

**REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 2, 2012**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Monday, April 2, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield.

Present: Councilors Drake, Kotkin, Manousos, McAlister, Montinieri, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Console, and Chairperson Hemmann.

Absent: Councilor Hurley

Also present: RaeAnn Palmer, Assistant Town Manager; Mike Turner, Town Engineer; Peter Gillespie, Town Planner; Kathy Bagley, Director of Park and Recreation; Jeff Bridges, Town Manager; and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

Councilor McAlister led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

REPORT FROM THE TOURISM COMMISSION

Christine L. Traczyk, 466 Brimfield Road, a member of the Tourism Commission presented the attached 2012 annual report.

Councilor Kotkin asked about the state of tourist related enterprises in Wethersfield.

Christine Traczyk said we have seen increased visitors at the Historical Society and Webb Deane Stevens Museum. Old Wethersfield continues to be the primary destination and there is still the problem of a low number of retail establishments to draw people for an extended time.

Councilor Drake asked for more information on the Certified Local Government.

Christine Traczyk explained in more detail why they want the town to participate in this program.

EDIC REPORT

Peter Gillespie, Town Planner presented the attached EDIC report.

Councilor Kotkin asked about the sizes of the store fronts of the former Porter and Chester property.

Peter Gillespie responded the sizes vary from approximately 2,000 to 5,000 square feet. PZC is working with the potential buyer to beautify that corner and façade improvement.

Councilor Drake asked about the plans for 1290 Silas Deane Hwy.

Peter Gillespie replied the ownership is changing and is not yet able to discuss their plans.

Deputy Mayor Console asked about the Farmer's Market, the nice location of Main St. vs. the more remote location of Solomon Welles House and the possibility of using Comstock property.

Peter Gillespie responded they considered that option and have spent considerable time researching, but feel the best fit for them is the Solomon Welles House location.

#### FISCAL YEAR 2012-2013 PROPOSED BUDGET

Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, presented a synopsis of the proposed budget for fiscal year 2012-2013.

Councilor Drake asked where the \$11 million increase in the Grand List came from.

Jeff Bridges, Town Manager responded it came from a bunch of little things.

#### GENERAL COMMENTS

Linda Case, 103 Park Ave, commented on the need to enforce the ordinance of no cars on lawns and glaring lights and the need for appropriate shielded lighting. She also gave a shout out to the Tree Warden and the improved way finding in town.

James Griswold, 56 Gristmill Rd, expressed thanks to the Mayor and Council for their work on the Town of Wethersfield. He commented on pending tax increases and stated the need to stop any tax increase. Mr. Griswold also commented on the need for development in town and suggested a solar farm in an effort to save money.

Martin Edgar, Birkshire Rd, Rocky Hill, spoke on behalf of a disabled friend who is unable to get residency with the Housing Authority.

Joan Biagioni, 217 Goff Rd and Jan Mirabelli, 195 Goff Rd, spoke on behalf of the residents near 214 Goff Rd. that are against the subdivision of 214 Goff Rd, 4.2 acres into 7 plots. She commented on the impact it will have on their quality of life, the impact it will have on the

environment, the potential water problems for Farms Village with the change in grade and potential home damage due to the blasting.

Gus Colantonio, 16 Morrison Ave, commented on the need for a stop sign at Orchard and Tifton. He also spoke against the implementation of full-day kindergarten.

Kim Robinson, 57 Stillman Rd, spoke against the implementation of full-day kindergarten citing concerns of fadeout, the restriction to hire only 1<sup>st</sup> year teachers with a Bachelor degree and concerns about class sizes.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Rd, spoke against the WHS renovation, his concern over the increased budget and his concern over the CREC school in town.

George Ruhe, 956 Coverdale Circle, commented on the budget, all-day kindergarten and the WHS referendum. He also requested WSPC be removed from the town budget.

#### Councilor Reports

There were no councilor reports.

#### Councilor Comments

Deputy Mayor Console thanked Shirley Steinmetz for informing him about the world hunger project being done at Trinity Episcopal Church.

He attended the UNICO event honoring a town member.

He accepted an invitation by Dr. McDowell to visit Hanmer school. He was able to learn a lot about the kindergarten and reading program. He expressed how impressed he was with the reading program for K-6. He is going to write up his idea and will present at a future budget meeting.

He agreed with the earlier presentation by Linda Case regarding the quality of life in Wethersfield and ensuring we do not allow our town to turn into the south end of Hartford. He stated the effort of the Blight Officer and police officers is helping, but reiterated the need to be vigilant.

He thanked George Ruhe for the information regarding the culvert condition and expressed the need to address it.

Mayor Hemmann read an announcement regarding National Donate to Life Month. Wethersfield is a proud partner with the Donate to Life network.

Councilor Roberts asked about the follow-up of the markings on Hang Dog Lane.

Mike Turner, Town Engineer, responded that CL&P service upgrades are being done based on complaints from numerous residents about the reliability of the service in that neighborhood. It will require two cuts across Hang Dog Lane and two cuts across Coppermill Rd. Engineering is working with them to bore under the road instead of cut on top. CL&P notifies Call Before You Dig and must get a street excavation permit before digging.

#### Town Manager's Report

Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, asked if the culvert and supports had been looked at.

Mike Turner, Town Engineer, responded the mason will check it out and see if restoration is possible. The permanent solution was included in an improvement request through the CIAC, but was not recommended to be funded this year.

Town Clerk Sassano said she received two emails in favor of the Library Budget from Sean Stearley and Royal Graves.

#### Council Action

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF JAY HALLINAN FROM THE DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE,”** seconded by Councilor Drake.

