

REGULAR MEETING MARCH 3, 2008

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Monday, March 3, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Silas Deane Middle School.

Present: Councilors Cascio, Console, Forrest, Hemmann, Kotkin, Roberts, Walsh, Deputy Mayor Montinieri, and Chairperson Adil.

Also present: Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

All stood for the pledge of allegiance to the flag which was led by Deputy Mayor Montinieri.

PRESENTATION OF THE CITIZEN OF THE YEAR - WETHERSFIELD/ROCKY HILL ELKS LODGE - WETHERSFIELD DARE OFFICER DAVID GOVE

Chairperson Adil said that he was honored to have the Wethersfield/Rocky Hill Elks Lodge Citizen of the Year, David Gove, at the meeting. He said that Councilor Hemmann brought this to the Council and asked that she join him at the microphone.

Councilor Hemmann said that it was her great honor to introduce members of the Wethersfield/Rocky Hill Elks Lodge; Stephen Bertucio, the current Exalted Ruler and Diane Rowe, Senior Knight and the next Exalted Ruler. She asked James Cetran, Police Chief, to make a few remarks.

James Cetran, Police Chief, said that the Police Department is extremely proud of Officer Gove. He said that this is a well deserved honor. He offered his congratulations.

Stephen Bertucio, Exalted Ruler of the Elks Lodge, said that the Elks are fraternal, charitable, and civic. It helps the youth and those less fortunate. Each year it selects someone as its Citizen of the Year. The criteria require that the person has to be involved in programs that help others. There were several candidates proposed for 2007. Officer Dave Gove was more involved than anyone else. He is a Wethersfield DARE Officer and Youth Officer at Wethersfield High School. He said it was an honor and privilege to present Dave Gove with this award.

Officer Dave Gove thanked the Elks Lodge for the honor. He said that a lot of times when an officer does his job, he gets negative feedback. To receive this and be recognized by the Elks Lodge and the Town, is such an honor.

Chairperson Adil thanked Officer Gove for all that he does for the Town.

REPORT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - PETER GILLESPIE, TOWN PLANNER

Peter Gillespie, Town Planner, reported on the following:

- Recently Completed Projects/New Business - A Certificate of Occupancy was issued to the Wild Rover Restaurant, 580 Silas Deane Highway. An electronics service/repair shop, 462 Silas Deane Highway, has opened in the former Victorian Gallery space.
- Approved Development Projects Under Construction - Interior renovations are underway at 506 Silas Deane Highway for the relocation of a business. Interior renovations are underway at 512 Silas Deane Highway for a flooring business.
- Under Permit Review - On Town Line Road, the KFC/Hines Sudden Service has received approval for the demolition and reconstruction of buildings to accommodate two new buildings. The Town has received an application for the lighting of Cottone Field, that will be working its way through the process over the next few weeks. The Flower Box, 580 Silas Deane Highway is looking to expand and plans are being reviewed for an

- addition. Applications have been filed for an expansion of the CREC - Soundbridge School on Progress Drive.
- Developer/Property Owner Contact - A Certificate of Occupancy has been issued for the building at 295 Ridge Road. Town Staff met with the developer to discuss plans for a second phase of the project to possibly include assisted living. The project will need to go back through the permitting process. Webster Bank is looking to consolidate their business in Wethersfield by merging its two locations. Arby's Restaurant continues to work with the Town to find a site.
 - Façade Improvement Grant - Recently the Town closed on two façade loans. One was Mr. Lagana's property at 965 Silas Deane Highway and the other was Narcissus Chocolate Shop at 7 Railroad Place.
 - Other News and Initiatives - He is working with the Chamber of Commerce on a breakfast meeting on April 3rd with businesses focusing on energy and conservation.
 - Preserve America - The next meeting will be held in early March. The Town expects to receive a draft report.
 - Planning and Zoning Commission - The Commission approved plans for a new Little League and soccer field at Mill Woods Park.

