

## **ADJOURNED BUDGET MEETING WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2008**

An Adjourned Meeting of the Town Council (adjourned from Monday, April 21, 2008) was held on Wednesday, April 23, 2008 at 5:45 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Eleanor Buck Wolf Nature Center with Chairperson Adil presiding.

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

**Also present:** Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk, Lisa Hancock, Finance Director, Greg Curtin, Chairperson of the Library Board, Kathy Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation, Paul Hutcheon, Director of Central CT Health District, James Cetran, Police Chief

### **LIBRARY**

Greg Curtin, Chairperson of the Library Board, said that the Library Board had a PowerPoint presentation to show. He said that he hoped it would put away some of the perceptions or mis-perceptions of many areas of the Library. He said that this is not a normal budget for the Library or Library Board. This is a budget that reflects a move from one room to three full floors. This move will be during this budget cycle. There are public safety issues and public health issues to address. He asked that the Town Council look at it differently than budgets from years past. He thanked the Town Council for all of its support over the past few years. The Town Council has been good to the Library and it has been appreciated. The Library Board calls the Library the jewel of Wethersfield and would like to have that reflected upon opening.

Paul Courchaine, Chairperson of the Library Board's Finance Committee, presented the following:



[Wethersfield Library Financial Projections](#) [208 KB PDF\* file]

Councilor Forrest asked whether the compare and contrast was between the existing Library and new Library or the previous Library, before renovations, and the new Library.

Laurel Goodgion, Library Director, said that the comparison is between the one floor the Library now has with the new Library. The square footage before the renovations was 26,500 square feet. Comparison with the size of the collection is what the Library has available operating out of the present temporary space and what the Library will have when the books are returned from storage. She said that there were two restrooms and a meeting room in the former Library office on the main floor, a small meeting room on the ground floor and a study room on the mezzanine level of the former Library. Now the Library has one program room.

Councilor Forrest asked about the \$40,000 increase in janitorial fees. He asked if this number was a change from now. Is there a way to think back two years to the former Library to make a comparison?

Laurel Goodgion said that she did not have the figures from two years ago but if you take the figures from now and multiply it by three it would be more than the amount of money that is being requested. She said that she is asking to go from 5 hours of custodial service a day to 8 hours.

Councilor Forrest asked if the Library had 8 hours of custodial service previously.

Laurel Goodgion said that the Library had 5 hours of service a day. There were less restrooms, meeting rooms, and one less floor. There will be 8 hours of custodial service Monday through Friday and four hours on Saturdays and Sundays when the Library is open.

Councilor Forrest asked about the additional \$31,000 in equipment and furnishings on page 171.

Laurel Goodgion said that it was made up of items requested in the Information and Technologies Equipment budget and the Equipment budget. The IT budget was for PC's and laptops. The Library is going back to the number of computers it had before the renovations plus an additional two in the teen area and two in the children's area. Additional computer chairs and appliances for the ground floor were also included. \$4,800 for chairs for staff, \$3,200 for appliances for the kitchen, \$1,800 for study room furniture in one room, and \$4,800 for computer chairs for the public.

Councilor Forrest asked if these items were taken out of the budget.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said yes.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that he met with the Library Board twice so he has a different perspective on this budget. He asked if when the budget was originally put together, did the Library Board have a start date in mind for the Library at full service?

Greg Curtin said that the Library Board used the June start date when making the budget.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri asked if the Library Board could go back and look at the monthly impacts of line item assuming a two month delay.

Greg Curtin said that it has not been done, but it is something the Library Board will begin to do.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that he doesn't know how many people are aware that a problem came up last week that will result in a delay of about six weeks.

Laurel Goodgion said that there are really only two areas that would be impacted, custodial and the new children's positions.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that there are some proposed positions for the children's library that could be somewhat influenced by this schedule change. He said that would be helpful to the Town Council. The Library is facing some cuts from the original proposal and he urges the Board to look at the proposed cuts and see where they suggest these cuts can be made versus where the cuts have been made. Are there any exchange type items? Also, how many children's positions are built into the \$80,000?

