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**REGULAR MEETING**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on December 19, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall.

Deputy Mayor Barry called the meeting to order.

Present: Councilors Bello, Hemmann, Hurley, Latina, Martino, Rell, Spinella, Deputy Mayor Barry and Mayor Montinieri (arrived late).

Also Present: Central Connecticut Health District Director of Health, Charles Brown; Judy Sartucci, MSN, RN, Chairman and member, Ann Marie Diloreto; Stephanie Askeland, Human Resources Manager, Sally Katz, Director of Physical Services, Jeff Bridges, Town Manager and Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk.

All stood for the pledge of allegiance to the flag which was led by Councilor Hemmann.

Central Connecticut Health District (CCHD) Chairman, Judy Sartucci stated that Wethersfield has three members from Wethersfield appointed to the Board to help represent the town and its interest regarding public health and public health services. They are Ann Marie Diloreto who is present tonight and John Aforismo and Deborah R. Pierce-Henault. CCHD was founded in 1993 and serve the towns of Berlin, Rocky Hill, Wethersfield and Newington and their current population is around 98,000 and provides a broad range of services to the member towns. They are one of 20 regional public health districts in the state and currently employ 9 full-time and 3 part-time that currently work out of five offices; one in each of the four member town halls with headquarters here in Wethersfield and a contingent of staff in the Newington Senior Center. In addition they have over 50 active professional volunteers. The Board of Health is made up of 14 members who include 13 members that are appointed by the town and our Director of Health.

Director Charles Brown presented the power point presentation: CCHD Annual Update to Member Towns 2016. It is available on line at their website ([www.ccthd.org](http://www.ccthd.org)). The following questions by Council are listed below.

Councilor Latina thanked Director Brown for the presentation and wanted to find out with regard the idea with the State wanting to try and regionalize, if you will, some of the health department aspects how would it affect them because we are a four town entity.

Director Brown commented that the State Department of Public Health put together a proposal for discussion purposes that centered on how it would affect those on the county lines. We would become part of that larger district should it be set up instead of a four town district, you would have up to a 16 town district. Currently there is not a lot of support for this.

Councilor Hurley asked what kind of benefits financially would centralize the office staff and functions give us.

Director Brown stated that the challenge there is the cost. If we were to come out of the four

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town halls then there would be the expense for rental space and things of that nature. By centralizing our staff the potential to gain efficiencies and service so that they don't have to add staff to field inspections operations may offset that particular increase. The main factor is cost and how we address those them.

Councilor Hurley asked if the member towns be able to see the costs that are going to be in the benefit to this before anything happens.

Director Brown stated that we are trying to be very transparent in what we are doing and to have that conversation overall. It has been over two years now of investigating this process so that they can make the right choice.

Councilor Hemmann inquired with regard to the spaces within the existing towns do they pay rent.

Director Brown replied that in Rocky Hill we don't. We are supported by the towns quite well so the rental space is at an affordable rate but the challenge they have is that some of it is not optimal for what they need and some places are not accessible for those with disabilities which means they can't get to the resources they have or there are other town halls that are having structural issues.

Deputy Mayor Barry asked how many field offices are there.

Director Brown responded that they have five offices in total. They have offices in each one of the town halls and our central office is here and in the other town halls we generally have field staff for inspections so our registered sanitarians that provide environmental health services. We do also have resources in the Newington Senior Center where we have our health educator, asthma coordinator and interns that help support our agency.

Deputy Mayor Barry thanked Director Brown for the presentation and all that he does.

## HEARING

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Deputy Mayor Barry asked if there was anyone wishing to speak on the public hearing item.

## **ORDINANCE REPEALING ARTICLE 1, CHAPTER 10 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD PERTAINING TO THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS.**

With no one wishing to speak, Deputy Mayor Barry declared the hearing closed.

## GENERAL COMMENTS

Gus Colantonio of 16 Morrison Avenue stated that the Town Manager made a good presentation at the last meeting why Morrison Avenue does not warrant a stop sign. He agrees with what he

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said but he disagrees with one thing about the intersectional site distance from Tifton. He wanted to point out: residents only wanted the sidewalk reconstructed from Wolcott Hill Road to Orchard; location of signs; and absence of a sign stating, oncoming traffic doesn't stop.