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

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO PROCLAIM APRIL AS FAIR HOUSING MONTH, TO RE-ADOPT, AS ATTACHED, THE TOWN'S FAIR HOUSING POLICY STATEMENT; THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY; TO AFFIRM COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) AND TO GIVE PUBLIC NOTICE OF THE ADA GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE,”** seconded by Councilor Drake.

Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, said that the Town continues to work with the Housing Authority. The Assistant Town Manager is here to address any questions.

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

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO AUTHORIZE THE TRANSFER OF \$10,261 FROM THE CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF A FENCE AT SOFTBALL FIELD #2 IN MILL WOODS PARK,”** seconded by Councilor Manousos.

Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, stated this section of fence was damaged beyond repair during the October storm and is necessary to repair before spring sports begin. If the expense is not covered by the Town’s property insurer, it will be submitted to FEMA and once received would be returned to the capital reserve account.

Councilor Kotkin stated the damage is pretty obvious and asked why CIRMA denied the claim.

Mr. Bridges responded it is unsure where they stand on this fence, but it is being worked on.

Deputy Mayor Console asked if all the branches and brush have been removed from the area?

Kathy Bagley, Parks & Recreation Director, responded affirmatively.

Councilor Drake asked if this is beyond the Town’s capability or is it just cheaper to hire someone.

Ms. Bagley responded this is the busiest time for the town staff and bringing in a contractor will ensure it is done more quickly.

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

### BIDS

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO AWARD A CONTRACT TO RAFFERTY FINE GRADING, INC, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25,000 FOR PAVEMENT RECLAIMING SERVICES,”** seconded by Councilor Drake.

Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, stated the ongoing project on Church St. rehabilitation requires more extensive work than the current vendor can do and the recommendation is to hire Rafferty to finish this job.

Mike Turner, Town Engineer, explained the specifics of the job and the current contract holder, Costello, does not do this type of reclaiming work and therefore the proposal is to reduce their

contract by \$25,000 and move it to Rafferty's.

Mayor Hemmann verified this is a result of the base failing.

Mr. Turner responded affirmatively and stated core samples were taken and it is beyond milling and overlay. Structural strength needs to be added.

Councilor Montinieri asked what the original amount for the Costello contract was? He verified the monies are just being redistributed.

Mr. Turner responded approximately \$60,000/year and confirmed.

Councilor Kotkin asked about the status of any work being scheduled for Mill St, between Silas Deane Hwy and Maple St.

Mr. Turner responded Physical Services is looking at it now and the street will not be milled and overlaid, but will have higher quality temporary patchwork done.

Deputy Mayor Console asked about the status of the Jordan Lane extension.

Mr. Turner replied repair work can start now that it is starting to dry up.

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

Deputy Mayor Console moved **"TO AWARD THE BID FOR POOL CHEMICALS TO H. KREVIT & CO., INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$28,376,"** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, stated this for the annual purchase of pool chemicals for Willard Pool and Mill Woods. Kathy Bagley is in attendance to answer any questions.

Deputy Mayor Console asked about the small amounts of \$750 and \$125. He also asked if the work is completed with the new tanks?

Ms. Bagley, Parks and Recreation Director, responded these small costs are for small amounts of chemicals used to balance the pool water. She stated the filter tanks were installed last fall and currently some upgrades are being done which were approved by the Council in January. They are currently on schedule.

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

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

None.

MINUTES

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 5, 2012”** seconded by Councilor Drake.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 7-0-1. Councilor Montinieri abstained.

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 19, 2012”** seconded by Councilor Montinieri.

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

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO APPROVE THE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 26, 2012”** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 7-0-1. Councilor Roberts abstained.

Public Comments

Barbara Ruhe, 79 Main St, commented on the good news of Panera Bread opening and holding a fundraiser called Raise the Dough. The Youth Service Advisory Board has been granted the profits of this fundraiser. It will be held on April 21, 2012. She stated the Association of State Flood Plain Managers will be attending a conference in Hartford in June and will bring tourism opportunities to Wethersfield. She also commented on the historical note of the pond on Cloverdale Circle and stated April marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ruhe family living next to it.

George Ruhe, 956 Cloverdale Circle, commented that the pond was originally what got him involved in the Council meetings. He spoke in favor of getting the pilaster fixed properly and requested the pond get the attention it needs.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Rd, commented on the tax increases we may see based on the proposed budget, WHS referendum, MDC special assessments and upcoming Hanmer

renovations. He spoke against the WHS referendum. He spoke for abolishing the Housing Authority, getting rid of the homes and therefore increasing open space.

Martha Conneely, 12 Fairmont St, spoke in favor of the WHS referendum and thanked the Council for bipartisan support for this project. She spoke about the need to do it right this time and the 'touch it once' idea. She stated enrollment will be at a high next year at WHS when we would be applying for reimbursement which will make us eligible for a higher reimbursement rate. She commented about the need for our schools to be attractive to our students so they don't want to go elsewhere, which would still require taxes to be paid for those attending other schools. The accreditation report should be arriving soon and encouraged people to get out and vote on April 24, 2012.

Joan Biagioni, 217 Goff Rd, added to her previous presentation regarding 214 Goff Rd. She stated the plan for this development never considered the quality of life for neighbors impacted by it.

Kim Robinson, 57 Stillman Rd, commented on full day kindergarten and the inability of 5 yr. old children to stay awake and focused for a full day. She presented some articles stating the difficulties of maintaining the costs associated with full day kindergarten, keeping low class sizes and maintaining programming.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 9:00 p.m., Deputy Mayor Console moved "**TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**" seconded by Councilor Drake. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano  
Town Clerk  
*Approved by Vote of Council*  
*May 7, 2012*