

Town of Willington

Board of Selectmen
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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Budget Workshop Special Meeting Minutes
Hybrid; TOB, Downstairs Room

February 13, 2023
5:30 PM

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

First Selectwoman Wiczenski called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM with the following in attendance: Selectman Bulick, Selectman Makuch, Business Manager Donna Latincics, DPW Director Troy Sposato, Tax Collector Janice Clauson and residents in person and via Zoom.

Budget Workshop

First Selectwoman Wiczenski reviewed the current budget documents provided; currently there is a 7.9% increase in the Selectman's budget including the CIP budget. Some of the assumptions in the budget include the cost of heating fuel, diesel fuel, electricity rates, medical premiums (increase of 7.5%), dental insurance (increase of 3%), life insurance rates, workers comp and liability insurance, refuse and recycle contract (in year 3 of a 4-year contract), energy performance contract, the library bond, and four Public Works leases.

Last week the reduction in the Town Clerk's budget was discussed. This week, it is proposed that IT services will be reduced by \$2,500.00 and the engineering line items for Land Use & DPW will each be reduced by \$2,500.00. The health insurance line item can be reduced by \$20,000.00 due to a placeholder waiver.

The DPW budget was again reviewed and will be reduced by \$40,000.00 for tree removal, \$20,000.00 for catch basin pumping, \$14,000.00 for the purchase of snow sand; \$35,000.00 for the purchase of snow salt; and \$2,000.00 for the purchase of calcium chloride.

Discussion was held on the reduction of the catch basin pumping services line item and the salt and sand budgets for snow season. There is always a risk when cutting the snow budget but this year has been out of the ordinary.

These reductions total \$141,980.00.

Region 19 is a working number but is at a slight reduction this year. The overall town budget is at 3.4% with the Selectmen's budget coming in at 7.87%.

First Selectwoman Wiczenski discussed the items in the Senior Center maintenance budget as well as the potential State ARPA funds the town should be receiving for the Senior Center that is earmarked for certain items, including maintenance and program costs.

This current budget only maintains the current status and does not add any additional positions or road maintenance or facilities maintenance. Discussion was held on the possibility of the two additional positions and the need for a facilities manager and the addition of funds for road maintenance.

Selectman Makuch spoke about the tree maintenance line item and the need for an increase in the road maintenance funding. Selectman Bulick spoke about the need to include road maintenance as CIP items.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski spoke about the state grant funding for TAR (Town Aide Roads) and how this is used to offset the budget. Discussion continued on road maintenance and the necessary bigger capital projects that need to be performed, as well as the discussion that additional funding is necessary to be included for maintaining current roads. Selectman Makuch stated that the \$40,000.00 that was removed from the tree maintenance line item should be added back into the road maintenance category for this year. Discussion was held on the necessary annual maintenance of the roads and long-term maintenance that is needed on various roads due to lack of maintenance over the years.

Selectman Bulick inquired about the cemetery line item and First Selectwoman Wiecenski stated that she spoke to S. Cobb and the \$2,000.00 the town gives the Cemetery Association goes towards the landscaping of the cemetery each year.

The additional \$40,000.00 added back into the road maintenance budget now brings the budget to an 8.88% increase in the Selectmen's budget and a 3.6% increase in the overall total budget.

Discussion was held on the increase of the Human Services Transfer Out line item due to the addition of the Senior Center Coordinator position.

Discussion was held on the Capital Improvement Program budget and the 10% increase that was planned for this year's budget.

Selectman Makuch stated that there is value in the additional positions requested but the cost of the positions outweighs the need at this time. First Selectwoman Wiecenski suggested including the addition of the facilities director position in the narrative to the Board of Finance to continue the discussion.

At next week's BOS meeting, the Capital Improvement Program plan will be presented for approval and the BOS budget will be finalized for approval.

First Selectwoman Wiecenski moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 PM.

Selectman Bulick seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 Yes (Bulick, Makuch & Wiecenski) 0 No. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelsey Allard
Recording Secretary
Town of Willington