In response to Councilors' questions, Peter Gillespie, Town Planner, said that the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development and Improvement Commission are sponsoring a breakfast meeting to talk about energy conservation and look at programs CL&P offers for businesses. He said that the Chamber of Commerce wanted to make sure local businesses were aware of any initiatives that are out there that they can take part in.

Chairperson Adil asked about the denial of the Hartford Hospital expansion project by the State Department of Environmental Protection.

Peter Gillespie, Town Planner, said that it is his understanding that it has not actually been denied. He suggested that the Town Manager explain it.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has denied it but it is in a thirty day appeals process. Anyone who would like to comment on the denial can send them to the Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Water Management and Inland Water Resources Division, 79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106. She said that the information would be put on the Town's website. The comment period is 30 days from last Thursday, about March 27th.

Chairperson Adil said that anyone who wishes for Hartford Medical Group to stay in Town should contact the DEP to voice their support for this project. He thanked the Town Planner for the report.

Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk, took attendance.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved **"TO TAKE OFF THE TABLE ITEM B.2.A. - BUILDING COMMITTEES - HIGH SCHOOL AND HANMER RENOVATIONS AND B.2.C. - RESOLUTION - ENERGY PROCUREMENT COMPANY - WORLD ENERGY SOLUTIONS, INC. AND TO ADD TO THE AGENDA ITEM B.3.J. - REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES"** seconded by Councilor Roberts.

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

GENERAL COMMENTS

No one wished to speak.

COUNCIL REPORTS & COMMENTS

Councilor Walsh said that he attended a meeting at the Wethersfield Historical Society. The renovations to the Keeney

Center are progressing and it is on schedule. The Taste of Wethersfield should be able to be held at the Keeney Center. The Historical Society is grateful for the Council action on the lightning suppression system and heaters for the stairways. On February 28th, the Infrastructure Committee met to discuss the Energy Improvement District. The major issues that were discussed with Mr. Rinebold of the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology were notification, the voluntary participation, taxation consequences, and the bonding authority of the District. The Committee made some changes to the proposed Ordinance. The changes were forwarded to the Town Attorney for review.

Councilor Forrest said that the Conservation Commission met and discussed some new projects, one being the Beaver Brook Plan from the 1960's. The Commission will be reviewing it for feasibility.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that the Community Center Building Committee toured the facility last week to see the progress on the building. It is progressing at a very good pace. It is staying on track and should be completed this summer. The Committee, along with the Mayor and himself traveled to New York to finalize the retrieval of two items from the World Trade Center. The Port Authority has authorized them to be shared with the Town on a lifelong rental basis at no charge. It will be incorporated in the work to the Community Center. This trip was a logistical trip to finalize the procurement of the two items. He was able to see the two items that were released to the Town. There are still steps that need to be taken to complete the legal paperwork. He said that he wants to emphasize that Judy Keane did an enormous amount of work to get the Town access to this material. It is very dramatic for the Town to have access to these items. Her efforts are absolutely phenomenal. A huge statement about the Town is Judy Keane's commitment to have a memorial to her husband as well as representation of the Town's commitment to a local memorial to the events of 9/11. The Snow Ball is this weekend, Saturday, March 8th at the Community Center. This event still has some space available. He said that the Town Hall/Library renovation continues to stay on schedule. People passing by will see quite a bit of activity on the exterior of the building. The Committee is pleased with the work and that the project is staying on track.

Chairperson Adil said that he was honored to be asked to go to New York with the members of the Community Center Building Committee. To see the destruction and the categorizing of the destruction was overwhelming. The fact that the Town will be privileged enough to have some of that history is exciting. He said that the Town owed it to Judy Keane and the Keane Foundation.

