

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

SPECIAL MEETING

March 23, 2023

7:00 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 Selectman

Alan Baker, Selectman

Sarah Muska, Selectman

Charles Nordell, Selectman

ATTENDANCE: First Selectman Bowsza hosted the in-person meeting. Deputy 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. Also present were Ruth Calabrese, **Director of Planning and Community Development**; Ken Rich, **Building Official**; Joseph Sauerhoefer, **Deputy Director of the Public Works Department**. Public: Paul Anderson, Tom Lansner, Patricia Shary, Wayne Shary.

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

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1. TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:

First Selectman Bowsza called the March 23, 2023 Special Meeting of the East Windsor Board of Selectmen to Order at 7:02 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 Baker 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:

A. February 16, 2023 Board of Selectmen Public Hearing (CDS):

First Selectman Bowsza noted the availability of the CDS Public Hearing Minutes for the February 16, 2023, he called for comments, or revisions. Hearing no request for revisions, First Selectman Bowsza called for a motion of approval.

MOTION: To APPROVE the Board of Selectmen Public Hearing Meeting Minutes for February 16, 2023.

Muska moved/Baker seconded/DISCUSSION: None

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

B. February 23, 2023 Board of Selectmen Special Meeting/Budget Workshop:

First Selectman Bowsza then noted the Minutes for the February 23, 2023 Board of Selectmen's Special Meeting/Budget Workshop are also available for approval; he called for comments or revisions for these Minutes. No one requested any changes; First Selectman Bowsza called for a motion of approval.

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MOTION: To ACCEPT the Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes of February 23, 2023 as presented.

DeSousa moved/Muska seconded/DISCUSSION: None

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

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

First Selectman Bowsza noted the first opportunity for anyone in the in-person audience to comment:

Paul Anderson, 89 Main Street, Broad Brook: Mr. Anderson noted in his review of the latest iteration of the blight ordinance that's going to be discussed tonight and he is still concerned. It appears the property owner has no recourse to questions regarding what's taking place until they decide not to pay a fine. Mr. Anderson noted that nowhere under the blight warning letter does it give the property owner the ability to disagree? Mr. Anderson suggested it's one person's opinion and one person's pile of evidence they think they have that's it, there's no recourse. And if you get to a hearing you've already been fined and if the hearing comes after the blight warning letter it appears a member of the Board would preside over the hearing, which Mr. Anderson isn't opposed to. Mr. Anderson suggested the blight hearing officer is – again – a one person opinion. Mr. Anderson suggested two people have to decide a property is a problem, and you're all done unless you go to Court, which is not reasonable for the average person, it's too expensive.

Mr. Anderson noted under "blight definitions" more than one inoperable or unregistered motor vehicle is listed; Mr. Anderson indicated he totally disagrees with that concept. People could have vehicles they're trying to do things with and they have nothing. There's no wiggle room here, there's no exceptions. It's just if you have more than one and you're done.

Mr. Anderson noted under "warning citations, hearings and fines" the corrective action is to provide a reasonable amount of time where the property owner could correct the blight, and that's a situation where you have no contest. The property owner can't say no, it's not true, it's not correct.

Mr. Anderson noted then you have a situation where the blight conditions are corrected eventually within 90 days regardless of weather conditions. If that

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happens in early December, and you may have snow until early February it may not be possible. The property owner has nothing. This ordinance is just not good.

Mr. Anderson suggested his personal opinion is it's his property, not the Town's. Mr. Anderson noted he's lived in the same place since 1971, it's the same house he's owned all that time, and now he feels like his ownership is being compromised, and that's not acceptable to him.

Patricia Shary, 119 Depot Street: Regarding the car situation, Mrs. Shary suggested if you have a car you're trying to fix up you buy a "parts" car that would be in violation because there's no registration on it. That's why Mrs. Shary is against this blight ordinance.

Wayne Shary, 119 Depot Street: Mr. Shary suggested there were two points he would like to address. Mr. Shary questioned if State-owned property was exempt from this ordinance; First Selectman Bowsza replied in the affirmative, noting the State has sovereignty and the municipal code doesn't apply. Mr. Shary then questioned how farmland fits into this, he suggested he felt farmland would be exempt as they have a totally different set of rules. First Selectman Bowsza suggested they discuss that issue offline but he felt they would agree to disagree on that.

Mr. Shary then addressed the unregistered motor vehicles, to fix a car sometimes takes multiple cars for parts. If you have two cars to fix a third car that is a violation. And, an unregistered motor vehicle could be a lawn mower, a tractor, anything with a motor that runs and is self-propelled is a motor vehicle.

First Selectman Bowsza queried the in-person audience for comments, no one else requested to speak. First Selectman Bowsza then offered an opportunity to speak to the online/remote participants.

