

The Tuesday, March 30, 2021, Special Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen was convened at 5:06 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 Stein.

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

Ms. Heller made the following statement: *"In accordance with Governor Net 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 March 30, 2021, special meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen may be viewed on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/rhCsobbFXrQ>

PRELIMINARY BUDGET HEARING

Town Counsel Gerald Weiner explained that the preliminary budget hearing is scheduled for April 19th. Last year, due to the COVID-19 lock-down, the budget hearing was conducted virtually. Mr. Weiner said that this year the Board of Selectmen is charged with the responsibility of determining how the meetings are to be held. According to Governor Lamont's Executive Order 9H, which clarifies his previous executive orders on public meetings, the Town is allowed to conduct a fully remote meeting or a hybrid meeting incorporating both remote and in-person attendance. Mr. Weiner said that any in-person meeting must follow consultation with the State Department of Public Health, and all protocols followed. He said that he discussed the preferred type of meeting with Ms. Heller and Mr. Genovese, and they agreed that a fully remote meeting would allow everyone to safely participate, and/or view on Channel 79 and youtube, especially during what appears to be a spike in local COVID-19 cases.

Mr. Genovese said that last year's preliminary budget hearing was conducted fully via remote participation and was very successful. He said the staff has become proficient over the past year conducting various remote meetings successfully. He questioned if a hybrid model would be successful with everyone hearing the questions, and comments.

Ms. Heller agreed that the 2020 Preliminary Budget Hearing ran smoothly, and she did not know of anyone whose questions were not answered, comments read, or statements heard. She noted that she has attended hybrid meetings and they are very confusing.

The Board members agreed that given the number of people that usually attend the hearing, the requirement that staff be present to answer questions, and the preponderance of protocols that would have to be followed – conducting the meeting as fully remote made the most sense.

ACTION AS APPROPRIATE

The Board of Selectmen **VOTED UNANIMOUSLY** (Heller – Rowland) that the Town of Woodbridge Preliminary Budget Hearing, pursuant to Charter Section 6-2(e), which is scheduled for April 19,

2021, shall be held with complete remote participation in accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Order.

ADJOURNMENT

On a non-debatable motion by Ms. Heller, seconded by Ms. Stein, the meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Geraldine S. Shaw, Clerk