Councilor Roberts said that last Thursday while traveling in Japan, she met with delegates of Wethersfield's sister city, Nagayo. She presented a letter from their Mayor to Chairperson Adil. The Deputy Mayor and translator of Nagayo had been to Wethersfield in 1999 and were thrilled to meet with a representative from Wethersfield. She said that they agreed that they would like to do more in the way of cultural exchange and keeping up the sister city relationship. They presented the Mayor and Town Manager with gifts. She invited the Japanese delegation to the 375th Celebration of the Town in 2009.

Chairperson Adil suggested she bring this issue to the Shared Services Committee. He said that the Silas Deane Middle School has such great technology that the Town may be able to set up a webcast with Nagayo, Japan.

Councilor Cascio said that the Chamber of Commerce is working with the Economic Development Improvement Commission on a meeting for April 4th. May 14th is the annual Chamber of Commerce meeting at the Wethersfield Country Club. He attended the Memorial Day Parade Committee meeting in February. He said that the parade is ahead of schedule. The Committee is contacting the Parade Marshall and speakers this week. The essay contest for eighth graders is also underway. The theme is "What does Memorial Day mean to you?" There will be a winner from each team at Silas Deane Middle School and Corpus Christi. Of those winners, one finalist will be selected and given a \$100 savings bond and have the opportunity to read the essay at the Memorial Day Parade Ceremony at the Cemetery. The Committee is trying to get another band to march in the parade. Clergy is also being put together. The date is Saturday, May 24th. The Library Board met in February. The renovations are continuing. The staff is working hard and is looking forward to the completion of the renovations. A new Library fundraiser is trying to raise \$40,000 for various items. The people in Town need to realize that the Library is used by every age group, social group and neighborhood in Town. It is one of the most important Town assets. He hopes resident will support the fundraising efforts.

Councilor Kotkin said that the Budget Committee met tonight. The Town had a very clean audit this year. He

congratulated the Town Manager and Finance Director and staff of the Board of Education that run its Finance Office. On a quarterly basis, the Budget Committee goes through the year-to-date status of the current budget. The latest numbers look like they are on target. In past years, the Town has done better with interest rates and last year with little snow. This year, the Town is more likely on target than ahead. The weakest news is the budget for 2008/2009 is in terms of health insurance. The Town will be looking at a 15 to 20 percent increase. Interest rates are down which is good news for some businesses but not for a Town that has money to invest. The interest income will probably be down by several hundred thousand dollars. The grand list did not have much growth and the Town will have to look at fuel increases, too. He said that he thinks it will be a tough budget this year. He said that the Mill Woods Park Building Committee met. The good news is that the Planning and Zoning Commission approved the plans for the Little League field and soccer fields. Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission still has to address it. The projects are moving forward. Council may be able to award a bid at its first meeting in May.

Councilor Hemmann asked where the Town stands after this past storm.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that she does not have the figures yet. Payroll will be put in today. She will have something for the Management Report.

Councilor Hemmann said that she knew there was not much left in the allotted dollars.

Councilor Console asked if the pipe tests at the Police Station have been completed.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that she did not know if the testing has been completed. She would have more information for the Management Report.

Councilor Forrest reminded the public that the Green Summit was coming up on March 13th at 6:30 p.m. There will be various committees at the Summit. A concise agenda has been created.

The format will be small groups talking about energy ideas that various individuals may have or what the Town and businesses can do. It will be a real opportunity to listen to the ideas of the residents. It is a great opportunity for Wethersfield to become a leader.

Chairperson Adil said that:

- Councilor Forrest will be a guest on his show on Wednesday night on Channel 14 along with other members of the Green Summit.
- Two Council comments came in from Dr. Sokolowski, one concerning bonds and one about computer software issues. He said the Town Manager will look into them.
- On March 5th, the Wild Rover will be holding a Grand Opening with proceeds to benefit the Police Canine Unit.
- The Snow Ball is this Saturday, March 8th.
- The 3rd Annual Beer and Wine Tasting sponsored by the Volunteer Fire Fighters Association will be Thursday, March 20th.
- On Friday, April 4th the Friends of the Nature Center will be presenting the Glamour Girls at a party at the Community Center for a fundraiser.

