzzi to the CIP Capital Improvement Plan Committee beginning 11/16/2023 and expiring June 30, 2024.

Seconded by Selectman Bulick

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

- c. Appointment of the new Human Services Director to the ARPA commission.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to appoint the Karen Côté, Human Services Director as a regular member of the Town of Willington American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Commission effective immediately, expiring once the charge of the committee has been completed.

Seconded by Selectman Makuch

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

B. Approve Vendor Street Sweeper

CIP had a project for a street sweeper and allocated \$100,00.00 dollars from the reserve fund for this project. Public Works has been looking for a used sweeper as the cost of a new sweeper averages \$280,000.00 to \$310,000.00. The board is reviewing a quote for a used sweeper that has become available from Chadwick-Barrow for \$80,000.00 and includes brooms and \$1,000.00 on our trade for our current sweeper. This is \$20,000.00 under budget.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to award the street sweeper purchase from CIP to Chadwick-Barrow in the amount of \$80,000.00.

Seconded by Selectman Makuch

Discussion: First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated when it is used, we are not usually able to get 3 equal quotes. The approval from the Board of Selectmen is step one, then it goes to the Board of Finance asking them to recommend an appropriation and the Board of Selectman would call a town meeting to go before the town.

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

C. Tax Refunds

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Cheryl A. Truehart, for an overpayment in the amount of \$29.58.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Cary C. Cope, for an overpayment in the amount of \$215.38.

Selectman Makuch seconded.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Vault Trust, for an overpayment in the amount of \$118.06.

Selectman Bulick seconded.

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

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund Toyota Lease Trust, for an overpayment in the amount of \$343.72.

Selectman Makuch seconded.

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

Old Business

A. Volunteer Firefighter Dept. Personnel Tax Abatement Ordinance Amendment

The fire department tax abatement ordinance proposal draft was revised by Chief Snyder and was presented by the Chair of the Emergency Efficiency Committee, Peter Tanaka the board had not received this draft prior to the meeting. The board of Selectman will take time to review the presented revision and discuss it at another meeting.

Present to Speak

John Tehan – discussed FOIA and the thoughts of Willington adopting a FOIA policy. John was happy to hear storm drains being cleaned out.

James Marshall – Wanted to Welcome Lisa the new recording secretary for Board of Finance and CIP committee. Excited about the unanimous support for the funding of the various building improvements at the schools.

Stephanie Summers – spoke in regard to the tax abatement and years of service and how she felt that \$2,000.00 was a modest sum for the firefighters answering the call.

Good & Welfare

- A. Mobile Food Share will be here at the TOB next, Wednesday, November 8th from 11am - 11:30am. Residents will need to park and bring their own bags. **The next Food Share is on November 22nd at 9:00 am. Because it is the day before Thanksgiving.** 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 December 7, 2023, 12:00 to 1:00pm it is open to all.
- B. Tuesday November 7th is Election Day from 6:00 am. to 8:00 pm. 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 Wicewski thanked the Registrars for all their hard work!
- C. Veterans day is November 11th, 2023, and is observed on Friday November 10th, 2023 with all Town offices closed. Veterans Day Ceremony on Saturday November 11th, 2023, at 11:15 am. at the Veterans Memorial in front of the Senior Center. Honoring the World War II Veterans. We will be honoring veterans from 3 different towns, from Willington, Ashford, and Mansfield. The Mayor from Mansfield, the First Selectman from Ashford and myself will be in attendance. All are welcome. The Transfer Station will be open on Veterans Day.
- D. Please continue to support our small businesses and restaurants if you can.
- E. 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. Our biggest food drive is "Scouting for Food," unfortunately, the boy scouts are not going to be hosting that event this year. Cub Scout pack 82 is coming back to Willington. Informational meeting on November 17th at 6:30 at the Public Library.

- F. October Monthly Report from Troop C: *276 calls to Troop C for service included 14 accidents, 15 criminal investigations, 0 burglaries, 2 larceny, 178 non-reportable matters and 1 arrest. Motor vehicle enforcement included 64 total traffic stops, 0 onsite DUI's, 0 arrest, 0 misdemeanor summons, 19 infractions, 19 written warnings, 25 verbal warnings.*
- G. First Selectwoman Wiecenski encourages everyone to come out and vote on November 7th, 2023, and to be respectful to all who are willing to serve. Stop by the PTA bake sale to support the Willington Scholarship Foundation.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 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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TOWN CLERK