

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

REGULAR MEETING

January 6, 2022

7:00 p.m.

***DUE TO THE INCREASE IN
COVID ACTIVITY THIS MEETING
IS BEING HELD REMOTELY ONLY***
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 remote meeting. Selectman Baker, Selectman Muska, and Selectman Nordell were present remotely; Deputy First Selectman DeSousa was not able to attend the meeting.

ABSENT: As noted previously, Deputy First Selectman DeSousa was unable to join the Board this evening.

GUESTS/SPEAKERS in-person: None; remote access only.

GUESTS signing in to meeting remotely: Ruth Anne Lansner, Tom Lansner, Board of Finance; Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary.

1. TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:

First Selectman Bowsza called the Regular Meeting of the East Windsor Board of Selectmen dated January 6, 2022 to Order at 7:00 p.m. via remote access.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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

3. ATTENDANCE:

See Attendance noted at the beginning of the meeting.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: None.

First Selectman Bowsza noted the Board Minutes for the Regular Meeting on December 16, 2021 were note ready approval; he requested a motion to postpone consideration of the Minutes until the Board's next meeting.

MOTION: To POSTPONE the approval of the December 16, 2021 Board of Selectmen's Regular Meeting Minutes until the Selectmen's January 20, 2022 Meeting

Nordell moved/Muska seconded/DISCUSSION: None

**VOTE: In Favor: Baker, Muska/Nordell
(No one opposed/No abstentions)**

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

First Selectman Bowsza noted the first opportunity for anyone signed in remotely to offer comments or questions. No one requested to speak.

6. COMMUNICATIONS:

A. E-mail correspondence from Joe Chaisson:

First Selectman Bowsza noted he had received an e-mail from Joe Chaisson, who had previously worked as a reporter for the Journal Inquirer. At Mr. Chaisson's request First Selectman Bowsza read his correspondence into the record: (See Attachment A)

First Selectman Bowsza wished Mr. Chaisson well in his new assignment, and noted he had always represented the Town fairly during his time with the Journal Inquirer.

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7. **BOARD AND COMMISSIONS RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS:**

- A. **Resignation:** None
- B. **Reappointments:** None
- C. **New Appointments:**

- 1. Mark Simmons (R), Housing Authority for a term expiring December 1, 2022

MOTION: To APPOINT Mark Simmons (R), Housing Authority for a term expiring December 1, 2022

Muska moved/Baker seconded/DISCUSSION: First Selectman Bowsza noted he had always held Mark in high esteem; he's pleased to see him volunteer to join the Housing Authority. He felt Mark will make a good addition to the group. Selectman Baker echoed First Selectman Bowsza's comments.

**VOTE: In Favor: Baker, Muska/Nordell
(No one opposed/No abstentions)**

8. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

***A. South Road Ownership Option Update:**

Any starred (*) items will not be discussed but will remain on the agenda pending receipt of additional information.

***B. Polling location Change:**

Any starred (*) items will not be discussed but will remain on the agenda pending receipt of additional information.

***C. Broad Brook Fire Memorandum of Understanding:**

Any starred (*) items will not be discussed but will remain on the agenda pending receipt of additional information.

9. **NEW BUSINESS:**

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A. Tax Refunds:

MOTION: To APPROVE Tax Refunds in the amount of \$1,767.52

Nordell moved/Muska seconded/DISCUSSION: None.

**VOTE: In Favor: Baker/Muska/Nordell
(No one opposed/No abstentions)**

10. SELECTMEN COMMENTS AND REPORTS:

A. Jason Bowsza:

(See Attachment B)

B. Marie DeSousa:

No report; Deputy First Selectman DeSousa not present this evening.

C. Charlie Nordell:

(See Attachment C)

D. Alan Baker:

Selectman Baker wished everyone attending this meeting, and everyone in Town in general, a Happy New Year.

Selectman Baker noted the Broad Brook Fire Department Commissioners will be holding a remote Budget Workshop on Monday, January 10, 2022. He reported the Broad Brook Fire Department is proposing a zero-increase budget; he doesn't see that changing.

And, to everyone, if you haven't gotten vaccinated, get vaccinated; if you haven't gotten your booster shot, get your shot; and wear your mask when meeting with others in person. Selectman Baker indicated he's glad to hear Selectman Nordell is doing better.

E. Sarah Muska:

(See Attachment D)

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11. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

First Selectman Bowsza noted this is the second opportunity for anyone signed in remotely to offer comments or raise questions; no one requested to be acknowledged.

