

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

***SPECIAL MEETING
BUDGET WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS
February 22, 2023
5:30 p.m.***

***THIS MEETING
IS BEING HELD IN-PERSON
In the John Daly, Jr. Meeting Room
Town Hall, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT 06016***

AND

***REMOTELY via ZOOM Teleconference
Meeting ID: 332 683 3563
Passcode: townhall***

MEETING MINUTES

********Minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting********

Board of Selectmen

Jason E. Bowsza, First Selectman
Marie DeSousa, Deputy First Selectman
Alan Baker, Selectman
Sarah Muska, Selectman
Charles Nordell, Selectman

ATTENDANCE: First Selectman Bowsza hosted the in-person meeting. Deputy First Selectman DeSousa, Selectman Baker, Selectman Muska, and Selectman Nordell were present in person.

ABSENT: All Selectmen were present this evening.

GUESTS/SPEAKERS in-person: First Selectman Bowsza hosted the in-person meeting. Amy O'Toole, **Finance Director; Department Heads making Budget Presentations;** Melissa Maltese, **Director of Parks and Community Development; Interim Chief of Police,** Roger Hart; Robert Rybick, **East Windsor Cemetery Association;** Debbie Williams, Chairman, **Arts and Culture Committee;** Ana Hills, Chairman, **Diversity Council; Public;** Noreen Farmer (originally signed in remotely, later appeared at the in-person meeting)

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GUESTS/SPEAKERS signing in to meeting remotely: Noreen Farmer, Jennifer, Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary.

1. TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:

First Selectman Bowsza called the February 22, 2023 Special Meeting/Budget Workshop Presentations of the East Windsor Board of Selectmen to Order at 5:30 p.m. in the John Daly, Jr. Meeting Room, Town Hall, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT 06016.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

First Selectman Bowsza requested Selectman Muska to lead everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ATTENDANCE:

See Attendance noted at the beginning of the meeting.

4. BUDGET PESENTATIONS:

First Selectman Bowsza noted a change in the Budget Presentations as Len Norton, Director of the Public Works Department had a scheduling problem; the Board will hear those Budget Presentations tomorrow evening.

(EAST WINDSOR) CEMETERY ASSOCIATION:
Robert Rybick, Chairman

Robert Rybick, Chairman of the East Windsor Cemetery Association, joined the Board.

Mr. Rybick advised the Board the requested Budget for Fiscal Year 2023 – 2024 is \$50,000.00. Mr. Rybick noted the following expenses:

- \$46,000.00 for lawn care, comprised of mowing
- \$12,000.00 for snow plowing
- \$12,000.00 for tree work
- \$10,000.00 for pavement repairs

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Mr. Rybick noted the tree work is the item that suffers if the Budget request is reduced. He indicated there are some safety concerns regarding tree work in some of the cemeteries. Mr. Rybick suggested some of the tree work involves repair of fencing damaged by fallen branches.

First Selectman Bowsza called for questions from the Board; no one requested additional information.

Mr. Rybick questioned if anyone had any questions on the burial fees; no one raised any questions.

**SOCIAL SERVICES, SENIOR SERVICES, PARKS AND RECREATION,
ELDERLY COMMISSION:**

Melissa Maltese, Director of Recreation & Community Services (Shortened to Director Maltese for ease of reading)

***(PLEASE VIEW POWERPOINT PRESENTATION ON YOUTUBE VIDEO
OF THIS MEETING)***

EAST WINDSOR SENIOR SERVICES:

Director of Recreation and Community Services (Director Maltese) reported this department is responsible for daily visits and the emotional, social, and health needs of the Seniors of East Windsor, Seniors from surrounding towns are welcome as well. Director Maltese reviewed the programs available.

Director Maltese reviewed the following Budget requests:

- No change to full-time salaries as contract negotiations remain ongoing
- Proposing to convert part-time nutrition manager to full-time, while eliminating a part-time administrative position – salary difference is \$3,026.00
- Longevity decreased by \$1,000.00 due to retirement

Director Maltese noted they received a P310 Grant for a new Senior bus, delivery of which has been delayed due to supply chain issues. They are investigating alternative funding options to purchase a replacement bus.

Selectman Muska questioned if funding is requested in this budget to acquire another bus? First Selectman Bowsza suggested the funding for the replacement

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bus would come out of the CNR account, although Director Maltese is pursuing other grant opportunities.

SOCIAL SERVICES:

Director Maltese reported when a new client comes to Social Services they review a needs assessment to match the client with the appropriate program, such as energy assistance or nutrition assistance or renters assistance. Director Maltese reported they also work with the State Marshal's Office, the Police Department, and movers to assist residents facing eviction. They also work with tenants whose landlords who are unable, or unwilling, to relocate the tenant to a comparable dwelling unit.

