

TOWN OF WILLINGTON

Board of Selectmen
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Meeting Minutes
Lower Level Conference Room

July 16, 2018
6:30 P.M.

**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:
Selectmen Makuch & Blessington and residents. She then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

Selectman Blessington moved to approve the minutes of July 2, 2018 with the following edit: page 1 under Public Works; first sentence should read: First Selectwoman Wiecenski *moved* to award the shimming contract (the word moved is missing).

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Makuch & Blessington) 0 No.

Present to Speak:

First Selectwoman Wiecenski opened the floor to the public for comment; asking the residents to list their name and a time limitation to 5 minutes each.

Todd Bissonnette of 41 Cosgrove Road stated that he would like to speak on behalf of the nuisance/noise issues and get an update of how things are going. He added that he would like to see alternatives of what can be done to protect the residents and resolve the issues rather than putting the entire town under an ordinance.

Scott Gilbert of 6 Burt Latham Road would like to see what resources are available to have the State Police patrol our roads – above and beyond what is already being done. He would like to see a little more police presence in the areas near the apartments, especially where the students live, where activity and speeding are prevalent. He added that he lives near the corner of Burt Latham, Latham Road and Cedar Swamp Roads and has offered for the State Police to sit in his driveway to run surveillance and ticket those who blow through the stop sign, noting that they would be able to make a lot of money off of that.

Sabrina Wentworth of 69 Cisar Road stated that she was at the April 16th meeting and is looking for an update on the speeding issues and to see what the Selectmen have come up with. She added that she is interested to learn more about the nuisance ordinance as she has been following in the meeting minutes over the past few months. She and her husband live between two apartments as well as a multi-family dwelling, and students are moving into a nearby home – a noise ordinance is something that could potentially be important to them and they are willing to support whatever the town needs to make it happen.

Jessica Smith of 39 Luchon Road said she also supports the ordinance as she hears a lot of noise from one disgruntled neighbor but as well as the students. She added that she is hopeful that the Board of Selectmen will address this.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that the speeding issue is not on the agenda, but will address that now. She stated that she had met with our liaison, Sergeant Duda of CT State Police, Troop C a few weeks ago and highlights of their discussions were touched on at a recent meeting. We do not have our own police force, nor do we have a resident trooper. She clarified even if we did have a resident trooper, it would not be a 24 hour per day scenario as you pay for one shift for a trooper to be in town, and it would only be 5 days per week. She then stated that Sergeant Duda offered to have more patrols through town if they were available and when they had resources to do so. She then further clarified that the troop could plan to be out in Willington to run a patrol, but if something more serious comes up, it would take precedence over patrolling.

Sabrina Wentworth stated that this topic was discussed in April, but there has to be other options there has to be something the town can do. First Selectwoman Wiczenski stated that there is really not much the town can do unless they want to invest in a resident trooper option or a police force. She added that the Selectmen have looked into getting speed bumps and she herself has attended LTA (Local Traffic Authority) training. At the LTA training and she found that we as a small town, are not unique in this situation and as a matter of fact, roads and neighborhoods that have apartment complexes are not unique to this situation either. She then warned that studies did show that speed bumps implemented on certain roads ended up pushing the problem on to neighboring roads and that is also something that the Selectmen need to take into consideration. At this point, the speed bumps do not seem to have enough effect for our Public Works' Director to make a recommendation; but it will remain an ongoing discussion. In the meantime, the State Police has offered to boost patrols when they can.

Selectwoman Makuch stated that we are facing many challenges – the Selectmen had reviewed a 127 page document on traffic calming studies. There are a lot of different strategies that we can implement, however they only work for a short period of time until people get used to them and the short term options can be costly. The strategies could be the way you plant trees along the road, adding medians or painting visual illusions with intricate patterns, but they only work until drivers are used to it. She added the only effective strategy is consistent enforcement. Selectwoman Makuch clarified that it is not like the Selectmen are washing their hands or they don't care, but we are facing a big challenge in this tiny town with limited resources.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski added that the Public Works' Director is not going to be the one to make the final decision on this, but the Selectmen do value his input, because the crews have to maintain the roads as well as clear snow and roadside mowing, so it is very important to have him involved with the discussions. She then closed the discussions noting that nothing has been put in place by this Board as of yet.