Laurel Goodgion said that it is 2 full time employees spread over five positions, none of them benefited positions. They are all part time and at a Library Associate level.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri asked if the positions are currently held by a staff member.

Laurel Goodgion said that these are positions that have been carried in the Library budget since 05/06 but have been waiting to fill them until the renovations were completed.

Councilor Cascio said that he has been around for the entire renovation and has heard that the Library is going to be the jewel of the Town. This has been a plan that the Town has been working towards. It is now in front of the Town Council. Either the Town Council puts up or has a Library that is functional only to the capacity that the Council allows it to be. The Town has spent millions of dollars on renovations. The way the budget is presented to the Town Council maybe with a reduction in the custodial staff and part time positions what will the Library look like? What is

going to be functioning?

Greg Curtin said that a commitment was made to the Library constituents that this would be a good Library. The Library Board formed a pact during the Referendum for phase II and made a lot of phone calls telling what the constituency would get at the end of the renovations. The Library Board is really concerned that it won't be able to live up to its end of the promises it made to residents. The residents are excited about the opening of the Library. There will be a gala opening.

Councilor Cascio said that he is hearing that past Council members had made a commitment to this project. He wanted to look at the history so members would know what has been done over the past five or six years when the Town Council reduced Library budgets because it wasn't needed because the Library wasn't totally functioning. His concern is that the Library is now going to be fully functioning by when, December 1st or January 1st? The Library has been a priority but is now being given a backseat. It is a building that is used by everyone and is a pleasure. It needs to be done the right way or the Town is in trouble.

Councilor Console asked if he was referring to time being money.

Councilor Cascio said yes. He would like a target date but the only effect will be on the custodian positions and children's positions.

Laurel Goodgion said that the children's positions are not even in the recommended budget.

Councilor Cascio asked for a quick rundown on what will be new in the Library.

Laurel Goodgion said that the number of public meeting rooms will be an asset to the Town. It will have more meeting space than surrounding Towns. There will be three study rooms and a conference room on the main floor. The lower level will have a conference room and a large meeting room that will hold a hundred people. On the mezzanine there will be a study room and conference room. There will be the greatly expanded children's area. It has decent public restrooms that are ADA compliant. There will be a self-serve coffee bar on the main floor and a lot more space for patrons to relax in. Skylights have been added to the main floor for natural light. The building will be much more functional as well, offering the staff more work space. The Library Director's office is also readily available to the public and not hidden away.

Councilor Roberts asked what the vacant positions were.

Laurel Goodgion said the vacant positions are a shelver, a Library aide, and a 12 hour Library clerk. They are positions that are being carried on the books and have been very careful not to fill positions. Since the expansion to the entire ground floor, the circulation has increased by 40 percent. Staff is being gradually added back. There is no funding for expanded teen services in this budget. It would be a 20 hour a week position to help on the reference desk. There was also a request for an expansion of the library monitor because the Library is open Friday afternoons.

Councilor Kotkin said that in 2007/08 budget, the Town Council approved the budget as presented. Last year the Town Council reduced it by \$500,000. Where do you expect to end this year?

Laurel Goodgion said that she is working on the third quarter projections now. It looks like there will be about \$60,000 left in wages if everything goes well, because the Library has been very slow in filling the positions.

Councilor Kotkin said that the requested increase is for about \$335,000, about 20 percent more than the approved budget this year. The Town Manager's recommendation is for a \$100,000 increase. She went through the budget line by line but that is more for information because the Town Council does not control the budget. The Town can come up with a number but it will be allocated by the Library Board. He asked for the Town Manager to explain her thoughts on the budget.

Bonnie Therrien said that in general, all new positions were taken out of the budget Town wide. The timing and economy do not allow for getting everything at once even though the Town would like to. Some things will have to be

phased in over time.

Councilor Kotkin said that there was a contract for Library employees that was settled.

Bonnie Therrien said that the contract was retroactive to July 2006 and will expire July 2009.