Selectman Baker questioned if the tenant has to stay in East Windsor? Director Maltese advised Selectman Baker she has relocated tenants to East Hartford and Bloomfield within the previous year. Selectman Baker questioned the reasons for the relocation. Director Maltese cited in one instance a tree fell on the house and the owner couldn't put the tenant up any longer, the second is due to lack of heat in the home and illegal permitted work. First Selectman Bowsza cited if the Town, or the Health Department, declares a dwelling uninhabitable then it becomes the Town's responsibility to find them another apartment.

Deputy Selectman DeSousa questioned if the Department works with the tenant who's renting under Section 8 to make up the difference in the rent if the unit is a higher price? Director Maltese indicated they encourage the tenant to pursue Section 8, which is in Windsor Locks, but the wait list is approximately 3 years.

Director Maltese reviewed her Budget request for Social Services:

- No change to full-time salaries as contract negotiations remain ongoing
- Proposing a salary increase for all part-time employees
- One staff member receives longevity
- Additional funding requested to cover the cost of the Federal Relocation Act requirements

PARKS AND RECREATION:

Director Maltese reported the department manages 7 facilities, with assistance from the Public Works Department. To lessen the impact on the taxpayers they seek funding through grants and other sources; she noted the Department received

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funding through the Bonding Commission, which will be used to provide lighting for Abbe Road and an all-inclusive playground at East Windsor Park.

Director Maltese reviewed the various programs offered through the Parks and Recreation Department.

Director Maltese noted Revenue for 2021 was \$28,150.00 and for 2022 it was \$33,965.78. Snack Bar revenue increased due to the addition of the Summer Concert Series, and the return of swim lessons after the pandemic.

Director Maltese reviewed her Budget request for the Parks and Recreation Department:

- Increase in part-time salary line as mandated by the State
- Increase in permanent part-time salary line

Deputy Selectman DeSousa recalled previous discussions had indicated the part-time salary increases would be 1.75% or 2%, she requested clarification on the numbers being proposed. First Selectman Bowsza indicated that supervisors are in the third year of their contract proposing a 1.75% salary increase, plus a merit component which is reflected in another budget line pending review. The clerical contract remains under negotiation, permanent part-time salaries is increasing by \$1.00 per hour to bring them up to \$20.00 per hour as mandated by the State, employees not under a bargaining contract will get a 2% increase. Deputy Selectman DeSousa questioned the 2.75% increase reflected under the full-time salary line. Finance Director O'Toole clarified it's 1.75% for this year's merit increase plus the 1.75% for next year.

Selectman Muska thanked Director Maltese and her staff, noting a lot of people rely on them for the services they provide while being fiscally responsible while improving conditions in the community.

Deputy Selectman DeSousa questioned if the proposed funding for relocation services was a sufficient amount. Director Maltese indicated she's providing 2 rooms for a large family, which she hopes to find a rental unit for shortly, the funding requested is to cover 2 months rent and a security deposit at a new location.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT, POLICE COMMISSION, EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT, COMMUNICATIONS:**

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Interim Chief of Police Roger Hart, assisted by Interim Deputy Chief Matt Carl, and Robert Leach, Chairman of the Police Commission

(PLEASE VIEW POWERPOINT PRESENTATION ON YOUTUBE VIDEO OF THIS MEETING)

Interim Chief Hart noted Robert Leach, Chairman of the Police Commission, had a scheduling conflict and will be unable to assist this evening. Interim Chief Hart, and Interim Deputy Chief Carl will review the Department Budget request for the Board.

Interim Chief Hart noted the East Windsor Police Department achieved Tier II Accreditation in November, 2022, which preceeds the Police Reform Mandate called for in 2020. Out of 94 Connecticut municipalities that have Police Departments, only 46 departments have achieved Tier I, Tier II, or Tier III Accreditation, East Windsor is one of the 46 municipalities.

Interim Chief Hart reported the Budget being presented is comprised of the Salary budget and the Operating budget. This Salary budget is 94% of the total budget request and covers the SRO, the mental health team, the detective team, which are comprised of 26 officers (including Interim Chief Hart and Interim Deputy Chief Carl), 10 administrative/civilian employees, and 3 part-time officers (the animal control officer and the social worker). A summary of the Salary Budget follows:

- Clerical salaries remain under negotiation
- Officer salary line decreased slightly due to retirement of a senior officer and another officer left the Department, both positions were replaced with lower paid individuals
- Dispatchers salaries remain under negotiation, which include slight raises
- Administrative salaries include the Chief and Deputy Chief positions, slight increases proposed
- Part-time salary line is for the social worker
- Overtime salary line for officers and dispatchers is flat/no increase
- Training salary line is flat/no increase
- Longevity decreased due to retirement of senior officer and one employee moved from one union to another
- Overall increase in salary line is a 0.24% increase

Interim Chief Hart then summarized the Operating Budget request.