Noreen Farmer, 247 South Water Street: Mrs. Farmer suggested she appreciated the effort everyone has put into the blight ordinance, people worked hard on it and had every good intention, but she's tried to go through it she got dizzy trying to figure out what applies to who and where and what could happen. She agreed that there were probably places it was a necessity for but she questioned if perhaps we've gone a little too far with it. Mrs. Farmer recalled she had issues with grass being too long, and she's not even sure that's been addressed. Mrs. Farmer questioned if perhaps the blight ordinance could be

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toned done a bit, or directed towards the things we're truly trying to go after. Mrs. Farmer reiterated she got lost trying to figure out the recent proposal, she felt a lot of people will be getting citations who won't be able to figure out where they're going.

First Selectman Bowsza offered the opportunity to address the Board to the online/remote participants again; no one requested to be acknowledged.

6. COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Budget Message – March 15, 2023:

First Selectman Bowsza noted the Budget Message he's drafted after deliberations made by the Board. He noted the Budget Message addresses the requirements of the Town Charter. First Selectman Bowsza noted the Budget Message is also available on the Town Website.

B. East Windsor 2023 Vendor-in-Place (VIP) Program Letter Regarding Installation of Centerline Rumble Strips:

Regarding the 2023 Vendor-In-Place Program, First Selectman Bowsza noted the State wants to install centerline rumble strips, which should help anyone who inadvertently crosses the center line. The State is seeking the Town's acquiescence along State highways, and they are requesting that the Town waive a public hearing on their proposal. First Selectman Bowsza questioned the Board for comments; hearing no opposition he indicated he'll advise the State of the Town's agreement and the waiver of the public hearing.

C. East Windsor – Revaluation Penalty Waiver:

First Selectman Bowsza referenced correspondence received from Secretary Beckham regarding his request to waive penalties associated with not filing the Property Revaluation last year. The Secretary has granted the Town's request for a waiver, and this completes the process for the Town to delay the revaluation process for a year. First Selectman Bowsza noted the process has been closed.

7. BOARD AND COMMISSIONS RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS:

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First Selectman Bowsza noted the Board has one reappointment and one new appointment to consider this evening.

A. **Resignation:** None

B. **Reappointments:**

1. **Wesley Bell (R), Agricultural Commission, regular member for a term expiring April 2, 2026:**

First Selectman Bowsza requested the Board to postpone this appointment until the April 6th Meeting. He understands Mr. Bell would like to be reappointed as an Alternate Member, Staff is researching a replacement for the Regular Membership position.

MOTION: To POSTPONE Item B. 1. until the Board's next meeting on April 6, 2023.

Muska moved/Nordell seconded/DISCUSSION: None

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

C. **New Appointments:**

1. **Kathleen Pippin, (R), Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Agency, alternate member for a term expiring February 6, 2024:**

First Selectman Bowsza noted the request for appointment of Kathleen Pippin to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Agency. Mrs. Pippin has noted she attends the meetings presently, her husband is already a seated member of the Agency.

MOTION: To APPOINT Kathleen Pippin (R), to the Inlands Wetlands and Watercourse Agency as an Alternate Member.

DeSousa moved/Baker seconded/DISCUSSION: Selectman Baker indicated he'll attest Mrs. Pippin has been to about 500 meetings.

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

First Selectman Bowsza requested the Addition of the term of service.

Deputy Selectman DeSousa AMENDED her motion, Selectman Baker amended his second.

AMENDED MOTION: For a term expiring February 6, 2024.

DeSousa moved/Baker seconded/DISCUSSION: .

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

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. Discussion of Permit Link Proposal for Development of Land Use Module:

Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese recalled for the Board that she had previously provided them with an outline of permit modules to track land use permits currently stored on paper. Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese noted that the engagement with Permit Link provides the Town with a tailored module at a discounted price, Permit Link will then sell this module to other municipalities.

Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese referenced two pages of the outline, one is related to the fees quoted by Permit Link, and the second is related to data extraction. She recalled that during her previous appearance before the Board they had wanted a legal review of the data extraction. She's found the Town will be able to get the data and the application attachments will be available on the Town's server as well as any forms associated with the data. If we chose to cancel the engagement with Permit Link they would be able to provide our data to the Town for a fee.

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Director of Planning and Community Development cited the reason for the delay in the contract review was ambiguity regarding a license agreement for the software, and the contract agreement. Both the Town Attorney and Permit Link's attorneys have determined them to be two totally different things. We're now in a position where our attorneys are comfortable with the service contract for the data retrieval.

Noting an experience with a prior vendor regarding ownership of the Town's data First Selectman Bowsza advised the Board he had asked Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese to make sure that the Town retained ownership of its information with this vendor. He noted that concern has been incorporated into the current documents.