Mike Iacampo of 68 Latham Road said that he has lived in his house for 15 years and both of your predecessors know quite well of what goes on in our neighborhood and every time we contact the town, we get the same answer - that the new liaison Troop is going to get on the issue and it is the same thing each time. He said that he does not want any tax money to be put towards this - we just want attention. First Selectwoman Wiczenski clarified that if you want attention, it is going to cost money. Mr. Iacampo asked what if we the residents met with the Troop to see what works in neighboring towns and what other options they can offer. He added that we need a presence - people need to see a car sitting there. First Selectwoman Wiczenski clarified that she met with the Sergeant and discussed these options and have asked for help but she cannot demand they come and sit here and our hands are tied. Mr. Iacampo asked what he can do to help the Selectmen. First Selectwoman Wiczenski responded that there is nothing against you to reach out to them and ask them to assist us; that is in your rights to do. Selectman Blessington stated that we had a trooper come to one of our meetings a few years back and the discussions were about what was being done in Mansfield but the issue is that Mansfield has their own police force and we do not - that makes a big difference. Our option is to ask the State Police to cover us along with 5 or 6 other towns - and that makes them to have to cover hundreds of roads in addition to our roads. He is not sure what the answer is here.

Mr. Iacampo said he believes that the trooper that was at that meeting is Trooper Stackpole, who is a Willington resident, but a resident trooper in Mansfield. When they show up at a driveway in Mansfield, they are able to

enforce and issue tickets, but they would need the similar rights in Willington to carry out the enforcement. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that the nuisance ordinance and speeding are two different issues. The Nuisance Ordinance is on the agenda and will be discussed further under old business.

Correspondence:

A list of correspondence was available at the meeting and in the Selectman's office.

The Selectmen received two tax refunds this afternoon. Because they are contemplating canceling the August 6, 2018 meeting, First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that it could be added to this meeting, so the refunds wouldn't have to wait so long. The Selectmen were in agreement to add the item to the agenda.

First Selectman Status Report

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that we had an issue with the air conditioning in the Finance Office last week, where the condenser needed to be replaced. The unit services finance, Human Services as well as Recreation. EMCOR had came out on Friday and replaced the parts and things are back to normal.

The State has issued a grant commitment for the oil tank at HMS and things are moving along. The next step is to have a site review from the State and we will be able to go out to bid. It is a slow process but it is hopeful that the tank will be replaced before the school year begins.

Public Works:

The crew has been busy with the following:

- *Catch basin cleaning
- *Roadside mowing
- *Road Shimming (to prepare for chip sealing in a few weeks)
- *Drainage improvements at Center School back lot towards Route 320

Also, on the first weekend in July, the Public Works crew members worked at the Transfer Station handing out new stickers to residents. The new stickers are helpful to the Transfer Station Attendants so they can better enforce usage at the site.

Derek is still out - he should be back on September 16th.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to add a new business item before Good and Welfare called: Tax Refunds.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated the add is due to the possible cancellation of the August 6 meeting.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Makuch & Blessington) 0 No.

Old Business

A. Nuisance Ordinance

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated we are either at the point where we have to decide as a board if we want to move forward or do we think this is in the best interest for the entire town.

Selectwoman Makuch moved to draft a nuisance ordinance for town vote.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski seconded the motion for discussion purposes.

Selectman Blessington said if we had an ordinance this will give the State Police the magical powers to enforce it. He said he actually feels that this will not change much - if someone is making noise and you call the state police, they come and ask them to quiet down - if they are called back, they give a citation. If the resident chooses to fight the citation, we need to have some kind of appeals process for them to fight it. Who will sit on the appeals board?

Martin Drobney asked what the procedure is? First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that there currently is no procedure and all of that would have to be determined.

Mike Iacampo stated that the minutes from the meeting where the resident trooper for Mansfield was here, he had offered to have Mansfield enforce and collect on the fines. First Selectwoman Wiecenski clarified that most of the options that were discussed at that meeting were viable or valid options. Mansfield cannot collect fines for misconduct in Willington - there were things that were determined after the fact of holding that meeting.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she believes if we implement a system that is going to fine people, it could come with a cost to enforce. Someone is going to have to be a deciding factor on an appeals board. She then cautioned even though this board brings an ordinance to town meeting, it does not mean that it is definitely going to happen - it does not mean that the residents in the Town of Willington are going to agree with us or with you - every resident is going to have a say and the meeting is the deciding vote - they can say yes or they can say no.

