

**APRIL 1, 2020**

**VIA TELE-CONFERENCE**

**RE: GOVERNOR LAMONT'S EXECUTIVE ORDERS 7B AND 7I AND  
TOWN BUDGET PROCEDURE FOR FY2020-2021**

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The April 1, 2020, Special Meeting of the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen met via tele-conferencing. First Selectman Beth Heller convened the meeting at 5:01 p.m.

**FIRST SELECTMAN'S REMARKS/STATEMENT**

*"Good evening everyone. Welcome to the April 1, 2020 Special meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Pua is recording this meeting. It is streaming live on WGATV Channel 79 as well as YOU TUBE, which allows the public to view and listen to the meeting.*

*You may access here at [https://youtu.be/L-vhU2q8P\\_w](https://youtu.be/L-vhU2q8P_w)*

***Item 1 on the agenda is the First Selectman's Report and Statement.***

*Prior to my statement, I will now call each member present. Please signify you are present with an AYE as I call your name:*

*Mica Cardozo – Aye (at 5:03)*

*Joe Crisco - Aye*

*Joe Dey - Aye*

*Dwight Rowland - Aye*

*Sandy Stein – Aye*

*Beth Heller - Aye*

*Also present for the record:*

*Finance Director/Administrative Officer Tony Genovese – Aye*

*Assistant Administrative Officer Betsy Yagla - Aye*

*Town Counsel Jerry Weiner - Aye*

*Executive Assistant Gerri Shaw - Aye*

*We are "live" with audio only on Channel 79 and you tube. Because this is a virtual meeting, I would remind those present at our meeting tonight of two things:*

*PLEASE mute your phone when not speaking to eliminate background noise.*

*PLEASE state your name prior to speaking.*

*Thank you.*

*The situation at Town Hall and at the state and federal level continues to change rapidly. Things have of course continued to change over the past two and half weeks for all of us here in Woodbridge, and I have asked for this meeting to bring you all up to speed on where things stand.*

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*I will begin by thanking our wonderful town staff and all residents for being flexible and working together as we navigate through this global crisis. These are unprecedented times and the situation continues to change rapidly. Unfortunately, we now have 6 confirmed COVID-19 cases here in Town. Another reminder and a plea to all residents to only go out for necessary purchases such as medicines and food, and continue to practice social distancing. **We must all endeavor to STAY HOME, STOP the SPREAD & SAVE LIVES!***

**Item 2 on the agenda is a Discussion re Governor Lamont's Executive Order #7 I, Section 13 regarding Adoption of the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Budget.**

*Executive Order #7 I provides in part that "The Board of Selectmen shall authorize the budget-making authority within said municipality to adopt a budget for the July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 fiscal year, and to set a mill rate sufficient ... without holding votes required by charter or without complying with any in-person budget adoption requirements, including, but not limited to, annual town meetings requiring votes, referendum, and special town meetings ...  
Jerry will explain Executive Order #7 B."*

**TOWN COUNSEL'S EXPLANATION OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 7B and 7I** (Note: a copy of the appropriate sections of the executive orders is attached to these minutes as the permanent record).

Mr. Weiner explained that Governor Lamont's executive order 7B basically states that towns must suspend all in-person open meetings. This effects the towns' budget process. Executive order 7I Section 13 prohibits in-person meetings to adopt a budget which means the Preliminary Budget Hearing to received public comments regarding the proposed budget (per Town Charter) cannot be held in the usual manner. Executive Order 7I Section 13 permits the Town to take reasonable steps to publicize the town budget and the town will hold a Preliminary Budget Hearing to receive comments from the public about the budget. Therefore:

- The preliminary budget hearing will be held on April 20, 2020
- A notice, "Call", of the Preliminary Budget Hearing will be sent to each household in Town
- The Preliminary Budget Hearing will be held using telephone, video, or other technology. In person attendance will not be permitted.
- The Public will have an opportunity to offer comments on the preliminary budget.
- Questions can be e-mailed to the Town prior to the preliminary budget hearing
- The hearing will be chaired by Board of Finance Chair Matthew Giglietti

Mr. Weiner said that under normal circumstances, following the Preliminary Budget Hearing, the Board of Finance makes a final determination re the budget and it is sent to the Board of Selectmen to present at the Annual Town Meeting. However, this year

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the Town cannot hold an Annual Town Meeting – the only item on the agenda (“Call”) for the Town Meeting is the FY20-21 budget. Executive Order 7I (13) provides that the Board of Selectmen **SHALL** authorize the budget making authority (Board of Finance) to adopt a budget.

Mr. Dey and Mr. Weiner clarified that the Town cannot hold an in person Annual Meeting as the Governor’s executive orders control the procedure for FY2020-2021.

Ms. Stein asked how the Town would distribute the budget document to the residents.

Mr. Weiner said the budget document must be on line seven (7) days prior to the Preliminary Budget Hearing.

Mr. Genovese said that in addition to the full budget being available on-line, a summary will be included in the notice sent to each household, as is standard practice.

Ms. Stein recommended that the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance meet jointly to review comments received at the preliminary budget hearing.

