

Link to view the March 9, 2022, Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen  
<https://youtu.be/OYSFtjH9Hjc>

The March 9, 2022, Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen was convened at 5:00 p.m. by First Selectman Beth Heller, via WebEx in accordance with SB2012.

Present via roll call: First Selectman Beth Heller; Deputy First Selectman Sheila McCreven, Joseph J. Crisco, Jr.; Paul Kuriakose; Dr. David Lober; and David Vogel.

Present for staff: Mr. Genovese, Administrative Officer/Director of Finance; Ms. Ford, Media Specialist; Mr. Weiner, Town Counsel; Ms. Yagla, Assistant Administrative Officer, and Mrs. Shaw, Clerk

#### FIRST SELECTMAN'S REMARKS

Good evening. Like all of you I have been watching the unprovoked Russian invasion of the independent nation of Ukraine with horror and sadness. I haven't written a proclamation, as many other town and city leaders have done, which I will read into the record at the end of my remarks. We cannot ignore this needless human suffering.

As I have been saying for the past few months, this year's budget process has been extremely challenging. If all department, board and commission budget requests were granted for next fiscal year, our mil rate will be close to 50, which I know you all agree, is not sustainable.

Last year, the Board of Finance asked each department that this year's budget requests should be developed with a goal of as close to a zero percent increase as reasonably possible. Currently, the Woodbridge Board of Education is requesting an approximately 9% increase which would require a major tax increase. There were no decisions made nor votes taken at last week's Board of Finance meeting, and they will meet again on March 17. The Boards of Finance and Education are working together to find ways to lower that request without harming the quality of education.

Once again, I encourage residents to pay careful attention to the budget process and voice their opinions. The most effective way for you to share your opinion and/or ask questions is at the **Monday, April 18 Preliminary Budget Hearing** when the Board of Finance presents its proposed budget. Following this hearing the Board of Finance may make changes to its proposed budget which is then presented at the Annual Town Meeting in May.

Our budget crisis is caused by a long-term revenue problem. If we do not grow our grand list soon, we will continue to face increasingly difficult budget decisions. New revenue is critical to fund our high-quality education and other important Town services. The Town could grow its grand list by expanding the commercial district and also offering new and diverse housing.

The 2030 Task Force, charged with growing our grand list, will soon refer a proposal to the Board of Selectmen to help with our business district. This will be on our agenda next month, and I am excited to learn more about it and how it could help us bring more vitality and more businesses to the area.

Simultaneously, the Housing Opportunity Study Committee just completed a survey of residents and tonight Chair Dominick Thomas will report to the Board of Selectmen with an update on their draft plan to diversify the Town's housing options.

As a reminder, The State of Connecticut has established a benchmark which requires 10% of all housing in each municipality be affordable. Currently, only 1.18 percent of Woodbridge homes qualify. We must provide housing which is not exclusionary and also affordable.

The former Country Club of Woodbridge (CCW) property is the largest tract of developable land owned by the Town that also has sewer and public water access, which allows for more dense development under our revised zoning regulations. I remain committed to **controlling** the development of the property and **letting voters decide** this issue at a town-wide referendum.

We MUST act on our own, and avoid having development forced upon us through legal action. Tonight, we will further discuss negotiations with Arbor Haven regarding their proposal later in our meeting in Executive Session.

Betsy, Tony and I met earlier this month with resident Kent Golden who discussed his idea to put solar panels on the CCW property. We are exploring that option and how it could complement housing on the property. Additionally, Betsy and I recently met with resident Ingrid Harrison who presented an idea for developing the former CCW. Her ideas are in your packet, as well as another idea from resident Deke Hotchkiss. We also received another email on the subject yesterday from resident Brett Calistro.

Since our last Board of Selectmen meeting, Tony and I have met with Dr. Budd and WBOE Chair Lynn Piascyk for our monthly meeting and to discuss the Board of Education budget. Attorney Weiner, Tony, and I met with the Arbor Haven folks again to discuss their proposal and also make sure they have received the feedback received to date from residents, boards and commissions.