Matthew Clark asked if the board is going to have an opinion on this at the town meeting? First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that there is nothing for her to have an opinion on or to endorse. Selectman Blessington said the majority of the Selectmen will vote whether it goes to Town Meeting. He then stated that another option that has been discussed before where the citizens of Willington can petition to hold a town meeting. The number of signatures needed is only 20 or 25 people to push it to vote. He stated that he is not in favor of this ordinance. First Selectwoman Wiecenski said that she does not have an opinion because we don't have anything to look at yet.

Selectwoman Makuch stated that we need to decide what we are going to do. She added that she believes that having such an ordinance on the books will be beneficial for the town it hinges a large part on enforcement and that is part of our biggest challenge. We have heard from quite a few residents that this should move forward and she is in favor of drafting the ordinance.

Selectman Blessington said he thinks such an ordinance will be a nightmare to enforce and he does not think it will be affordable - he sees it might end up with having to have a resident trooper or police force. he added that he has spoken with several people who are opposed and does not feel it is going to pass. He added that he was hoping he would see a petition from 25 people who want to see an ordinance.

Selectwoman Makuch said her decision to put this forward isn't because she thinks it is going to pass at a town meeting, she just thinks it is a good idea in general.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski cautioned that the way the motion is worded that she thinks it is rushing a bit. She would rather see everything done in pieces and put in properly in place so it is clear before it goes to town meeting to be voted on. She added that she will be willing to agree to a proposal brought to the board so that can be agreed upon and also see what the financial implications are going to be if it gets put into place. Selectman Blessington added that it would also need to be brought before the Town Attorney as well as the State Police for review. First Selectwoman Wiecenski then warned the public that this is something that is not going to happen overnight - or even in the next few weeks. It is not a speedy process. Something like this is going to take months to make sure it is done correctly.

Selectwoman Makuch amended her motion to draft a nuisance ordinance for consideration.

Vote: 2 Yes (Wiecenski, Makuch) 1 No (Blessington)

motion passes. First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she will begin on drafting an ordinance. There was no more discussion on this matter.

B. Flags on the Town Green

First Selectwoman Wiecenski recapped at the last meeting, a gentleman had offered to make a donation of flags to extend through the Town Green to the Town Offices and down to the library. She said that she had a chance to look at options and although it was a very generous offer, she thinks the area is too long of a span, not to mention that the telephone poles are staggered on each side of the road, and feels it would not look proper.

There are also a lot of factors to consider -- would we need special permits to put flags on the poles, and is the school, fire department and church different from the residential properties? She added that she does not think it would visually get the feel of what is anticipated and has received feedback on this from a resident who was not in favor of it; thinking it would take away the charm of the Town Green.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski added that we also need to think of what will happen if the resident can no longer donate the flags, and that would then leave the town with another added expense if not kept up. She likes the idea but realistically, it is not visually suitable. The Selectmen will send a thank you letter to the resident for their generous offer.

New Business

Tax Refund

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$40.92 to Lizotte Painting, LLC for an excess payment. Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Makuch & Blessington) 0 No.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to refund \$119.82 to Gopi Avvori on a certificate of correction. Selectwoman Makuch seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Makuch & Blessington) 0 No.

Good & Welfare

First Selectwoman Wiecenski reminded residents that taxes are due. The last date to pay taxes without penalty is August 1st.

Susan Yorgensen is retiring. Her last day with the Town will be August 10. The Selectmen thanked her for her 30+ years of service to residents and businesses in the town as a whole.

The Planning and Zoning Commission will meet tomorrow night at 7:30 PM

The Board of Finance will meet on Thursday, July 19th at 7:00 PM

The Board of Education will meet on July 24th at 7:00 PM

-all meetings will be held in the lower level conference room at the Town Office Building.

Concerts in the Park are now going on every Wednesday night from 6:30 PM 8:30 between now and August 22nd.

Crafts in the park is held every Wednesday morning at 10AM – 11AM at River Road. For a \$3 fee, kids are able to make a craft that they can take home.

Summer Camp is in full swing at HMS and Halls Pond is open for the season. Passes are available in the Recreation Department.

Lastly, the group called "It Takes a Village Hill" is holding an Outdoor Adventure Hunt and Touch a Truck event on Saturday, July 28 from 1PM-3PM at River Road Athletic Complex. The group is asking for non-perishable food items for the food pantry and candid photography will be done by Dot Drobney

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 PM.

Selectman Blessington seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Wiecenski, Makuch & Blessington)

Respectfully submitted,
Robin Campbell
Administrative Assistant