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- Police Reform Act requires drug testing and psychological testing for 20% of the employees annually for 5 years, which is an unfunded mandate at a cost of \$300.00 times the 5 years or \$1,500.00
- Dog Fund balance remains flat/no increase and is funded by licensing fees through the Town
- Vehicle maintenance remains flat/no increase at \$33,547.00 for 20 vehicles
- Travel remains flat/no increase at \$1,000.00
- Supplies increased slightly by \$404.00 or 2%
- Equipment is for the Capital Region Emergency Unit replacement of helmets and vests at an approximate cost of \$4,000.00
- Uniform replacement at a 2% increase
- Dues and Fees for classes increased by 2%
- Overall increase on Operating budget of 0.59% or \$1,313.00

Interim Chief Hart noted the employee benefits are not included in this budget proposal as they're included elsewhere in the Town budget. First Selectman Bowsza clarified it also doesn't include the contracts still under negotiation.

Interim Chief Hart reported the total budget request for the Police Department is a 0.26% increase.

First Selectman Bowsza opened discussion to the Board.

Selectman Baker noted that Longevity also included higher education incentives while Dues and Fees includes an educational reimbursement, what's the difference? Interim Chief Hart cited the Dues and Fees reimbursement is for the cost of the pursuit of the higher education, while the incentive is under each collective bargaining unit money is paid for acquiring a higher degree.

Deputy Selectman DeSousa questioned the cost of operating the dog pound. Finance Director O'Toole noted the Dog Pound Line is at \$39,000.00 is paid out of another fund.

First Selectman Bowsza questioned the status of vacancies. Interim Chief Hart suggested the Chief position is vacant, one person is being considered to fill the dispatch position, and another person is being considered to fill an animal control position.

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Selectman Nordell recalled a problem with the department being able to acquire a specific model for replacement vehicles, he questioned if that had been resolved. Interim Deputy Chief Carl indicated there had been a problem a couple of years ago with Tahoes being depleted across the nation, one has since been requested under the Capital Improvements Budget. Interim Chief Hart also noted that a portion of funding received through a grant has been used to purchase and outfit the SRO vehicle. Discussion continued regarding the vehicle replacement schedule under the CIP requests.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

Interim Chief Hart noted the following:

- Annual stipend to remain the same at \$23,500.00
- Stipen funds 2 personnel, and a small stipend for an additional 2 more people
- The budgeted amount for the phone, communications/Everbridge suite, and supplies remains flat/no increase
- Equipment maintenance, which includes maintenance of generators in the various buildings, has a small increase due to the potential for replacement parts for the older generators
- Overall increase for Emergency Management is 5%, while the overall increase of the entire budget is only 2%

Interim Chief Hart advised the Board the Town received a reimbursement of the EMP Grant, which are Federal funds that the Town receives through the State, in the amount of \$6,417.40, Finance Director O'Toole felt the reimbursement was for FY 2019. Interim Chief Hart noted he is in the process of reapplying for the Local Emergency Operation Plan Grant which would reimburse the Town another \$5,000.00.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Interim Chief Hart noted the following:

- The Town has a service agreement with Marcus Communications to maintain the radio system, and its equipment – main infrastructure of the radio system and dispatch consoles. While Marcus Communications has been good about keeping the cost minimal Interim Chief Hart has included a small (3%) increase if replacement of individual radios is needed

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- Tolland County now handles communications for the Police Department, while both fire departments and the ambulance association are now managing their own dispatch, the cost of services has been adjusted accordingly.

ARTS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE:
Debra Williams, Chair

Debbie Williams, Chair of the Arts and Culture Committee joined the Board. Ms. Williams noted the Committee is a relatively new committee, she reviewed some of the various projects completed within the last year, including 2 projects with the East Windsor High School, a mural on the outside of the High School, 2 projects at Broad Brook School, and possibly a mural within the school, a mural for the Children's section of the Warehouse Point Library, the mural at the Connecticut Trolley Museum – which was their first project – and they're partnering with the Trolley Museum to do "car cards" which are card advertisements for local businesses to be displayed in various trolley cars, 3 showcases during the Parks and Recreation Concert Series last year, working with the East Windsor Soccer Club to paint the kickboard at Osborn Field.