I joined the Strategic Plan subcommittee for their first meeting. They will be updating us later tonight. I met with Beth-Wood Baseball League president Dwight Rowland to receive and thank them for their annual donation to the Town. Following my monthly meeting with Police Chief Cappiello, Tony and I met with representatives from Eversource about their plan for further "vegetative management" on the land beneath their high-tension power lines. You will hear more about that from Betsy later tonight.

I also met with Amity Superintendent Dr Byars with FS Cofrancesco and FS Zeoli for our monthly meeting. I attended the SCRCOG monthly meeting. I was fortunate to join the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion book discussion on *the 1619 Project*, where there were nearly 30 participants. It was a wonderful evening.

Thank you.

I will now read the “PROCLAMATION IN SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE.”

Whereas, following the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the people of Ukraine, on December 1, 1991, voted overwhelmingly to affirm its status as an independent nation; and

Whereas, Russia’s continued attempts to control and re-subjugate the Ukrainian people have been consistently rejected by the nation; and

Whereas, Vladimir Putin, in the name of the Russian people, has invaded Ukraine without provocation and in violation of international law; and

Whereas, the invasion of Ukraine by this brutal authoritarian regime is a severe threat to the lives and well-being of tens of millions of Ukrainian civilians; and

Whereas, tens of thousands of Russians have risked their lives in protest and opposition to this invasion; and

Whereas, Russia’s Putin’s flagrant violation of state sovereignty poses a threat to all international institutions

Now therefore, be it resolved, that the Town of Woodbridge stands with the nation of Ukraine and in solidarity with all Ukrainians, living across the world and condemns the invasion of this sovereign nation, supports the full withdrawal of Russian troops, and the maintaining of the democratically elected government.

Signed at Woodbridge, Connecticut this ninth day of March 2022

**ACTION TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**PRESENTATION – 4-H GROUP**

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (McCreven – Vogel) to grant permission for the Woodbridge 4-H Group’s project to add Woodbridge to the Pollinator Pathway and to present a proclamation in support of the project on Earth Day, April 23, 2022.

**FUNDING REQUESTS**

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED** to recommend the following funding requests to the Board of Finance for consideration:

#2122-09 – Interdepartmental Transfer	Amount: \$ 3,000
To: Parks Dept – Overtime (1520-00/50410)	\$1,500
Parks Dept - Rentals (1520-00/53610)	\$1,500
From: Revenue – Donations (1-6-1100/46410)	
For: Transfer donation from Beth-wood Fathers Baseball to the Parks Department budget lines.	

(Heller – Crisco) Unanimously Approved

#2122-10 – Allocation Amount: \$ 10,000  
To: Town Plan & Zoning Commission Gen'l. Prof. Services (1180-00/52100)  
From: Board of Finance Contingency (1170-00/56800)  
For: Request is to fund a professional planner and/or attorney to assist TPZ to review and make updates and revisions as necessary to the Zoning Regulations.  
(Heller – Crisco) Unanimously Approved

#2122-11 – Intradepartmental Transfer Amount: \$ 1,500  
To: Gov't Access Television – Gen'l. Prof. Services (1135-00/52100)  
From: Gov't Access Television – Prof. Dev. Conference (1135-00/54610)  
For: Fund shortage in budget line for production personnel.  
(Heller – Crisco) Unanimously Approved

#2122-12 – Intradepartmental Transfer  
To: Public Works Overtime Regular (1310-00/50410) \$ 30,000  
Public Works Equip. Parts (1310-00/55140) \$ 10,000  
From: Public Works Highway Wages (1310-00/55140)  
For: This request is to fund overtime due to winter storms and fallen trees on roads as well as equipment parts due to higher than normal need this year.  
(Heller – Crisco) Unanimously Approved

#2122-13 – Intradepartmental Transfer Amount: \$ 5,000  
To: Public Works Sand, Salt & Materials (1310/00/55160)  
From: Public Works Road Maintenance (1310-00/55170)  
For: This request is to fund the purchase of additional treated salt for road treatment  
(Heller – Crisco) Unanimously Approved

**BULK PICK-UP CHARGES FOR INSTITUTIONS OF FAITH**

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (McCreven – Vogel) to continue the practice of waiving the bulky-waste disposal fee for institutions of faith up to \$200 for the balance of this fiscal year and FY2023.

