

The April 14, 2021, Regular Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectman was convened at 5:00 p.m. by First Selectman Beth Heller via teleconference. Ms. Heller declared the following members present via roll call: First Selectman Beth Heller; Deputy First Selectman Mica Cardozo, Joseph J. Crisco, Jr.; Joseph S. Dey, III; Dwight C. Rowland; and Sandra T. Stein.

Present for staff: Administrative Officer/Director of Finance Anthony Genovese; Town Counsel Gerald Weiner; Assistant Administrative Officer Betsy Yagla; and Board Clerk Geraldine Shaw.

Ms. Heller made the following statement: *“In accordance with Governor Ned Lamont’s Executive Order 7b Section 1, which suspends the open meeting requirements of in-person participation, audio and video of this Regular Meeting is being simultaneously televised live on WGATV Channel 79 and youtube@wgatv79, in order to allow the public to view and listen to our meeting.”*

The April 14, 2021, meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen may be viewed on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/e6rZm0zsSP4>

BOARD ACTION

FIRST SELECTMAN’S REMARKS

“Good evening and welcome to the April 14, 2021 Board of Selectmen regular meeting.

I am pleased to announce that I have now finalized the list names of residents who have agreed to serve on the Ad Hoc Housing Study Committee. There was a lot of interest in this committee. Fortunately we had many responses, but unfortunately not as many openings as applicants. We have a diverse group of thirteen citizens, and Attorneys DuBuque and Weiner, and Zoning Enforcement Officer Kris Sullivan as legal advisors and staff to the committee. These folks will be doing very important work and I am grateful to everyone who offered to serve. As a reminder, the committee will evaluate the data, engage the community, assess housing needs and submit a report to the Board of Selectmen, per our charge to the Committee.

The following residents have agreed to serve: Debbie Brander, Mica Cardozo, Harriet Cooper, Mary Dean, Buddy Degennaro, Nicole Donzello, Elaine Feldman, James Graham, Kathleen Hunter, Donovan Lofters, Dwight Rowland, Lewis Shaffer and Dominic Thomas.

I will ask the full group to hold its first meeting with the goal of creating the State-mandated Affordable Housing Plan. The Town Plan and Zoning Commission continues to work through the application to amend the Zoning Regulations and the Town’s Plan of Conservation and Development to permit multi-family housing in most of the Town’s residential districts, with affordable housing. The Public Hearing has been closed and now the Commission has 65 days to make their decision. You may view the application, other documents, and videos of their Public Hearings on the Town Plan & Zoning Commission page on the Town website. As a reminder, all the hearings are streamed live on local access cable Channel 79, on the WGATV [YouTube](#) channel, and on Webex.

The meeting agenda on the Town website includes the link to view as well as participate in the meetings. I am confident that the Zoning Commission will review the application in a fair, thorough, and thoughtful way, and provide an opportunity for all sides to be heard. I am equally confident that Woodbridge will remain the wonderful community that we have all come to love.

I have also added Teri Schatz to the Ad Hoc 2030 Task Force. TP&Z Chair Rob Klee had been a member of this task force but he resigned in order to prevent any possible conflicts of interest. You will remember that this group of town leaders and business owners is tasked with working on ways to grow our Grand List and make sure our Town continues into the future remaining fiscally stable.

*As many of you are aware, Verizon/Cellco has privately contracted with a Woodbridge landowner to erect a 140-foot cell tower in the area of Newton Road. **Unfortunately, as we have discussed in the past, cell towers are not approved or denied at the local level.** Neither TPZ nor the Board of Selectmen has the authority to approve or deny these structures. These decisions are the exclusive jurisdiction of the State of Connecticut Siting Council.*

The Board of Selectmen, in our desire to prevent this project from being built in a residential neighborhood, has however, hired a land use attorney to work with the Town to try to find an alternate site for the tower. The Board does not believe that a cell tower should be erected in any residential neighborhood in our Town. The Board of Selectmen will continue to do all we can to oppose this project, and we welcome your support. Should Verizon/Cellco eventually submit an application to the Siting Council regarding their current proposed location at 118 Newton Road, it will be incumbent upon all who oppose this project to submit testimony against it. It is my hope that the Board of Selectmen will vote to do so as well. We hope to get a further update from our consultant, and I will send out correspondence as soon as I do. They continue to review data and if there is a viable alternative, we will share it with Verizon and the public.