- 12. EXECUTIVE SESSION** – Pursuant to C.G.S. 1-200 (6)(b), negotiations, (6)(e) discussion of any matter which would result in the disclosure of public records, or the information contained therein described in subsection (b) of section 1/210.
Action possible:

MOTION: To GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION Pursuant to C.G.S. 1-200 (6)(b), negotiations, (6)(e) discussion of any matter which would result in the disclosure of public records, or the information contained therein described in subsection (b) of section 1/210 at 7:17 p.m. Attending the Executive Session will be First Selectman Bowsza, Selectman Baker, Selectman Muska, and Selectman Nordell.

Baker moved/Nordell seconded/DISCUSSION: None

**VOTE: In Favor: Baker, Muska/Nordell
(No one opposed/No abstentions)**

LET THE RECORD SHOW the Recording Secretary signed out of the Meeting at 7:17 p.m.

First Selectman Bowsza reported the Board had exited the Executive Session at 7:53 p.m. He noted no action was taken.

First Selectman Bowsza called for a motion to adjourn.

13. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 7:54 p.m.

Muska moved/Nordell seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted, -----
Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary, East Windsor Planning and Zoning Commission

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ATTACHMENTS:

- A.** Correspondence from Joe Chaisson
- B.** First Selectman Bowsza's Report
- C.** Selectman Nordell's Report
- D.** Selectman Muska's Report

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BOARD OF SELECTMAN – 1/6/2022 – ATTACHMENT A

E-mail from Joe Chaisson, former Journal Inquirer Reporter:

Dear East Windsor Board of Selectmen:

As some of you may already know I am no longer a reporter for the Journal Inquirer, therefore I will not be covering East Windsor anymore. I started my newest adventure on Monday as a producer for Western Mass News in Springfield.

I just want to tell you all how much of a pleasure it was to work with all five of you. I was lucky enough to cover your great town for the entirety of my two year tenure at the JI, and I was so incredibly honored to have that responsibility. Throughout those two years I dealt with, including business owners, Police Officers, teachers, town employees, fire officials and elected officials, were so friendly to me. I've covered several other towns along the way and without a doubt, your town's group of Selectmen is far and wide the most professional bunch in the area. East Windsor will always have a special place in my heart, and I thank you all for your help along the way.

**All the best,
Joe Chaisson**

BOARD OF SELECTMAN – 1/6/2022 – ATTACHMENT B

First Selectman's Report – January 6, 2022

Happy New Year!

For more than a month, COVID-19 numbers in East Windsor have been increasing at an alarming rate. In terms of cases per week, cases per 100,000 residents, and 14-day rolling average, our numbers are roughly six times higher than they were a month ago. Because of that, I have ordered a universal indoor mask mandate for any person over the age of two years old, when someone is eating or drinking in a bar or restaurant, or if they have a written exemption from a doctor. The order is effective tomorrow and will last until February 1st.

On New Year's Day, the Town was able to distribute about 3,000 at-home COVID test kits provided by the state. I want to thank State Representative Jaime Foster, Caren Paradise, Kevin Green, George Johnson, Joe Sauerhoefer, Melissa Maltese, Samantha Charette, Valerie Galinski, Maureen Duclos and Heidi Alexander for volunteering to make the event a success.

We will be doing another at-home COVID test distribution on Saturday, January 8, from 11am to 1pm – or while supplies last - at the Town Hall. This will again be a drive-through model. Please remain in your vehicles and wear a mask when a volunteer approaches your window. Tests will be available to East Windsor residents only. Proof of residency will be required, and we will provide one test kit per valid ID,

N95 masks will also be available to the general public as follows over the next few weeks: • Monday-Thursday at the Town Hall and at the Town Hall Annex from 12:30pm to 4:30pm • Saturdays at the Warehouse Point Library from 10am-3pm.

We were also able to provide a PCR testing event yesterday at the Town Hall Annex. We are working with our partners at the East Windsor Ambulance Association and at Priority Urgent Care to set up another testing opportunity

We have completed an application for reimbursement through FEMA for COVID-related activities undertaken by the Town in 2021. If fully funded, this would mean more than \$30,000 in reimbursed funds to the Town. Thanks to Finance Director Amy O'Toole, Chief Ed DeMarco, and Deputy Chief Roger Hart for their work to obtain that reimbursement.

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The Fiscal Year 2022/2023 budget process has begun. Finance Director Amy O'Toole and I have met with roughly half of the departments/agencies submitting budget requests already, and we anticipate wrapping up those meetings next week. So far there are no surprises, although our budget is always tight. This year will be no exception.