Robert Young of 20 Coppermill Road commented the discussion with CCHD was very timely. While regionalism today may have some good features to it we are seeing it spurring bad stuff. We are locked into a service MDC, we can't go to somebody else and it is a monopoly. Maybe regionalism isn't that good of a thing. He talked about the State 1.45 billion dollar deficit.

### COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Hemmann reported that the Shade Tree Commission met as they continue to work closely with Eversource in regard to trees near power lines and with residents as well. They are looking at some different ways to structure more options that are available to them.

Councilor Hurley reported that the Recreation Committee met and discussed capital improvement projects and reviewed and put in order over 100 of them. Cottone Field was on the top of their list which will probably come to the Capital Improvement Committee for review at budget time.

Councilor Bello reported that the Library Board met. Lathrom Associates made a presentation for some plans for interior space modifications. A multiphase project, the Board is just in some planning phases: costs, financing and fundraising. Pretty preliminary but some great plans were brought in.

### COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Martino commented that Councilor Hurley and he were at the memorial service for K9 dog Thor. He commended Sargent Rivera's, Oscar and Jenny, who put that whole plan together. It was exceptional. He thanked D'Esopo's for all the work and donations they made towards that program as well. It was a very well-orchestrated event. The chilling part was afterwards when they went outside. The dogs were all outside with their handlers when everybody was coming in and then they put them in the car; but when they brought the urn out, all the dogs started barking and didn't stop until the ashes were put in a police cruiser to be taken away. It was unbelievable.

Also he attended the Firemen's Award Dinner. He wanted to commend the firemen who got their certifications and Lieutenant Robert Lecrenier was honored for 40 years of service. He also wanted to congratulate at the Salute to Business former Mayor, Dan Camilliere was given the Betty Rosania Award and other businesses in town were honored the same night.

Councilor Latina wanted to give a shout out to the staff over at Highcrest School. They did their Jingle Bells Run this past week and were able to collect about 205 toys for the community services here in town which is a really great event. Kevin Kobelski, the gym teacher did such a wonder job and the kids always look forward to it and she wanted to say thank you.

Councilor Hurley commented on the Health District and other regionalization. We just have to

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be careful. Regionalization should be a good thing when it happens to cost us less. Everything he has seen come forward recently are all going to cost Wethersfield residents more. We just have to be careful every time these things come up.

Deputy Mayor Barry stated he shared that sentiment and he thought everybody on Council have that same goal in mind. We do have to be thoughtful and circumspect on what we are doing and how we move forward.

#### TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Bridges stated that January 9<sup>th</sup> Mayor Bronin will be here in Council Chambers at 6:30 p.m. He has been visiting the suburban communities around Hartford to talk about their fiscal woes; his plan to solve those and get over that burden. Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup> the Connecticut Airport Authority will have a public hearing on obstruction removal at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. We did receive the tax warrant from MDC that included the reserve which was the amount that they told us was going to be in the reserve. At this point it is really up to the legislature to find a way to solve that problem. Of course we have until May 15 when we have to adopt a budget. That gives up to 6 months from now for some solution to that before we actually have to physically budget it. He was sure there would be plenty of discussion as the session progresses. The Christmas tree pick up collection is the band and cub scouts for \$10.00 to recycle and is a good way to get rid of them.

#### TOWN CLERK COMMUNICATION - NONE

#### COUNCIL ACTION

#### ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR ACTION

Councilor Spinella motioned to “**APPROVE THE ORDINANCE REPEALING ARTICLE 1, CHAPTER 10 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD PERTAINING TO THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS**”, seconded by Councilor Bello.

The State has repealed the statute that provided for these councils so perhaps it's time to take it off our books as well. Can't remember when they last met.

**Vote:** All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Martino motioned to “**APPROVE LOCAL 1303-40 AFSCME COUNCIL 4 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2016 TO JUNE 30, 2019**”, seconded by Councilor Bello.

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Town Manager Bridges invited Stephanie Askeland, Human Resources Manager to the podium to explain the motion.