Mr. Weiner said that such a meeting is not prohibited by the Town Charter. It would be the decision of the Board of Finance to agree to such a meeting.

The Board agreed to ask the Board of Finance to meet in joint session following the budget hearing to discuss the final budget prior to the Board of Finance setting the mill rate.

**ACTION AS APPROPRIATE**

Ms. Heller moved, seconded by Ms. Stein: *"It is hereby moved that in accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Orders 7 B and 7I Section 13, the town proceed with the following Budget Process for July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 Fiscal Year:*

*1- The Preliminary Budget Hearing shall take place on April 20, 2020 and the in person open meeting requirement for the meeting is suspended and any in-person access to the meeting will not be permitted. The Preliminary Budget Hearing will proceed remotely by conference call, video conference or other technology. The draft proposed budget will be posted on the Town website prior to the budget hearing and the public will be permitted to email to the Town any comments on the proposed budget.*

*2- In accordance with Executive Order 7 I Section 13 the BOS hereby authorizes the budget making authority of the Town, i.e. the Board of Finance, to adopt a budget for the July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 fiscal year without holding any votes of taxpayers at an Annual Town Meeting as set forth in the Town Charter. The Annual Meeting will not be held. Subsequent to members of the Board of Finance voting for and adopting the Budget, the Board of Finance shall set the mil rate for the July 1, 2020*

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*through June 30, 2021 fiscal year no later than May 18, 2020;*

*3- The First Selectman and the Administrative officer shall establish all necessary procedures to carry out this motion.*

Discussion: Mr. Dey, Mr. Cardozo and Mr. Weiner emphasized that the Governor’s orders 7B and 7I mandates the procedures as laid out in Ms. Heller’s motion. The Board also agreed that the motion give a “no later than” date for the budget to be adopted and the mill rate set.

**VOTE ON THE MOTION:** Ms. Heller called the roll for the vote:

- Mr. Cardozo – Aye
- Mr. Crisco – Aye
- Mr. Dey – Aye
- Mr. Rowland – Aye
- Ms. Stein – Aye
- Ms. Heller – Aye

Ms. Heller declared the motion carried.

**MOTION REGARDING A JOINT MEETING**

Ms. Stein moved and Mr. Crisco seconded that the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance have a meeting to discuss the preliminary budget and the comments that were made at the preliminary budget conference prior to the Board of Finance making a final decision about the mill rate and the fiscal year 2021 budget.

Ms. Heller called a roll vote:

- Mr. Cardozo – Aye
- Mr. Crisco – Aye
- Mr. Dey – Aye
- Mr. Rowland – Aye
- Ms. Stein – Aye
- Ms. Heller – Aye

Ms. Heller declared the motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Geraldine S. Shaw, Clerk

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**SEE ATTACHMENTS**

Executive Order 7B – received March 14, 2020

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**NOW, THEREFORE, I, NED LAMONT, Governor of the State of Connecticut, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Connecticut, do hereby ORDER AND DIRECT:**

- 1. Suspension of In-Person Open Meeting Requirements.** Sections 1-206, 1-225, and 1-226 of the Connecticut General Statutes, and any open meeting provision of any municipal charter, ordinance, or regulation that conflicts with this order, are suspended to the extent necessary to permit any public agency to meet and take such actions authorized by the law without permitting or requiring in-person, public access to such meetings, and to hold such meetings or proceedings remotely by conference call, videoconference or other technology, provided that: 1) the public has the ability to view or listen to each meeting or proceeding in real time, by telephone, video, or other technology; 2) any such meeting or proceeding is recorded or transcribed, and such recording or transcript shall be posted on the agency's website within seven (7) days of the meeting or proceeding, and made available within a reasonable time in the agency's office; 3) the required notice and agenda for each meeting or proceeding is posted on the agency's website and shall include information about how the meeting will be conducted and how the public can access it; 4) any materials relevant to matters on the agenda, including but not limited to materials related to specific applications, if applicable, shall be submitted to the agency a minimum of twenty four (24) hours prior and posted to the agency's website for public inspection prior to, during, and after the meeting, and any exhibits to be submitted by members of the public shall, to the extent feasible, also be submitted to the agency a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting and posted to the agency's website for public inspection prior to, during, and after the meeting; and 5) all speakers taking part in any such meeting or proceeding shall clearly state their name and title, if applicable, before speaking on each occasion that they speak.

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**Executive Order 7I – Section 13 received March 21, 2020**

**Adoption of Municipal Budgets (#13)**

- Requires a municipality's legislative body or, in a municipality where the legislative body is the town meeting, the board of selectmen, to authorize the municipality's budget-making authority to adopt a budget for the July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021 Fiscal Year and set a mill rate, notwithstanding any provision of the state statutes, special acts, municipal charters or local ordinances.
- Provides that the budget shall be adopted without holding votes required by charter or without complying with any in-person budget adoption requirements, including town meeting, referendum or special town meetings.
- Requires the budget-making authority to comply with the public meeting requirements set forth in Executive Order 7B and take all reasonable steps to publicize the draft municipal budget and receive public comment, including publishing draft budgets on the website and providing an email address or other means for the public to submit timely comments on the proposed budget.