Deputy Selectman DeSousa questioned the \$2,500.00 discount referenced in the document. Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese suggested the Town is paying a fee for Permit Link to build the modules at a discounted fee, but the \$2,500.00 is an annual service fee for updates and support. She indicated the Town won't incur that fee until the module is up and running.

First Selectman Bowsza noted that Finance Director O'Toole has confirmed the financing for this product is part of the Planning Department Budget; Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese replied in the affirmative. He questioned that the \$2,500.00 annual fee would be part of the IT Budget; Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese clarified that fee would be part of the Planning Department Budget as well.

Selectman Baker indicated he had a question regarding data extraction. He noted the document provided for the Board references a \$100.00 permit fee if it exceeds 15 types of permits. He questioned that there were 15 types of permits? Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese indicated the permit types would be Wetland Permits, Special Use Permits, etc. She noted the module would track conditions of approval, expiration dates, reminder letters. Selectman Baker questioned if the module would provide reminders to track application phases for the status of erosion controls? Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese indicated the module would create automatic e-mails to permit holders and staff and templates for approval letters.

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First Selectman Bowsza called for additional comments; hearing no one request to additional discussion he called for a motion.

MOTION: To AUTHORIZE the First Selectman to sign the Point Software License Agreement and the Permit Link Services Contract as presented.

Baker moved/Muska seconded/DISCUSSION: None

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

B. Discussion of Blight Ordinance:

First Selectman Bowsza noted Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese and Ken Rich, Building Official have created a new version of the proposed blight ordinance. He referenced the public comments made earlier, and asked for comments from Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese and Building Official Rich.

Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese indicated they've spent a lot of time in an effort to simplify the blight ordinance. They've revised the definitions, and have reviewed a previous e-mail with Town Attorney Brian McCann. They have provided for the Board a two-page blight ordinance, and a Memorandum of Law which is based on the Statutes, and explains the process to implement the blight ordinance.

Discussion briefly occurred regarding the documentation provided to the Selectmen for review. First Selectman Bowsza opened discussion to the Board.

Selectman Muska referenced language within the process explanation of a "Blight Department", she questioned if a new department would be established? Director of Planning and Community Development suggested the language is a template at this point, as it also references a Blight Officer. Selectman Nordell cited confusion as well, as he noted suggested revisions had been made at previous meetings, he's unable to determine if those revisions have been incorporated in the documents being reviewed this evening. Selectman Muska indicated she was unsure of the addition of previous suggestions as well.

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Selectman Nordell opened discussion on vehicles. He agreed that in some instances it could be blight, but he can understand the disappointment of citizens in seeing that as part of the ordinance. Selectman Nordell agreed, vehicles can be a lot of things, including lawn mowers, tractors, and cars. He agreed that no one wants to live next to a junk yard, but if you're a collector of 1967 Chevy Chevelles and you have several to make one that will someday be operable, he questioned the avenue to circumvent that situation as blight to appease the Town and the person who owns the five vehicles they're trying to make into one. Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese suggested that currently Zoning requires vehicles to be registered, or to be kept within a structure, and if they're in a structure Staff wouldn't be looking at them as blight.

First Selectman Bowsza concurred that the Section 404 of the Zoning Regulations addresses the storage of vehicles, Selectman Baker and Selectman Nordell suggested if it's covered under the Zoning Regulations then the issue of multiple vehicles could be removed from the blight ordinance; Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese concurred. Selectman Nordell suggested he could envision potential issues with the multiple vehicles, which would be: 1) if it's an environmental hazard leaking oil and or gas into the ground, and 2) the issue of multiple vehicles is a hazard to fire and first responders. Selectman Nordell questioned if there were other avenues available to address those issues. Selectman Nordell referenced the example brought to the Board previously, noting to him that wasn't blight, it's a couple of cars parked on someone's property. He suggested removing the language under the blight ordinance, or change the wording to "more than two inoperable or unregistered vehicles not covered" by a tarp or portable structure." Selectman Muska felt that was infringing on the people's right to tell them they have to have these items.

First Selectman Bowsza returned discussion to what is a motor vehicle? He suggested defining a vehicle as something registered by the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles; they don't register lawn mowers.

Selectman Baker suggested Mr. Shary's earlier comment about farmland being exempt is correct.

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Selectman Nordell suggested the “purpose” section should be totally changed. He suggested alternative language – *“the blight ordinance is designed to protect first responders so they’re not seriously injured, or killed, while responding to a situation at a home, protecting town officials as well and where tenants and renters are faced with blight situations that they can’t get resolved through their resources that they have an avenue that it protects them, and it should be for neighbors having difficulty trying to sell their homes or who feel their property values have been diminished due to the proximity of a blighted property. This ordinance is designed to protect the Town of East Windsor and its citizens from such outcomes caused by blight, and that the ordinance is not designed to standardize a form of living or appearance in the Town. Its objective is to eliminate injury or death caused by blight.”* Selectman Nordell suggested this was a more reasonable proposal than Longmeadow where you can’t leave your trash cans out longer than six hours after trash pick-up. He felt East Windsor’s purpose was to provide safety for the residents, first responders, and, in limited instances, for people unable to sell their homes due to the condition of their neighbor’s yards.