Ms. Williams summarized the the Arts and Culture Committee's Budget requests:

- Total budget request is \$4,000.00, which is the same amount requested last year
- \$1,500.00 would be allocated to pop-up workshops featuring visiting artists to be held at the Broad Brook Center for the Arts. The intent is to showcase local artists teaching their craft to others. They've also discussed a plein-air workshop where we take a group of people into an outside environment and encourage them to paint in the fresh air
- \$500.00 to participate in a local street fair to be held at the Broad Brook Opera House. Discussions continue with the owner of the Broad Brook Garage to paint a mural on their retaining wall. They were considering turning the painting into an event, with food trucks, so people could watch the muralist work
- \$500.00 to create a collaborative mural at the East Windsor Park during National Night Out
- \$500.00 for materials and supplies for contests for creating and displaying artwork within the community
- \$500.00 for local artists to create pieces in their fields

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- Stipends for groups or organizations they collaborate with for projects, or to use for operational funds to pay snacks while the artists or kids doing community service are working

First Selectman Bowsza called for comments or questions.

Selectman Nordell noted the Committee has been doing some great stuff, it seems like every event the Town is hosting this group is there, including or incorporating people into the events. He commended the group for getting out there and engaging the community. Ms. Williams suggested a group's involvement, and funding support, makes it a collaborative effort and then they're invested in the project.

Selectman Baker questioned the status of the wood sculpture for the American Heritage River Commission? Ms. Williams reported the first one was completed but the artist would only accept cash, she reached out to another artist who did a similar sculpture for the City of Bristol but that artist would only accept cash as well, so she's still working on the project.

Hearing no further questions First Selectman Bowsza thanked Ms. Williams for her presentation.

**DIVERSITY COUNCIL:
Ana Hills, Member**

Ms. Hills noted she doesn't have a PowerPoint presentation, but she does have coloring books to share with the Board.

Ms. Hills summarized the Diversity Council's 2023-2024 Budget requests:

- Total budget request is \$3,000.00
- They plan to implement the following:
- The Witness Stone Project, through which they look for enslaved people that lived in town. They work with middle school students to gather information, at the end of the program they put a "witness stone", which is a stone with the enslaved person's name on it, and they place that stone where they lived, worked, or worshiped. The anticipated cost of the project is \$5,000.00. First Selectman Bowsza questioned who in the school would be working with them? Ms. Hills indicated she's talked with Superintendent Tudryn, the

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Assistant Superintendent, Darryl Rouillard, and the Diversity Center within the High School.

- Continued presentations of the segments of the 3-part series on March 15th, April 5th, and May 2nd in the Broad Brook School Cafeteria
- Increased use of a Facebook page
- Working with Crayola regarding licensing for the coloring book
- They are working with Finance Director O'Toole regarding their fund-raising process, and had reached out to the Connecticut Diversity and Equity Department for assistance with grant applications. They have also partnered with the City of Bristol Diversity Council for advice

First Selectman Bowsza called for questions from the Board.

Selectman Baker questioned if the Diversity Council has talked to the Board of Education regarding funding for the additional segments of the Witness Stone Project? Ms. Hills indicated she spoke to Randi Reichle, the Chair of the Board of Education, who referred her to Mr. Darryl Rouillard about the project.

Selectman Muska questioned if the \$3,000.00 you're asking for include, besides the recording secretary, the deposit for this project? What are the other costs? Ms. Hills suggested the Facebook page is free, Crayola hasn't come back to them with a cost for the coloring book, the bulk of the remainder of the requested budget is for the Witness Stone project. Selectman Muska questioned what was proposed for fund-raising projects. Ms. Hills suggested they'll approach every small business, bake sales, anything they can do to raise the money.

Hearing no further requests for questions or comments, First Selectman Bowsza thanked Ms. Hills for her presentation.

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, SANITATION, TOWN
PROPERTY, ROADS, IT, BUILDING COMMISSION:
Len Norton, Town Engineer/Director of the Public Works Department:**

Presentations rescheduled.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

First Selectman Bowsza queried the members of the in-person audience for comments.

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Noreen Farmer, 247 South Water Street: Ms. Farmer suggested it's exciting to see, the people in the splash pads at the park, the artists, and walking in to the schools and looking for the stone gardens. People are coming out of the woods from COVID and it's exciting to see the community coming together and doing things that are positive and inspiring. If there's a way to give them a little bit more Ms. Farmer is all for it because they're working their butts off and deserve to do it with a little less stress.

First Selectman Bowsza offered the on-line participants an opportunity to speak, no one requested to be acknowledged.

First Selectman Bowsza called for a motion to **ADJOURN.**

6. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Muska moved/Nordell seconded/DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: In Favor: DeSousa/Baker/Muska/Nordell

Respectfully submitted, -----
Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary, East Windsor Board of Selectmen