Councilor Roberts said that the St. Patrick's Day Parade will be Saturday, March 15th at 11:00 a.m. in Hartford. She said that it would be great to have nice representation from Wethersfield.

COUNCIL ACTION

Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved "**TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF DEBRA HAMMER FROM THE HARTFORD-BRAINARD AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**" seconded by Councilor Roberts.

Chairperson Adil asked that a letter be sent thanking her for her service.

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

Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved **"TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS:**

Human Rights and Relations (from alt to full)

Shirley Steinmetz D 375 Brimfield Road 3-03-2008 to 6-30-2009

Human Rights and Relations (as alternate)

Deb Hammer D 65 Broad Street 3-03-2008 to 6-30-2009

CT River Assembly

Joseph Smith D 83 Apple Hill Road 3-03-2008 to 2-28-2011

Greater Hartford Transit District

Martin Walsh D 15 Laurel Way 3-03-2008 to 6-30-2008

Tree Warden

John C. Lepper U 932 Ridge Road 03-03-2008 to 12-31-2008

," seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-1.

Councilor Walsh abstained from the Greater Hartford Transit District appointment only.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved **"TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS TO THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE-WETHERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL AND HANMER SCHOOL:**

J. Edward Brymer Jr. D 64 Old Post Road 3-3-2008 to *

Steven M. Barry D 124 Black Birch Road 3-3-2008 to *

Daniel A. Camilliere D 148 Ox Yoke Drive 3-3-2008 to *

Christine T. Fortunato D 28 Fairmont Street 3-3-2008 to *

Dianne G. Silva-Ratti U 25 Dudley Road 3-3-2008 to *

David L. Drake R 14 Quail Hill 3-3- 2008 to *

Diane M. Fitzpatrick U 40 Wippoorwill Way 3-3-2008 to *

* project completion

AND TO APPOINT COUNCILOR KOTKIN AS THE LIAISON TO THE SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE - WHS AND HANMER SCHOOL" seconded by Councilor Walsh.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilors Kotkin and Roberts abstained. The motion passed 7-0-2.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

RESOLUTION - ENERGY PROCUREMENT COMPANY - WORLD ENERGY SOLUTIONS, INC.

Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO DISAPPROVE THE RESOLUTION APPROVING A CONTRACT WITH WORLD ENERGY SOLUTIONS, INC. TO PROVIDE ENERGY AUCTION AND PROCUREMENT SERVICES"** seconded by Councilor Roberts.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that in October 2007 there had been the introduction of a resolution concerning the hiring of World Energy Solutions, Inc. to auction off energy on behalf of the Town. It was decided to table it. At that time, the Town was looking into the new State initiative. After careful consideration, there is just so much in the new State law that could really bring a lot of savings, new programs, and grants to the Town, she felt that it was much better to go out for a request for proposals (RFP) for an energy consultant that could handle things like the auctioning all the way through all the pieces of the energy bill. She requests that the Town Council vote this down and she can do a request for proposals to hire someone on behalf of the Town and hopefully the Board of Education.

Councilor Hemmann asked if there was money in the budget for this type of position.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that she is trying to get a feel for how the consultants would work. Some may work according to the amount of savings. It would be for next year's budget. Some have flat fees and some have a percentage of savings. She won't know until the RFP's are returned.

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

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO TRANSFER \$50,000 FROM CONTINGENCY TO THE TOWN ATTORNEY ACCOUNT T1030125 5220"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that in this year's budget \$150,000 was budgeted for the entire Department. There are a number of cases, especially through the Historic District Commission that were unforeseen. There are also some foreclosures. She is making an estimate that \$50,000 will be enough for the rest of the year. There is also freedom of information issues and blight issues that the Town Attorney is working on.

Chairperson Adil said that it is regrettable that the Town Council has to do this. He said that it upsets him to spend this money since some of the cases are frivolous.