Councilor Kotkin said that he thought that there was a re-opener in the contract.

Bonnie Therrien said that the Town is in the middle of that now. It is to move the health insurance over to the teachers' plan.

Councilor Kotkin asked if that was reflected in this budget and if it would save the Town any money.

Bonnie Therrien said that it is not reflected in the budget. Chris Monroe is working on that now. Once everyone is moved to that policy, the Town should see a savings but there are two other unions to negotiate with.

Councilor Kotkin said that if the Town was successful there would be some modest savings in the 2008/09 year.

Bonnie Therrien said yes. She would be able to find out by next week.

Greg Curtin said that the Library Board is spearheading a fundraising program mainly for furniture.

Paul Courchaine said that there are places that are appropriate to fundraise for and donors will support, like specific programs or furniture. Typically, one does not see fundraising for operational costs.

Councilor Kotkin said that there is some money for furnishings and he knows that there are a couple of large companies that give used furniture that is in very good condition. Is that something that the Library Board would broach?

Laurel Goodgion said that donated used furniture is being used for the administrative area and the technical services area.

Councilor Kotkin congratulated the Library staff for running a great operation. He said it is amazing what the staff has done.

Chairperson Adil asked if the Town Manager could give the Town Council a revised schedule based on the new completion date of Town Hall.

Bonnie Therrien said that she does not have the latest date to move Town offices back. There was a section of piping found in the ceiling of the main floor near the stairs that was corroded. Every pipe was not checked during the second bond project. This is the time to do this work. The Building Committee is now waiting for the report from the HVAC contractor for the exact cost and plans. It could possibly cost \$100,000 but there is some money left in the bond. She said that the last she heard was that it could be a 6 to 7 week delay. The Building Committee meets next Monday and will give her an update. The Town was supposed to move the end of June and the Library was going to open October 1st.

Laurel Goodgion said that she is reworking her timeline given the delay and said that she thinks the earliest the Library can be open would be mid-November, if the 6 week delay is accurate.

Chairperson Adil asked where the shelving money was in the budget.

Bonnie Therrien said that the Library Director just gave her the report on the bid for the shelving and it came in under the anticipated amount. It looks like the bond will be able to cover the shelving. The Building Committee will discuss that on Monday night, too.

Chairperson Adil thanked the Library Board and staff for their time.

Laurel Goodgion said that the most important items that are not in the Manager's budget are the children's positions for the expanded Library. The amount was \$85,000 but with the delays there is some flexibility there.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION (page 179)**

Kathy Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation, said that there are four separate budgets; the main budget, the Community Center budget, the Nature Center budget, and the Parks Maintenance budget. The Park and Recreation budget on page 179 is the biggest one. It deals with all the programs with the exception of the Community Center and Nature Center. There are not many changes in this budget. The big change is in working with the schools. The schools are looking to have more custodians in the buildings during the park programs. Some key staff used to be able to unlock the schools. The changes with security, which she fully supports, are making her look at things differently. Based on the additional custodians for the security of the building, it is a \$20,000 subsidy to the Board of Education to help defray the costs. That is the biggest increase outside of salary and benefits. It is listed under rentals, custodial service for park programs.

Bonnie Therrien said that she is going to get a report on this from the Superintendent because if there is already a custodian in the building, the Town should not have to pay for the custodian.

Kathy Bagley said that there were some additional custodians that had to be put on for some park programs. She said that she is working cooperatively with the Schools to try and not hold one program at a school at a time.

Chairperson Adil asked if the Keane Foundation opening will have an impact on any of this.

Kathy Bagley said not really. There will be program increases but not dollar increases. All new programs have to be self-sustaining. She said that she will meet with Judy Keane on Monday to discuss programming. That, too, will be looked at as a cooperative venture. There will not be much of an increase in the utilities because the square footage will be about the same. If anything, there may be a little reduction because of the energy efficient windows and heating system. She showed a rendering of what the new entrance to the 9/11 Memorial Center will look like. She passed it around. It includes the piece of steel from the World Trade Center site. The other piece of steel will be used inside.