Building Official Rich referenced Selectman Nordell’s comment about the renters, noting he’s finding that it’s the renters causing the blight due to hoarding, blight, and garbage. He suggested they get calls on a particularly problematic property and they can’t do anything about it. Selectman Nordell suggested his intent was people like Ken or the Police Department to have some teeth when you need it to address these situations, not to protect the guy who’s had a grudge with his neighbor for years to go after the neighbor.

Selectman Baker noted he reviewed the Zoning Regulations and didn’t see anything regarding motor vehicles. Selectman Nordell questioned where the more than one unregistered or inoperable motor vehicle came from, Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese suggested it was a reference from the Town Attorney when dealing with something similar in Norwalk.

Selectman Muska agreed with Selectman Nordell’s approach and felt that was the direction the Board should consider rather than infringing on people’s rights, she felt it should be focused on health and safety. Selectman Muska referenced page 2, “warnings, citations, hearing fines, subsection a – provide a reasonable amount of time for the property owner

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to correct the blight....” Selectman Muska felt that was too vague and open to interpretation. Selectman Nordell questioned if a person would be given some consideration if they started working on a blighted condition but couldn’t complete it because of monetary limitations? Building Official Rich suggested he ran into that in South Windsor, and the guy had the money but was just being difficult. Selectman Muska questioned if situations were being considered on a case by case basis, or is it 30 days? Building Official Rich suggested he works with people on a case by case basis because all the people and the situations are different.

Selectman Baker referenced page 5 of the definitions regarding yard vegetation which should be removed as they’ve taken out the issue of the height of the grass.

First Selectman Bowsza referenced Selectman Muska and Selectman Nordell’s comments about a reasonable amount of time, he offered the following: “and shall be remediated or caused to be remediated within 30 days which may be extended with good faith efforts to remediate the blighted conditions on the part of the property owners...” which would address dealing with snow or if someone had been displaced due to a fire and needed to deal with finding a new apartment. Building Official Rich concurred.

First Selectman Bowsza questioned under definitions, letter “e”, “the following conditions exist: the property has been cited for than two code violations in the past which have not been corrected and are not the subject of a pending appeal.” First Selectman Bowsza questioned how that was a blight issue? Director of Planning and Community Development Calabrese felt that was a Building Code violation. Building Official Rich suggested it doesn’t become blight until someone is cited multiple times.

Selectman Baker cited everything is may rather than shall, which allows descretion in managing the process. Selectman Baker then referenced section 3-1(b) Inspections under Procedure, Article 3, page 6 of the blight ordinance “...the PMO may inspect any proeprty believed to be blighted, or any property or premises which is believed to be blighted for which no complaint has been received...” Selectman Baker felt that says you can drive around and if I see blight I’m going to cite you, he felt a lot of people would take offense to that, he questioned if there was a different

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way to present that? Discussion followed regarding blighted properties, such as the Broad Brook Mill, which are a safety hazard to the public as well as first responders and others versus less visible and less accessible properties.

Paul Anderson (89 Main Street, Broad Brook), requested to speak before Staff leaves. Mr. Anderson questioned the documents being reviewed versus the documents provided for the public this evening. Ultimately Mr. Anderson suggested the references were a waste of time. He cited the documents provided in the Selectmen's packets and noted the discussion occurring is about another document. Mr. Anderson advised the Board there is no possibility of a blight ordinance officer coming on to private property having more authority than anyone else in the world; it's not going to happen.

Deputy Selectman DeSousa noted she started driving around when discussion occurred regarding recreational vehicles, it's not a health or safety issue, and it's covered under Zoning. She noted the previous discussion about boarded up windows, and while driving around she noticed a lot of different buildings that have boarded up windows, particularly in the basement. She also felt looking at chimneys and cracks in the foundations would become a problem. She noted the amount of older homes in Town which would be affected by a neighbor's complaint about the windows or cracks. Deputy Selectman DeSousa cited she understood if it was a construction project and there was concern for bricks falling from a building but she felt we had no business being on someone's property unless we were invited, and then that's a liability issue. Deputy Selectman DeSousa questioned if we've gone a little too far for East Windsor, we're different than Long Meadow or South Windsor.