This evening we will be hearing from Alexia Belperron, President of the Amity Woodbridge Historical Society, who will be giving the Board an update on the Darling House etc. Just to let the Board know, this past week a member of the Society asked that Head of Maintenance Brad Parsons discard some of the items that had been removed from the yellow barn as part of the preparation for the next steps toward renovation. Unfortunately, no one from the Historical Society was present when Brad went down to remove what he thought were the items to be discarded, and some items that were not to be discarded, were. We have since clarified with Brad and with the Historical Society that a Society member should be present when Brad or other Town staff are asked to do work on site to prevent further miss-communication.

Earlier this month Town buildings opened to the public. The Library and the Senior Center have limited hours and, at all buildings, we are asking people to sanitize and sign in when they enter the building for contact tracing purposes. Masks are obviously required, and are required on all Town property, including outdoor facilities.

I am pleased to let you know that I received notice that this week is dedicated to recognizing Animal Control Officers throughout the country for the work they do daily. I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy National Animal Control Officer Appreciation Week. I thank our Animal Control Officers for your hard work and effort each and every day, twenty-four seven, three sixty five, that every one of you put into this profession.

Secondly, I am also pleased to announce that May 2 through May 8 is the 52nd Annual Professional Municipal Clerks week. This office is a time honored and vital part of local government, and is the oldest

among public servants. The list of what they do is way too long to list here! I know they are ever mindful of their neutrality and impartiality, rendering equal service to everyone. I thank them all for their accomplishments and service to our residents and all others who have needed their help.

*I will take this opportunity to remind everyone, both the Board and the public, of next week's **Preliminary Budget Hearing**. Last fall, in preparation for budget season, we directed all Town departments and Board and Commissions, as always, to be extra mindful of taxpayer dollars as they prepared their proposed budgets. Over the past few years, we have consolidated staff positions and reduced programs. To put it in perspective, between Fiscal Year 2015-2016 and Fiscal Year 2020-2021, the Town portion of the budget (not including the boards of education) decreased by 0.12%. As a reminder to all residents, the Preliminary Budget Hearing will be held VIRTUALLY next Monday, April 19, at 7:30 pm, at which time residents will be able to ask questions or make comments on every Town department's budget requests. The Preliminary Budget Summary will be mailed to every home in town prior to the hearing, and the Full Preliminary Budget is posted on the Town website as is the link to participate in the hearing. It will also be broadcast on Channel 79 and YouTube. I ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO PARTICIPATE.*

Lastly, the Town of Woodbridge Municipal Elections will be held on Monday, May 3rd and the Amity Regional District 5 Budget Referendum is scheduled for Wednesday, May 5th. Unlike in the fall election, absentee ballot applications will NOT be automatically mailed to all registered voters from the Secretary of the State. "No Excuses" absentee ballot applications are available online or by request at the Town Clerk's office (203-389-3424). The applications may be dropped in the Ballot Box in front of Town Hall and the Town Clerk will then mail you a ballot with two envelopes. Complete the ballot, put it in the inner envelope, sign the envelope, and put that in the outer envelope and simply drop the completed ballot in the Ballot Box. All ballots MUST be received by 8:00 pm on May 3rd for the Town Election and 8:00 pm on May 5th for the Amity Referendum. Applications are required for both the election, and the referendum.

Thank you."

REQUEST TO SELL COFFEE AND PASTRIES

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Stein – Heller) that the Town enter into a MOU agreement with Café Rebelde for the sale of coffee and pastries in the Town Center and Pease Place.

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to schedule a Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to discuss and receive information regarding the proposed ordinance prohibiting the use of artificial turf in Woodbridge.

STATE AFFIRMATIONS

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to adopt and authorize the First Selectman to sign the following State Affirmations for the year 2021:

- ADA Municipal Grievance Procedure
- ADA Notice
- Affirmative Action Policy Statement
- Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Fair Housing Policy Statement
- Fair Housing Resolution

CALL OF ELECTION FOR MAY 3, 2021

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to call the Town of Woodbridge Biennial Election to be held on May 3, 2021. The polling hours for said election are from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. to be held in The enter Gym located at 4 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge, Connecticut.

MOTION TO CALL THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) that the Town of Woodbridge Annual Meeting, pursuant to Charter Article III, Section 3-2, which is scheduled for May 17, 2021, shall be held with complete remote participation in accordance with Governor Lamont’s Executive Orders 9H and 7B.