Chairperson Adil asked if there were any questions.

Kathy Bagley said that the Community Center budget begins on page 181. This budget represents the utility costs for the building and the staff for the building. It also includes some supplies for programs at the Community Center. The increases in this budget have to do with a couple of pieces of equipment. A new floor machine is needed for the new gymnasium floor and a similar floor in the fitness room. She said that each year she is also trying to replace a heating unit in the building. The heaters in the west wing are original to when the building was a school. This year one unit was replaced. The budget includes the replacement of 12 chairs and 24 cushions in the Banquet Room for \$1,500. The chairs have been in the room since 1996.

Councilor Kotkin said that there is no increase for natural gas. Does the Town expect to use less or has the price been locked in?

Kathy Bagley said that she was directed to hold her number from last year.

Bonnie Therrien said that was the number given from CRCOG.

Councilor Kotkin asked that the Town Manager and Superintendent get together and agree upon expected increases for the leveling of heating costs. The Board of Education is showing a 15 or 20 percent increase in heating costs and the Town is showing no increase.

Bonnie Therrien said that she thought that the Board of Education received the same information from CRCOG. She will double check that they have that information.

Councilor Kotkin said that he wants to make sure that the Town is not under-budgeting and the Board of Education is over-budgeting. It doesn't make any sense unless one side has a fixed contract and the other side does not.

Councilor Cascio asked how the banquet usage was running.

Kathy Bagley said that the usage of the banquet room is fairly steady. There were some additional bookings in the late fall and winter due to the Keeney Center fire. It is used so much for community groups but she tries to set aside key times for private parties. It is used a lot.

Councilor Cascio said that when there are aerobics classes there used to be a carpet fee. Does that fee still exist and does the funding go to the replacement of the carpet.

Kathy Bagley said that is not included in the registration fee for the aerobics classes.

Councilor Cascio said that with the new 9/11 sports complex and the existing facility, where is the Town in relation to the painting of hall ways and other repairs and maintenance? Does the Town have a plan for painting and carpet?

Kathy Bagley said that in the 10 year Capital Improvement budget, the Community Center has 2 pages of requests. Over the 10 years, painting, carpet replacement, and drape replacement are included. They are spaced out over the years. Each year, the list changes as priorities change. Now the lobby is the priority because it should blend in with the new wing. In next year's Capital budget there is a request for a heating unit in the doorway by the canopy and some work in the lobby. She said now she will wait to see what gets funded. She said that she tries to keep the plan up to date in case a funding source becomes available.

Councilor Walsh asked if part of the plan is to look at efficiencies of heating units to move towards energy savings.

Kathy Bagley said that when she evaluates which rooms need to be fixed because the unit is broken, she also makes sure that the unit will fit with the system in the building and then looks for energy efficiencies.

Councilor Roberts said that in the Capital Improvement Budget she noticed storage. At a meeting in the Senior Center area, she noticed rubbermaid containers everywhere.

Kathy Bagley said that is because of the construction going on in the building. Once the construction is complete, there will be more storage.

Councilor Roberts said that when meeting with the Keane Foundation about programming, residents have mentioned to her that the Town does not have a lacrosse program and it is becoming a popular sport.

Councilor Kotkin said that it looks like the Town Manager cut out \$4700 from a secretary position, was that for more hours?

Kathy Bagley said that every year she tries to boost the part-time secretary position from 25 hours to 30 hours a week.

Councilor Kotkin said that the reason the floater was hired was to give all Departments some more hours. Has that not worked for you?

Kathy Bagley said that recently her Department has had the benefit of the position.

Chairperson Adil asked if the on-line registration has helped ease the work of the office.

Kathy Bagley said that since it is so new, it has increased the hours because everyone has to be trained on it and learn about it. She said that she anticipates that it will cut down on counter time eventually. The summer is the key time and people are registering on-line.

Bonnie Therrien said that the next budget section is the Nature Center on page 193.