Building Official Rich indicated the reason for basement windows is for ventilation because that's where most of your mechanicals are, that's code. If he saw a boarded up basement window and it seemed like a dangerous situation with old equipment downstairs he'd ask the owner to fix it but unless he's called to a property as a Building Official he has no right to go onto someone's property and make them fix that window. Selectman Nordell reiterated he felt if the boarded up window isn't a safety issue it shouldn't be included in the blight ordinance, the blight ordinance should be about safety. Director of Planning and Community Development

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Calabrese suggested the check and balance in the process is if the citation wouldn't pass on appeal if it wasn't related to the purpose.

Discussion followed regarding the documentation the Board should review for consideration of the blight ordinance. First Selectman Bowsza suggested some iteration of Selectman Nordell's statement of purpose should be included, as well as the template included by Attorney McCann, as well as the definitions on page 2 of the Memorandum of Law and the process provided in the working draft of the ordinance. First Selectman Bowsza suggested that should this go to referendum the Memorandum of Law should be incorporated to explain how the ordinance works. Selectman Baker suggested the farming exemption needs to be included in the template as well.

Selectman Nordell suggested he wanted to present something passable, not just something from another Town. Selectman Nordell noted he appreciated the time Staff has spent on this.

9. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Discussion and Authorization for Settlement Authority Regarding Watts vs. Town of East Windsor:

First Selectman Bowsza requested to TABLE Item 9A until after the Board's **EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

MOTION: To TABLE Item 9A – Discussion and Authorization for Settlement Authority Regarding Watts vs. Town of East Windsor until after the EXECUTIVE SESSION.

Nordell moved/Muska seconded/DISCUSSION: None

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

B. Discuss Fertilizer Agreement for Town Parks to Include Joe Sauerhoefer:

Deputy Director Sauerhoefer noted the cost of this project is under \$20,000.00 so he didn't have to go out to sealed bid. He's providing the Board with an Excel spreadsheet with the prices submitted by three

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contractors; Tru Green is the least expensive contractor to go with. Two reasons he'd like to go with an outside company is the Town doesn't have an applicator's license, and he'd like the Town Hall and the parks to look good. Deputy Director Sauerhoefer cited current problems with grubs and crabgrass.

Deputy Director Sauerhoefer indicated Director of Recreation and Community Services Maltese has the funding for these services in her Parks and Recreation Budget, to fertilize two or the four parks included in the proposals. Funding for the Town buildings would come out of the Facilities Budget.

Deputy Director Sauerhoefer reported he's appearing before the Board to allow him to enter into an agreement with Tru Green.

First Selectman Bowsza called for questions or comments from the Board.

Selectman Baker felt going with the professional services is a good thing. He noted his concern is pesticides so its early or late Spring we're talking about. Selectman Baker noted his concern is pollinators, not just honeybees. He felt the proposed plan takes care of that. Deputy Director Sauerhoefer cited it's also more cost effective because the cost of labor isn't being paid by the Town.

Deputy Director Sauerhoefer reiterated he reached out to the three companies included in the Excel spreadsheet. He noted he's known Beebe Landscaping for their whole career, he loved Green Meadow, but their bid was too high, his recommendation would be to go with Tru Green. Deputy Director Sauerhoefer noted it's a one-year contract.

First Selectman Bowsza called for questions or comments from the other Board members.

Selectman Nordell reported he's used Tru Green and wasn't happy with them. First Selectman Bowsza noted the difference in Tru Green and the next bidder is about \$50.00. Selectman Nordell questioned Deputy Director Sauerhoefer's reasoning for going with Tru Green besides them being the lowest bidder. Deputy Director Sauerhoefer suggested because their reviews were great, other than Selectman Nordell's. Deputy Director Sauerhoefer reported he's known Beebe Landscaping their whole career

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and trusts they'll do what they propose. Deputy Director Sauerhoefer reiterated he loved Green Meadow but their bid was too high. Deputy Director Sauerhoefer noted it's not a contract, it's a matter of him responding to Tru Green's email and the Town will be added to their schedule.

Deputy Selectman DeSousa cited Green Meadow included overseeding in their proposal. Deputy Director Sauerhoefer suggested that was one of the reasons their bid was high. He also noted funding for that part of the agreement wasn't in the Town's budget. Deputy Director Sauerhoefer noted the Town Hall and the Police Department have never been fertilized in the 11 years he's been employed by the Town, in order to establish grass you need to start with fertilizer. The Town has an overseeder and could handle that part of the work once the grass is established.

Deputy Director Sauerhoefer indicated that was his recommendation, although all bidders will do what the Town is requesting. He's looking for approval from the Board to initiate the agreement with one of these bidders.

MOTION: To AUTHORIZE the Public Works Department to enter into an agreement with Tru Green for services as attached.