TAX REFUNDS

Pursuant to Section 12-124 – 129 of the Connecticut General Statutes and the recommendation of the Tax Collector, the Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Cardozo) to refund tax in the amount of \$6,360.95.

FUNDING REQUESTS

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

2021-22 – Interdepartmental Transfer Amount: \$ 10,560.00
To: Fire Dept. Cleaning/custodial Svc. (1230-00/53100)
From: Revenue – Miscellaneous Grants (1-2-1100/42600)
For: Additional funding for additional cleaning and sanitizing of the fire house due to COVID19
(Heller – Crisco) Unanimously approved

2021-23 – Intradepartmental Transfer Amount: \$ 10,000.00
To: Public Works Contracted Services (Rentals) (1310-00/53610)
From: Public Works Road Maintenance (1310-00/55170)
For: To address additional tree work
(Crisco – Stein) Unanimously approved

BID WAIVER – CATCH BASIN CLEANING

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Rowland) to approve the Public Works Department request for a bid waiver to use the CRCOG bid list and award Woodbridge’s catch basin cleaning contract to Janet’s Sweeping & Property Care, LLC for a bid of \$23.00 per basin, contract total of \$37,697.00

BID AWARD #2021-04 – PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM FOR THE CENTER GYM

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Crisco) to award Bid #2021-04 – Public Address System to Valley Communications in the amount of \$20,569.65

LEASE PURCHASE AGREEMENT

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Stein – Heller) to accept the Chase Bank quote of 1.89% for five (5) annual payments, in arrears, for the financing of the replacement of Police Department IT infrastructure with a purchase of \$226,202.08.

REQUESTS TO HOLD EVENTS ON TOWN PROPERTY

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED** to approve the following applications to hold an event on Town property:

- June 3 – 8th grade celebration – (Heller – Stein) Unanimously Approved

Town sponsored “Second Saturdays”

- May 8 – Decorating Flower Pots – (Heller – Stein) Unanimously Approved
- May 15 – Chalk Art Event – (Heller – Rowland) Unanimously Approved
- June 12 – Community Tag Sale (Heller – Cardozo) Unanimously Approved
- August 14 – Arts Event – (Cardozo – Stein) Unanimously Approved
- September 11 – Craft/maker Fair – (Heller – Stein) Unanimously Approved

ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THE TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Cardozo) to acknowledge receipt of the Town Clerk’s reports for the month ending March 31, 2021 and cumulative from July 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021.

MINUTES

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED** to approve the following minutes:

March 10, 2021 – Regular Meeting – Unanimously Approved (Heller – Stein)
March 30, 2021 – Special Meeting – Unanimously Approved (Heller – Rowland)
December 1, 2020 – Capital Budget Review – Unanimously Approved (Heller – Crisco)
December 3, 2020 – Capital Budget Review – Unanimously Approved (Heller – Crisco)
January 26, 2021 – Operating Budget Review – Unanimously Approved (Heller – Crisco)
January 28, 2021 – Operating Budget Review – Unanimously Approved (Heller – Crisco)
February 2, 2021 – Operating Budget Review – Unanimously Approved (Heller – Crisco)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 7:01 p.m. the Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Rowland) to move into executive session pursuant to Connecticut General Statute(s) 1-200(6)(B); 1-210(b)(4) Litigation re tax appeal Settlement - Willow CT PROPCO LLC, 225 Amity Road, Woodbridge and to invite Mr. Genovese and Mr. Weiner to attend.

At 7:15 p.m. the Board of Selectmen moved out of executive session and returned to the regular meeting. Ms. Heller stated that no motions were made or votes taken in executive session.

Action as appropriate on matter heard in executive session – The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Stein – Cardozo) to approve the Tax Stipulation discussed in executive session – Willow Ct PROPCO, LLC vs the Town of Woodbridge and the properties located at 225 Amity Road, Woodbridge. The parties have agreed to stipulate that the value of that real estate going forward shall be in the amount of \$4,250,000. All the terms of the stipulation is fully set forth in the documented dated March ____, 2021, contained in the packet of materials distributed to the Board of Selectmen for this evening’s meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

On a non-debatable motion by Ms. Heller, seconded by Ms. Stein, the meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Geraldine S. Shaw, Clerk