Kathy Bagley said that this budget funds the running of the Nature Center. The only new item in this budget is the \$1,500 for a copy machine. The last budget is the Park Maintenance Budget. This budget includes the utilities for the pools, playgrounds, Solomon Welles House, and the maintainers for the pools. The only new item in this budget is for a water fountain for the picnic area at Mill Woods Park and an accessible path to the water fountain and bocce courts. The water fountain does not have a shut off valve. Along with the fountain, she would like to have some new plumbing so that it will have a shut off valve. The paved path has heaved from frost. The boat motor that was requested by the Department and cut by the Town Manager was for the boat for the Harbormaster. The motor was repaired last year and is just shot. The Town Manager suggested taking the money for the motor from the Cove Preservation Fund. She said that she will put together that request. She is trying to figure out how to go about purchasing a used motor. The price in the budget is for a new motor.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri asked how the lighting was controlled for Mill Woods and Mikey's Place.

Kathy Bagley said that there are different accounts for different parks. At Mickey's Place, the gazebo is on a timer. The street light in the park is not in this budget. She said that the Daversa Family reminds her to adjust it when needed. In Mill Woods, the tennis court lights are on timers. The softball lights are not on a timer. A park ranger turns them on and off as needed. The basketball lights are controlled by the ranger, too. The skatepark lights won't be used until they are fixed. They won't be fixed until the money has been raised by the skatepark. That would tie into the park ranger, too. It would be negotiated lighting in an effort to modify behavior. The new Little League Field will probably be controlled by the park ranger, too.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri asked if any thought was given to installing motion lights at the tennis courts.

Kathy Bagley said no. The lights are so old it may not be feasible. She said that the park closes and no one should be in the park late.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that town-wide, there are groups out there that are interested in consulting with the Town for retrofitting energy equipment, with the cost being paid by the provider with the savings being recaptured over a certain period of time by the provider. The Town needs to look at that town-wide. There are a lot of inefficiencies in Town that could save the Town some money.

Kathy Bagley said that CL&P walked through the Community Center and made suggestions based on usage.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that he would expect to see some savings with the efficiencies in the new 9/11 Memorial space.

Councilor Cascio asked if the \$7,000 water fountain could be part of the renovations.

Kathy Bagley said that it could be part of the Master Plan. The request for this item is due to the fact that it does seem to get vandalized and the shut off valve would help with that. One has been installed in Mikey's Place and it has held up very well. It is used for the picnic area, playground area and skatepark. As it is now, it is a concrete column with a spigot on the top. One hit with a baseball bat and it comes off and water continues to run. The water fountain would be about \$4,000 and the path would be about \$3,000. The costs are for material only. In-house labor would be used.

Councilor Kotkin said that he doesn't see anything for the Little League Fields in this budget for operating costs. He asked if that would go in the next budget

Kathy Bagley said that the biggest expense would be for electricity and water. It will be used in May and June of this fiscal year. The electricity budget has been increased a little bit.

Councilor Kotkin asked about the water charge. He said that if he looks from 2006 to what is requested in 2009, it is tripled in the water bill. The charges have gone up but not tripled. The usage must have gone up, too.

Kathy Bagley said that she has been discussing this with the MDC. This past fall the summer water bill was tripled and yet nothing changed during the summer. The Town and the Metropolitan District Commission did a series of tests

to see if there was a water leak or a bad meter. They are going to work with the Town again in the Spring to see if the Town is losing water some place. The bill for Mill Woods is unexplainable today. She is still working on it.

Councilor Kotkin said that the Town needs to get this under control before it send lines up to the Little League Fields and Soccer fields. Otherwise, the costs could be huge.

Kathy Bagley said that it is a priority. The MDC has been very good but says that it is the water that the Town has used. The Town feels it just doesn't match the Town's records.

Bonnie Therrien said that the Police Department has a similar problem with water, too.

Councilor Kotkin said that he will be eager to hear what comes of this.

Chairperson Adil asked if other watering sources were considered for the fields.