DeSousa moved/Muska seconded/DISCUSSION: None

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

C. Discuss Cyber Expense Increase for IT Budget to Include Joe Sauerhoefer:

Joe Sauerhoefer, Deputy Director of Public Works, advised the Board he has recently taken classes through CCMO on cyber security and cyber risks. To further his education regarding his IT involvement he has already implemented some initiatives which he reviewed with the Board.

Deputy Director Sauerhoefer cited the rise in cyber crime. He is asking the Board to include in his IT Budget for next year a security system which will improve the Town's systems regarding vulnerabilities. The annual cost is \$16,000.00, which is based on the number of users. Deputy

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Director Sauerhoefer suggested it's a monthly fee which he can fund through his current IT Budget through July of 2023.

First Selectman Bowsza cited Deputy Director Sauerhoefer's commitment to this aspect of his job responsibilities. He suggested Deputy Director Sauerhoefer is asking the Board's approval of him presenting this additional cost when he presents to the Board of Finance next week. No motion was made, the consensus of the Board was to agree to Deputy Director Sauerhoefer's inclusion of the cost of the security system in his IT Budget when making his presentation to the Board of Finance.

D. Tax Refunds:

MOTION: To APPROVE Tax Refunds in the amount of \$3,511.13.

Muska moved/Nordell seconded/DISCUSSION: None

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

10. SELECTMEN COMMENTS AND REPORTS:

A. Jason Bowsza:

(See Attachment)

B. Marie DeSousa:

Deputy Selectman DeSousa reported she has not had any of her liaison meetings scheduled since the last Board of Selectmen's Meeting.

C. Alan Baker

Selectman Baker reported that the **Planning and Zoning Commission** had a light schedule at their recent meeting, he has nothing to report for them.

Selectman Baker also noted the **Diversity Council** didn't have a quorum but they held an informal discussion to review that they had the

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advertising correct for the April 5th Diversity and Equity Inclusion Meeting

D. Sarah Muska:

(See Attachment)

E. Charlie Nordell:

Selectman Nordell reported he only had one meeting on March 14th with the Connecticut Water Company. He was unable to attend as he was out of Town.

11. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

First Selectman Bowsza noted this is the second opportunity for anyone in the in-person audience to comment.

Wayne Shary, 119 Depot Street: Mr. Shary thanked the Board for their interest in the Town, many of his thoughts/questions have been answered by your thoughts.

Mr. Shary suggested much of the discussion/comments are related to interpretation. He suggested that he reviewed some of the blight ordinances for towns around us and some of them have really strong ordinances. He suggested Towns that have Councilman seem to have the stronger blight ordinances, while the Towns governed by Selectmen, such as Somers, Ellington, East Windsor, aren't as strong. He felt that was because we're all farm towns, and he didn't want to lose track of that. We're not South Windsor, which has huge buildings, or Windsor Locks, which has an International Airport and a major aircraft industry. Mr. Shary reiterated East Windsor's history as a farm town; he hoped we can keep that in mind.

Mr. Shary noted Deputy Selectman DeSousa's comments that the blight ordinance would pit neighbor against neighbor because one told on the other; that bothers him. Mr. Shary referenced the ability to take photos, he suggested he can send his little four-propeller thing up and take photos of anyone out in the yard in their swimsuits. Mr. Shary suggested the Board may want to consider how someone takes pictures of others.

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Mr. Shary referenced a section of the proposed blight ordinance regarding a code violation is a zoning violation and building codes, he questioned why we're discussing zoning and building codes for blight? Mr. Shary felt that was a different story, it has nothing to do with blight.

And conditions and imminent danger, Mr. Shary felt Selectman Nordell was spot on when he talked about safety. Mr. Shary felt that's what the Town should be looking at, safety, not if Joe covers his window in his 1800s house because the bricks around it are falling in his basement. Building codes didn't exist in the 1800s.

Mr. Shary then referenced the warnings and citation letters, he noted the State says with fines assessed at \$10.00 to \$100.00 per day, but the blight ordinance lists a fine of \$100 per day, it doesn't get back to the \$10 per day, why \$100 per day? Mr. Shary suggested the Town would be causing a lot of problems for a lot of people if you follow this \$100 per day rule. He noted \$100.00 per day for 5 days is \$500.00. Mr. Shary suggested that's a lot of money to come up with, there are a lot of old folks in Town, maybe outnumbering the younger folks. Mr. Shary suggested the older people in Town have what we have because we have it, and can't provide more for ourselves because we're on a fixed income. Mr. Shary suggested we have a blight ordinance now, he questioned why that wasn't being modified? First Selectman Bowsza clarified that the Town has a Property Maintenance Code rather than a Blight Ordinance, and the Property Maintenance Code wasn't drafted in a way that it kept up with Statutory changes.

Mr. Shary indicated he was happy to see that motor vehicles was being addressed. He suggested that it applied to anything that could be driven down the road, lawn mowers, anything that runs.