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

Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO TRANSFER \$20,000 FROM CONTINGENCY TO THE LABOR ATTORNEY ACCOUNT T1024200 5247"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said she has already come to the Town Council with a transfer of \$12,000. There was \$7,000 in this year's budget. Normally, it is not all spent. There are a lot of labor issues going on this year. There have been a number of mediations with Library employees as well as the Physical Services Labor Union over the approved volunteer agreement for the fields. There is one arbitration case, too. \$10,000 was spent on just the arbitration case. She said that she may not need the entire \$20,000 but wants to be on the safe side for the rest of the fiscal year.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that during the negotiations with the Library, one benefit of the expense was to negotiate several features, especially in regard to health insurance that did have some savings for the Town.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Town prevailed in a number of issues that were important to the Town Council.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that this expense has some benefits to it. At the end of the day, the Town needs to measure these expenses against the net gain to the Town.

Chairperson Adil said that there are also gains on the Town Attorney side, too. The tax foreclosures netted the Town \$100,000. There have been assets there.

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

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO TRANSFER \$3,000 FROM CONTINGENCY TO THE TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNT T1010816 5370"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Town Council Supplies Account is really a general usage for the Town Council to be able to send flowers to families on Boards and Commissions in the time of a death. The biggest unexpected expense was during the renovation last summer when the air conditioning had to be turned off for weeks. The employees suffered during that time period. The Town Council was good enough to host a luncheon as a thank you to the employees. It was an unexpected cost but very much appreciated by the employees. The luncheon took up about half of the originally budgeted \$3,000, but went a long way for morale.

Councilor Cascio said that with these three budget transfers the contingency budget will be \$198,000. Is there a certain number that the Town Manager does not want to go under?

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that there is not a set number. She said she tries to get the Town through the end of March. Come April, the Town Council can transfer between Departments. That is what will happen before anything else is taken from the Contingency Account. The Town is doing very well. It is already March and there shouldn't be many transfers that need to be made at the next meeting. The Town has spent less than half of what was budgeted.

Councilor Cascio said that the Town Council doesn't want to be accused of spending a lot of money but as Deputy Mayor Montinieri says the transfers for some of the negotiations have netted the Town a savings. The Town really needs to communicate that to the public.

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

Councilor Roberts moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT A GRANT FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE EXPANSION OF DIAL-A-RIDE SERVICES AND TO NEGOTIATE AND SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE TOWNS OF NEWINGTON AND ROCKY HILL TO PROVIDE A TRI-TOWN MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE"** seconded by Deputy Mayor Montinieri.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Dial-A-Ride program has been very successful. The Town has to go out to bid on it every few years. The Town did it as a formal bid and only one bidder came back. A corporation down in Florida put together the bids and they increased the amount of rides to the point where the Town will never expand to that many rides within the next year. She said that Town Council needs to reject this because she can't negotiate with a formal bid. Then the Town will go out for a request for proposal and she will have a lot more room to negotiate and will come back to the Town Council with a price.

Chairperson Adil said that this is the approval of the grant application.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, apologized and said that the Town does want to approve this grant to allow for the Town to have more Dial-A-Ride services once the request for proposal is returned.

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

Councilor Roberts moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT IF AWARDED A FISCAL YEAR 2008 HAZARDOUS MOVING VIOLATION ENFORCEMENT GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$23,200 FROM THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, TRANSPORTATION SAFETY SECTION"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that this is an excellent regional initiative that the Police Chiefs have put forward to help stop the "race track" along the Berlin Turnpike in the spring and summer months. This will enable the Police to cross Town lines to help with the enforcement. Other driving violations will also be looked at with this program.

Councilor Kotkin said that he hopes the Town gets this grant. It is a tough area during the summer with hundreds of

cars.