**ADD ITEM TO AGENDA**

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (McCreven – Lober) to add to the agenda the required resolution for the Senior Center Restoration Grant.

**GRANT RESOLUTION**

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (McCreven – Crisco) to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That First Selectman Beth Heller is authorized to enter into and amend contractual instruments in the name and on behalf of the Town of Woodbridge and to affix the Corporate Seal of the Town thereon concerning a Bond Commission approval on July 23, 2021, in the

contract amount of \$300,000, the funds to be utilized to assist with the renovations of the Woodbridge Senior Center, including the transformation of outdated space, access improvements, and increased functionality. (Project #MHA213006MHASBC)

**ARPA FUNDS – UPDATE**

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Lober – Heller) to take the standard under revenue recovery.

**PERMISSION TO HOLD EVENTS ON TOWN PROPERTY**

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED** to grant permission to hold the following events on Town property:

Boy Scout Troop 907 – Annual garden/flower sale – Old Fire House Green – April 9, 16, 23, 2022  
(Heller – McCreven) Unanimous

Boy Scout Troop 907 – Troop picnic fun weekend – Town Center Green – Jun 18, 2022  
(McCreven - Lober) Unanimous

Beth-Wood Baseball League – Movie Night – Town Center Green – April 29, 2022  
(Heller – McCreven ) Unanimous

**REQUEST TO CONVENE THE ORDINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Vogel) to convene the Ordinance Committee to review a request from the Commission the Use of Publicly Owned Properties for a “No Littering” ordinance and to undertake a review of all Town Ordinances.

**TOWN PLAN & ZONING REPLY RE REQUEST FOR 8-24 REVIEW – MASSARO FARM PAVILION**

The Board **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – McCreven) to accept the favorable reply from the Town Plan and Zoning re the proposed pavilion on the Massaro Farm.

**ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THE TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS**

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Kuriakose) to acknowledge receipt of the Town Clerk’s Reports for the month ending February 28, 2022 and the cumulative report for July 1, 2021 through February 28, 2022.

**MINUTES**

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (McCreven – Vogel) to approve the following minutes as presented:

- Joint Boards of Selectmen & Finance – December 2, 2021 – Cap. Budget
- Joint Boards of Selectmen & Finance – December 7, 2022 – Cap. Budget
- Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting – February 9, 2022
- Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting – February 22, 2022 – Budget Rcnds.

**RESIGNATIONS:**

The Board of Selectmen acknowledge with regret the following resignations:

- Michael Shanbrom – Police Commission
- Tobi Nwangwu – Economic Development Comm.
- Nancy Polk – Commission on the use of Publicly Owned Property
- Chris Sorensen – Town Plan & Zoning Alt.

- Todd Sasso – Commission on the use of Publicly Owned Property

**EXECUTIVE SESSIONS**

At 7:30 p.m., the Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Vogel) to move into executive session pursuant to: 1) pursuant to CGS 1-200(6) (C) – Security Devices regarding dispatch – Selectmen Paul Kuriakose; 2) pursuant to CGS 1-200(6) (D) – Discussion of Arbor Haven Proposal to purchase the former Country Club of Woodbridge Property - and to invite Town Counsel Gerald Weiner and Administrative Officer/Director of Finance Anthony Genovese to attend.

At 8:11 p.m. the Board of Selectmen moved out of executive session. Ms. Heller stated that no motions were made or votes taken in executive session.

**ACTION ON ITEM DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board of Selectmen VOTED UNANIMOUSLY (McCreven – Vogel) to take no action on the Arbor Haven proposal for development of the former Country Club of Woodbridge property until the Board of Selectmen receives the Housing Opportunity Study Report.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a non-debatable motion by Ms. McCreven, seconded by Mr. Vogel, the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m

Geraldine S. Shaw  
Clerk