Mr. Shary suggested that more people on the payroll will increase taxes. He noted the two people who spoke tonight won't have the manpower to handle this blight ordinance themselves, they'll have to hire more people to assist them.

Mr. Shary also felt the location of the blight impacted its affect on the neighborhood, is the blight in the front or the side or the rear? He suggested if something was in the back yard people could put a tarp over it. He suggested blight could be a cord of wood that's been sitting there five years or extra lawn mower parts, cover it with a tarp.

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Mr. Shary noted that if the blight ordinance, then it becomes law. And every time something becomes law a little of everyone's rights are being taken away. Mr. Shary questioned if this becomes law do they have to come back to the people to modify it? First Selectman Bowsza clarified that a modification would require returning to the Board and going through this process again.

Mr. Shary advised the Board he appreciates that the Board is watching out for the people, he wouldn't be attending the meetings every two weeks if he didn't appreciate your efforts. When you're gone what are the people going to do, and these opinions change. Think about that when you enact something that becomes a law.

First Selectman Bowsza turned the meeting over to Deputy Selectman DeSousa as he needed to retrieve some equipment to continue the meeting. Deputy Selectman DeSousa acknowledged Mrs. Shary.

Patricia Shary, 119 Depot Street, Broad Brook: Mrs. Shary suggested the best way to keep this Board working for the people is to vote them in again. Deputy Selectman DeSousa suggested if some of the current Board moves on to other things the new people will learn how to represent the people, and this ordinance is a good example of that.

First Selectman Bowsza returned to the meeting. Deputy Selectman DeSousa relinquished the meeting to First Selectman Bowsza.

Tom Lansner, 127 Laurel Circle: Mr. Lansner suggested at one time there was a feeling from some people in town that we didn't need a blight ordinance, that there should be nothing at all. Mr. Lansner gave the Board credit for trying to come up with something workable. Mr. Lansner suggested he has issues with obvious blight, as an example, when you drive down South Water Street people leave mattresses and other things out at the curb. Mr. Lansner suggested that's obvious blight, he felt we need something to address that issue. Mr. Lansner encouraged the Board to continue with the blight ordinance revisions, but the earlier comments he saw on Facebook is the wrong way to go; there must be something that will satisfy everyone.

Paul Anderson, 89 Main Street: Mr. Anderson thanked the Board for putting up with him. He also noted Mr. Lansner comments on Facebook, he didn't do it.

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Hearing no further requests for public participation via the in-person meeting First Selectman Bowsza then offered the opportunity to speak to the online/remote participants; no one requested to be acknowledged.

12. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – Pursuant to C.G.S. 1-200 (6)(a), Discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee, provided that such individual may require that discussion be held at an open meeting, (6)(b), strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims or pending litigation, (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. Discussion of Attorney-Client Privileged matters. Discussion of contract matter. Action is possible.

MOTION: To GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION at 9:-09 p.m. Pursuant to C.G.S. 1-200 (6)(a), Discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee, provided that such individual may require that discussion be held at an open meeting, (6)(b), strategy and negotiations with respect to pending claims or pending litigation, (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. Discussion of Attorney-Client Privileged matters. Discussion of contract matter. Action is possible. Attending the Executive Session will be First Selectman Bowsza, Deputy Selectman DeSousa, Selectman Baker, Selectman Muska, and Selectman Nordell.

Nordell moved/Muska seconded/DISCUSSION: None

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

LET THE RECORD SHOW the Recording Secretary signed out of the Meeting at 9:09 p.m.

LET THE RECORD SHOW the Board came out of EXECUTIVE SESSION at 9:17 p.m. No further action was taken.

13. **ADJOURNMENT:**

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MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 9:17 p.m.

Muska moved/Nordell seconded/DISCUSSION: None

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

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

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. First Selectman Bowsza's Report
 - B. Selectman Muska's Report
- Selectman Baker's Report, Selectman Nordell's Report, and Deputy Selectman DeSousa's Reports transcribed in the Meeting Minutes.

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN 3/23/2023 ATTACHMENT

First Selectman's Report – March 23, 2023

The East Windsor Diversity Council, in collaboration with the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education, has now held one of three successive discussions on diversity, equity and inclusion. These facilitated discussions are a great way of gaining better understanding of the perspectives of others. The next one, which I highly recommend, will be held on April 5th at 6:30pm at Broad Brook Elementary School. Please come join the conversation if you can.

On March 15th , the budget requests for the Boards of Education and Selectmen were presented by Dr. Tudryn and me. The Board of Finance has now begun their role in the formulation of the FY 23/24 budget. As they work through their budget workshops, the public is welcomed and encouraged to participate. The presentations from the Boards of Education and Selectmen begin at a mill rate increase of only 0.11 mills. It is my hope that the Board of Finance will work towards a no mill increase this year, which means no tax increase. I'm happy to help them achieve that goal however I can.