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

Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF POLICY MANAGEMENT FOR A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$75,000 FOR THE INSTALLATION OF WINDOWS AT THE PITKIN COMMUNITY CENTER AND TO SIGN THE GRANT CONTRACT"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that Representative Morin had received \$150,000 for the Town of Wethersfield over a two year period for windows at Webb Elementary School. Initially that was what the money was for, but it was determined that the money would not be enough for Webb. She said that she checked with the Office of Policy and Management and the money was allocated more for a general windows grant. The grant was over a two years period. The first year funding was \$75,000 and is asking that part of that be used for the 9/11 Keane Foundation Community Center renovation project. The Town needs to submit the grant in order to get the first year's funding. If all of the money is not used, the Town can redo the grant application and use the money for another project.

Councilor Kotkin asked if each year the money was \$75,000.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said yes, it is \$75,000. The Town can apply for the second \$75,000 as of July 1, 2008.

Councilor Kotkin said that the windows in the courtyard at Webb Elementary Schools were not replaced because there was not enough money. He asked if she knew how much the classroom windows around the courtyard would cost.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that Charles Viani, Vice Chairperson of the Webb School Building Committee is working on those numbers and should have them in next week.

Chairperson Adil said that he thinks that it is a great project, but the Town Council should get input from the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee to see what its priorities are.

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

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO WAIVE 50 PERCENT OF THE COST FOR POLICE SERVICES FOR THE INTERCOMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH GROUP, INC.'S 2008 OLD WETHERSFIELD 5K RUN/FAMILY WALK FOR MENTAL HEALTH"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said this is a waiver that the Town Council has issued every year that she has been Town Manager. It is a wonderful event. Last year, the cost was \$1599.29 for the Police. The Town Council waived about \$800 last year. The cost this year would be similar.

Chairperson Adil said that he participated last year and had the Boy's Track Team take part in it.

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

Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO DISAPPROVE THE PENSION COMMITTEE'S REQUEST FOR A 3 PERCENT COLA FOR RETIREES WHO RETIRED PRIOR TO THE 2003 EARLY RETIREMENT PROGRAM WHO DO NOT CURRENTLY RECEIVE A COLA ON THEIR PENSION"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that at its February Pension Committee meeting, the Pension Committee voted to request that the Town Council approve a one time 3 percent cost of living increase for all Town and Board of Education employees who retired prior to the 2003 Early Retirement Program. What is hard about this request is that the Town is already down \$500,000 and she hasn't even started the budget yet. It is not a good time to do this. In some contracts, a COLA is a negotiated item. This may be something that needs to be done across the negotiating table. The cost is \$38,700. The cost also goes into GASB45, too. She said at this time she would recommend this not be

approved. There are members of the Pension Committee at the meeting tonight.

Tony Martino, a member of the Middle Managers meeting, said that the Pension Committee started discussing this back in 2003 when the golden hand shake was given out. It took the Committee this long to get here. This entails 136 people in their 70's, 80's, and 90's. Whenever someone asks for something, the person has to find a way to pay for it. He said that he thinks he has found a way to pay for it. A couple weeks ago at another meeting, the Pension Committee had its second interview with the pension advisors. The fee schedule is going to change and as a result of that the Town is going to realize a tremendous savings. The Pension Committee is not looking for this to take effect until July 1st. During the budget process, the Town Council will find out what happens with the pension advisor. He would like this to be considered.

Chairperson Adil said that he would like to look at this again during the budget time and also during union negotiations.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Town's Pension has done very well but she has just received the numbers from the actuary and in order to keep paying the pension, the Town will still have to put in \$150,000 in order to keep the pension fully funded.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the 136 employees were across different unions.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said yes.

Councilor Kotkin asked if in the future this would be something that unions would negotiate for these people.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that it would be difficult because the unions would be negotiating for members that are no longer active. She doesn't know if a union vote would say current members are going to give something up for members that aren't even here anymore.

Councilor Kotkin said that the cost of living is going up. But, it is not just this one time \$38,700, it is a perpetual cost. He said that this is going to be a very tough budget year.