Stephanie Askeland stated that we have reached an agreement and the Union has ratified this three year term contract. Wage increases for the first year is 2%, for the second year 2.25% and 2.25% for the third year. There are also increases to the employee contributions for their defined benefit pension contribution as well as the defined contribution pension plan and Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB). The wage increase and the employee contribution increases will be effective upon ratification of the contract so there is no retro wages nor are there any retro employee contributions for the areas that have increased in the employee contributions. With regard to insurance, effective 7/1/17 all active employees and any retirees who retired after 7/1/10 will be moved on to a high deductible health plan. There will also be an increase to employee insurance premium co-share of 1% effective 7/1/17 as well and those are the major areas as far as the financial impact of the contract.

Councilor Martino asked because of the switch over to the high deductible plan and because retirees are involved will they be contacted to come in to participate or how will they be made aware of the change.

Ms. Askeland replied that if the contract is approved tonight she will go to physical services tomorrow and talk with active employees first. The most important thing is to find a time that is not only good for our employees, but for their spouses as well. So she will start gathering times in February and March that work for employees and in the interim she will also be reaching out to retirees to explain in a letter format and then also to set up times to have them come in so we can take the time to go over the plan and ask any questions that they may have. It is very important that both employees and retirees attend these informational sessions. There is a lot of information to absorb and she is encouraging the employees to attend the informational sessions twice. It's a big change.

Councilor Rell thanked her for working diligently on this for the last couple of months and was wondering when the last contract was approved by this Council.

Stephanie Askeland stated that in general that would have been the police contract and that was anywhere from July to September of 2015.

Councilor Rell asked if this is a two year contract and if pay raises will be retroactive to July and approximately how many current town employees would this affect.

Ms. Askeland stated that this is a three year contract so the contract begins July 1, 2016 and no, they will not. The wage increases will be upon ratification as well as any increased employee contributions. We felt that was a fair way of doing it since there are no retro wage increases. This will affect 34 current employees and we have two vacant positions within this bargaining unit.

Councilor Rell inquired if it was the town's intention to fill those positions.

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Town Manager Bridges stated yes. One is a carpenter and the other is a custodian position.

**Vote:** All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Town Manager Bridges stated that he wanted to thank the Physical Services Union and Stephanie Askeland. It took a lot of communication between those two, particularly on the high deductible. We actually had a reopener under the old contract to talk about high deductible and we couldn't even get them to the table to talk about this but as they got comfortable; the police are on it now and a lot of the school groups are on it now. There is a lot more information out there and Ms. Askeland continuing to work with that group to get this done. It's a huge cost savings for us and it is actually better for a lot of the employees, particularly the ones hired that don't get retiree health to manage their long term health costs which provides them and their families a bank of money through their lives that they can use to purchase not only eyeglasses and their regular services; but when they do retire they have a pot of money to buy insurance to get them until they get to 65 and Medicare. Very well done.

Deputy Mayor thanked them both for their hard work

Councilor Bello motioned to **“ACCEPT THE 2016-2017 DOT/NHTSA DUI ENFORCEMENT GRANT”**, seconded by Councilor Martino.

Town Manager Bridges stated that this is an annual request of the Police Department to accept these grant funds for enhanced enforcement during the holiday season.

Councilor Hemmann asked how long we have been receiving this grant. She knows it's been in place a number of years and it really has been successful. Last year a grid of comparison from year over year was presented. It became very clear we did see benefits of participating.

Town Manager Bridges said he could get an update on the numbers on that.

Deputy Mayor Barry asked how many time a year we do this.

Town Manager Bridges stated two to three times a year; summertime, Thanksgiving and Christmas or New Year's. And there is another grant for distracted driving that we do as well in the summer.

**Vote:** All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

### BIDS

Councilor Spinella motioned to **“ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL FROM TRC FOR PROJECT OVERSIGHT FOR THE PHASE 2 OF THE COMMUNITY CENTER FLOORING ABATEMENT PROJECT”**, seconded by Councilor Bello.

Town Manager Bridges invited Sally Katz, Director of Physical Services to the podium to explain the motion.