On March 16th , I was delighted to join fellow municipal leaders from Enfield, Somers and Suffield at the North Central Connecticut Chamber of Commerce's annual economic development breakfast. So much of economic development is out of the control of any municipality, but establishing a business-friendly climate in our community is essential. I was very happy to share some things that we are doing successfully and learn about what our neighbors are doing as well.

We are continuing to work towards the re-establishment of a Youth Services Bureau (YSB) in the Town of East Windsor, thanks in large part to the initiative undertaken by Interim Deputy Chief of Police Matt Carl. Deputy Chief Carl has been spearheading research and coordination activities with key personnel on Town staff and in the school district, as well as making inquiries into other, more established YSBs. As a team, we met as recently as yesterday. We are looking forward to next steps very soon.

Coming up on March 29th , next Wednesday, I've invited my friend Tim Keeney, First Selectman in the Town of Somers and a retired naval captain and Navy Seal to come to the East Windsor Senior Center to share his experiences as a seal, and also as the leader of the dive rescue time for the Skylab II mission. I've seen Captain Keeney's presentation before, and it is simply outstanding. Anyone with an interest in the topics of naval

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aviation or the space program would love it. That presentation will be on March 29 th at 12:30 at the Senior Center. It is open to all, and I highly recommend it.

Breakfast with the Easter Bunny will be held at the East Windsor Senior Center (125 Main Street, BB) on Saturday, April 1 st from 8:30am-11:30am. Breakfast will consist of pancakes, sausage, fruit, juice, milk and coffee. No tickets required – pay at the door. Fee is \$6.00 per adult, \$3.00 per child (cash only please). Raffle tickets will also be sold – raffle baskets are donated from businesses and organizations in the community. All proceeds will benefit summer camp scholarships.

And just a reminder: the Town recently passed a new elderly property tax credit program. The Assessor's office is accepting applications from February 1 st through May 15 th . Qualifying households will receive a \$250 tax credit on their July tax bill. The state elderly homeowners' program will follow the same enrollment schedule of February 1 st through May 15th. Contact the Assessor's office for more information.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason E. Bowsza
First Selectman

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN – 3/23/2023 - ATTACHMENT

Selectmen's Report - March 23, 2023

On March 13, 2023 I attended the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. I must note that I was appalled and did not condone some of the public participation at that meeting directed towards a staff member. Members of the public are always encouraged to participate and give their feedback, however they should do so in a professional and respectful way. Members of Boards and Commissions are volunteers and Town Staff is hired to act in the best interest of the community. Although residents may not always agree with decisions made, aggressive behavior is never acceptable and it should never be tolerated.

The Commission voted to keep the gate fee at East Windsor Park the same as last year and to increase the Abbe Rd. field game rate by \$50.00, bringing it to \$150.00 a game mainly because of the new lighting that will be installed.

The Breakfast With The Easter Bunny will be held on April 1st from 8:30AM-11:30AM at the Senior Center. The cost is \$6.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children and the money raised will be used for camp scholarships for East Windsor children.

The softball field at East Windsor High School will be named after Karen Drake and that dedication will take place at a ceremony on April 13th at 3:30PM, with a rain date of April 14th at the same time.

The Kid's Fishing Derby sponsored by the Broad Brook Angling Club will be held on May 6th this year and Parks and Recreation donated \$250.00 towards the prizes.

Tim Misluk was able to raise enough money to complete round one of the soccer shelter for the Abbe Road Soccer Complex. This is an Eagle Scout Project and he is working on raising the rest of the money to complete the second set.

The Arts and Culture Committee was unable to hold their meeting on March 14, 2023 due to lack of a quorum. They did hold a Special Meeting on March 21, 2023, which I did attend. The Committee collaborated with the Broad Brook Elementary School to display students' artwork here in this room at Town Hall and at the Warehouse Point Library.

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The Committee will be holding an Arts and Culture Day at East Windsor Park on Saturday, May 20, 2023 from 12:00PM-4:00PM. Members of the Committee are truly excited to put this event on! There will be live music, vendors, an origami activity for kids, a pottery demonstration and various foods from different countries. The event is free to attend and T-shirts will be handed out to the first fifty kids!

The Photography Contest will be extended, with a new deadline of May 12th, 2023 to encourage additional participation.

Collaboration has begun again with the American Heritage River Commission and an artist to carve an Owl and a possible Blue Heron at the Melrose Trail. The Artist is hoping to have the Owl completed in time for Connecticut Trails Day on June 3rd!

Submitted With Sincerity,

Sarah A Muska, Selectman
smuska@eastwindsorct.com