Chairperson Adil said that this is a tough vote, because the Town wants to make sure it takes care of its retirees, but he agrees with others, that it is not something that the Town can do at this time. It can be brought up again at budget time.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilor Roberts abstained. The motion passed 8-0-1.

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO APPROVE/DISAPPROVE THE REQUEST OF DAVID MALON TO OBTAIN THE EASEMENT LOT ADJACENT TO 254 CREST STREET TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION THROUGH A QUIT CLAIM DEED WITH THE APPROPRIATE EASEMENTS"** seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that back in July, Mr. Malon asked to obtain the property next to his property at 254 Crest Street. The Town Council sent it to the Planning and Zoning Commission for an 8-24 review. The Town did some research to see who owned the property. The Planning and Zoning Commission gave a positive referral. The property can be transferred by a quit claim deed with the appropriate easements for utilities. Attorney Bradley has reviewed this and agrees that it should be transferred by quit claim deed.

Councilor Forrest said that the gentleman is interested in maintaining this property and it is not on the Conservation list of properties that need to be retained or preserved in any way. It is also not a building lot. He said that he sees no reason not to move forward with this.

Councilor Cascio asked if Mr. Malon will pay taxes on this property.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said yes.

Councilor Casio asked if he was aware of that. He asked if the Attorney's costs will be paid by Mr. Malon.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that she would make sure that Mr. Malon is aware that he has to pay taxes on the property. The Town Council could say that he covers the costs.

Councilor Cascio moved **"TO AMEND THE MOTION TO INCLUDE THAT ATTORNEY COSTS FOR THE TRANSFER BE INCURRED BY MR. MALON"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE to the amended motion. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SUBMIT RFP'S FOR TWO GRANTS FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES WHICH ARE DUE MARCH 14TH"** seconded by Councilor Roberts.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that Nancy Stillwell, Director of Social and Youth Services, just learned that the Town can obtain additional dollars for the Senior Case Management Services and for the Municipal Senior Center. One is for \$1,500 and the other is for \$3,000.

Chairperson Adil said that he is glad to see the Town Council doing something for the senior citizens.

BIDS

Deputy Mayor Montinieri moved **"TO REJECT THE BID FOR THE SALE OF THE BENCHES FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SELL THEM AT THE OFFER RECEIVED ON FEBRUARY 27, 2008"** seconded by Councilor Walsh.

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

Councilor Roberts moved **"TO REJECT THE BID FOR DIAL-A-RIDE SERVICES AND TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO ISSUE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS SOLICITING DIAL-A-RIDE SERVICES"** seconded by Deputy Mayor Montinieri.

Chairperson Adil said that the Town Manager already discussed this.

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

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

Councilor Hemmann introduced the following Resolution -

RESOLUTION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN MDC CHAIRMAN WILLIAM DIBELLA

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council, on behalf of the Town of Wethersfield, a member municipal corporation of the Metropolitan District Commission, does hereby declare that it has no confidence in the leadership of Chairman William A. DiBella. The Town of Wethersfield, through the Town Council, opined that Mr. DiBella's adverse jury verdict regarding State Pension Funds exemplifies the reasons for which Mr. DiBella should not be at the forefront of a \$2.1 billion bonded reconstruction project and urges its fellow member towns to join Wethersfield in this vote of "no confidence".

MINUTES

Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 4, 2008"** seconded by Deputy Mayor Montinieri.

Councilor Forrest said that he had a correction on page 14373 His comment should read "Councilor Forrest said that he would be addressing the concerns that came into question..."

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

Councilor Forrest moved "**TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 19, 2008**" seconded by Deputy Mayor Montinieri.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilors Cascio, Roberts, and Walsh abstained. The motion passed 6-2-0.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:55 p.m., Councilor Forrest moved "**TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**" seconded by Deputy Mayor Montinieri All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk

Approved by vote of Council March 17, 2008