To add transparency to the budget process and Town finances in general, we have recently entered a contract with a company called Cleargov that will provide detailed financial information about the Town's budget in a more transparent and in an interactive way. It is my hope that this added layer of transparency will provide a sense of confidence to the taxpayers in town that their money is being managed responsibly.

On December 18th, the East Windsor Veterans Commission held their annual Wreaths Across America ceremony. Congratulations to MC Dan Morgan and the commission members for putting together a well-organized event.

The Town is constantly looking for ways to improve our constituent service delivery. This isn't to say that there is a problem per se but improving the means and methods by which we work for the public can always be strengthened. To that end, we recently held a de-escalation training for Town employees. The training was provided by Officer Tamrah Stepien of the East Windsor Police Department. Officer Stepien holds an MSW, has extensive training and experience in de-escalation, and heads East Windsor's Mental Health Team. Thanks to Officer Stepien and EWPd for sharing your knowledge and expertise.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason E. Bowsza
First Selectman

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN – 1/6/2022 – ATTACHMENT C

Selectman Nordell's report 1/6/2022

I would echo Selectman Muska's statement about the distribution of test kits and masks that took place last weekend.

On Monday the 3rd I did attend the WHPFD meeting which Sarah Muska reported on.

On Tuesday I attended the CT Water Company quarterly meeting. In this meeting they gave a presentation on the following points. PURA has required CWC to keep the interest free payment plan available.

Federal assistance is also available and can be obtained in accordance with the operation fuel assistance program. They also have a rate assistance plan as well that can be obtained through social services.

They recently compiled their customer survey results and got very favorable percentages and comments.

They have followed the OSHA mandate of requiring all employees to be vaccinated in order to continue employment.

PURA authorized a WICA(Water Infrastructure and Conservation Adjustment) to a 2.4% increase which allows CWC to fund infrastructure projects and water main replacements. CWC has budgeted for 61.4 million dollars for infrastructure projects across the state for 2022.

CWC also contributed 120million dollars in 2021 in community grants and programs.

CWC has partnered with upcycle to sell rain barrels to customers with delivery for those interested. More info on their website about that.

March 1st is the deadline for firefighter training and equipment grants.

I had the unfortunate privilege of suffering from a case of Covid for the two weeks prior to Christmas. During that time I missed a Selectmen's Meeting and several others. Covid is still hitting my household and seems to just get us one at a time dragging out the process. At this point I still have the lingering effects of a cough and a loss of smell and taste. As we all know our community and essentially the whole world is suffering from this terrible illness. I sympathize with everyone because whether you have Covid or not it is in some way affecting the entire world and the way we live our lives. If you are being affected or are infected I hope it is in the most minimal way possible. Stay safe out there and look in on those who may be needing help and most of all have patience with one another.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN – 1/6/2022 – ATTACHMENT D

Selectmen's Report - January 6, 2022

Happy New Year! I'd first like to start off by commending First Selectman Jason Bowsza, Recreation and Community Services Director Melissa Maltese and all that were involved in the excellent execution of the Mask and COVID Test Kit Distribution on Saturday, January 1, 2022 at Town Hall. Not only were these kits in the possession of the Town quickly, but the timing and organization of making sure that they got into the hands of residents promptly, should be recognized. I have heard from so many residents just how grateful they are. Thank you to all who volunteered to make sure the process ran smoothly; from directing traffic to handing items out, thank you.

On January 3, 2022 I attended the Warehouse Point Board of Fire Commissioners meeting, covering for Selectman Nordell.

Chairman Lou Flynn informed the Commission that he had received communications with disapproval of the portion of Selectman Nordell's Selectmen's Report pertaining to the Warehouse Point Fire District given on December 2, 2021. There was a lengthy conversation discussing whether it is a conflict of interest for Charlie Nordell to serve as a Fire Commissioner and the District's liaison from the Board of Selectmen. Passing by a majority vote, the Board voted to consult legal counsel to investigate if there is a conflict of interest.

On December 13, 2021 the District voters voted, thirty two in favor and zero opposed to authorize the Warehouse Point Fire District to purchase the property at 81 Bridge Street for \$225,000.

There were sixty one fire calls in the month of December and a total of seven hundred and forty three calls in 2021. The Department hired four new part time staff to cover shifts, as well as three new volunteers and one junior member who were voted into the senior membership.

The Board of Fire Commissioners will hold their first Budget Workshop on January 24, 2022.

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The Economic Development Commission canceled their January meeting and did not meet.

Submitted With Sincerity,

Sarah A. Muska, Selectman