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Director Katz stated that last year they began a flooring project in the Community Center. They were able to replace half of the main hallway's flooring, remove the old flooring which had asbestos related material in the mastic of the flooring that didn't pose any dangers but needed to be removed. We want to continue that program, which was very successful, into this year to finish the hallway and to go into other rooms that have the same condition. The current flooring that hasn't been replaced is chipping and is causing a potential tripping hazard to the people who utilize the facility and it needs to be removed. Because the mastic which holds the floor tile down does have this material in it, it needs to be removed by a certified asbestos removal corporation. We would then do containment, remove the entire tile and all of the mastic and do air sampling and then put down new flooring. TRC was the company we used last year. They worked with HazPros which is the company we use for asbestos abatement, set up the containment, get the work done within the confines of the schedule that the Community Center had put forth and then remove the materials and do the air sampling. We were able to get all the clearances for the flooring company to be able to come in, put down the flooring, do the applications that they needed and then be able to reopen on time for the Community Center.

Councilor Latina inquired how long the Community Center would be closed to do this work.

Director Katz replied approximately two weeks. She and Mary Thibeault has been working on this for about a year and it is a time where things are not being scheduled and people have been notified of the scheduling and the reasons why. It will happen after the school year begins because that also helped us in pricing for the asbestos removal and so it will be late in January.

Councilor Bello asked if the whole building is going to be closed or just that wing.

Director Katz responded that they have not scheduled any programs in the building itself especially while the containment is up. Once the containment is down and they are doing the flooring, they have the option to cordon off just that section but while they are doing the containment, nothing is being scheduled for the building.

Councilor Hurley indicated he had an event there on January 21<sup>st</sup>.

Director Katz replied that he would be there unless it snows.

**Vote:** All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Councilor Bello motioned to **“ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL FROM HAZPROS INC. FOR REMOVAL AND ABATEMENT OF PHASE 2 OF THE COMMUNITY CENTER FLOORING PROJECT”**, seconded by Councilor Spinella.

Director Katz indicated that this is the company they used last year to do the asbestos abatement and one of the best thing about them is they came in under budget and three days earlier than the schedule that we had placed on them. We have walked them through the area and they feel confident that they will be able to meet or better their schedule. All the collective pricing estimates for the three parts of this, TRC, HazPros and the flooring company have come in under the budget that was allotted by CIAC for this project.

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**Vote:** All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Councilor Martino motioned to **“ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL FROM M. FRANK HIGGINS & COMPANY FOR \$22,490.00 FOR INSTALLATION OF THE FLOORING IN PHASE 2 OF THE COMMUNITY CENTER FLOORING PROJECT”**, seconded by Councilor Bello.

Director Katz stated that this is the continuation of the flooring products that we used. The response from the people who have used the Community Center were very pleased with the way the flooring came out from Phase 1 and since we have completed that project they have not had any difficulties with those rooms or with the way the flooring was installed. It looks updated, brighter and more welcoming and we want to continue that through the hallway and into the other rooms.

**Vote:** All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

#### ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

#### MINUTES

Councilor Spinella motioned **“TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 5, 2016,”** seconded by Councilor Martino.

**Vote:** All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0. Mayor Montinieri arrived.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gus Colantonio of 16 Morrison Avenue spoke about all the problems on Morrison Avenue.

David Caruk of 149 Broad Street commented that a certain article in the online paper, the Darien Times, from a year ago about the CRCOG [Capitol Region Council of Governments]. Senate bill 1 had to do with motor vehicle taxes, making it a regional tax so that we would help out the region. A year ago, they said that 10% of this motor vehicle tax would go towards funding the CRCOG. They are trying to make a point to support the whole region by using car taxes. He doesn't know where CRCOG stands on this today; wonders if we are going to continue to bail out Hartford. It looks like we will be bailing them out every year.

Robert Young of 20 Coppermill Road commented that we have 35% of the senior citizens in town are elderly and have fixed assets like bank accounts that don't generate much and yet they are going to be looking at these type of increases. You should have said no to Ms. Askeland. He welcomes the Mayor of Hartford to come here and he hopes to give him a few of his good choice words.

Councilor Bello motioned **“TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION,”** at 8:20 p.m., seconded by Councilor Spinella.

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**Vote:** All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Bello motioned **“TO COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION,”** at 8:43 p.m., seconded by Councilor Rell.

**Vote:** All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:43 p.m., Deputy Mayor Barry moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Rell. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano  
Town Clerk