Kathy Bagley said yes, other sources were considered and were costed out. The best way to do it is through the piping with the MDC. The brook couldn't handle it and the well water would need to go through a process and might not be enough water anyway.

Chairperson Adil asked for a report on the bike trails

Kathy Bagley said that the connection of the bike trail to the Solomon Welles House is planned for completion by June.

Councilor Cascio asked about the dam at Bell Pond. He asked if that was part of the park and who maintains it.

Kathy Bagley said that the Town maintains its side of the pond.

Councilor Cascio said that on the Town side there was a lot of activity on the weekend. He wondered how children got over there. He said that he is concerned with the safety of them being there.

Bonnie Therrien said that Capital projects are on page 12 of the budget.

Kathy Bagley said that there is \$25,000 for Willard Pool caulking and \$78,000 for the driveway loop.

Bonnie Therrien said that Kathy Bagley is amazing during the budget process. She and her staff are very creative with finding savings.

### **CENTRAL CT HEALTH DISTRICT (page 165)**

Paul Hutcheon, Director of the Central CT Health District, handed out a copy of the District's 2008-09 adopted budget. He said that this is the local Health Department for four communities: Berlin, Newington, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield. The population is about 94,000 people. There is an office in all four Town Halls with the central office in Wethersfield. The 2008-09 budget shows that the per capita membership rate is remaining the same at \$4.06 per capita. This is the fourth year in a row that the District is able to hold the line item. Wethersfield's contribution for the year will be \$105,791, a slight reduction from the current year based on a .62 percent reduction in the population in accordance with the State figures. 85 percent of expenses are for salaries and benefits. The District doesn't own any property or vehicles. On the income side, the District is able to cover 33 percent with grants. It is a significant increase from prior years. To balance the budget, the District is taking \$85,000 from the Reserve Account to balance the budget in order to keep the rate the same. The Board of Health recently adopted a policy whereby it is planning on keeping 25 percent of expenditures in a reserve account. The website has recently been updated. A Salon Ordinance has been passed by the District. All salons will be licensed and regulated in the four Towns. Wethersfield has had a Salon Ordinance since the 1980's. It will include nail salons but not tanning or tattoos. On the grants, the District recently received a dental screening grant for about \$5,000 for free screening for seniors. The Community Health Coordinator is great at finding the grants and writing, receiving, and implementing them. The District is starting a smart dining in

the district grant for about \$10,000. This is a partnership between class 3 and 4 dining establishments where the District will ask them to provide health food choices on their menus. Handouts will help them choose what menu items qualify. There is a \$17,000 grant for Asthma prevention to train school nurses in prevention and care.

Councilor Kotkin asked if there was any chance that additional Towns would be added to the District.

Paul Hutcheon said that there is always a chance and the opportunities would be looked at as they were presented. Plainville came to the District and asked for a proposal. He drafted one and brought it to the Board. The Board voted not to move forward with it. The primary reason was that in order to be equivalent to what Plainville has now and offer the programs and services that it does and stay at \$4.06 per capita. The District decided not to put forth a proposal because there would have been a \$22,000 shortfall. The Board was not interested in increasing the membership fees in order to bring Plainville on board.

Councilor Kotkin said that there was a free dental clinic for all a few weeks ago. Is that something that the Town would look into providing?

Paul Hutcheon said that this is the first phase of the dental project. Phase two would be for care and treatment. This first phase is only a screening. He said that he is hoping that with the success of the program, the District will be eligible for and will receive the second level of funding.

Councilor Roberts asked how many people are on the Board and how do they get appointed.

Paul Hutcheon said that there are 11 members on the Board. It is set by State Statute. Every Town gets 1 member based on 10,000 population or part there of. All the representatives are appointed by the Town Council. Wethersfield has 3 members. There is a vacancy as, Patrick Kelly from Wethersfield has resigned. There are also 11 staff members. The District received an Emergency Preparedness Grant that funds the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator 100 percent. It also helped to pay for a few communication items. Effective next grant period starting August 10th, the grant is being planned on being reduced by 38 percent. There will be a significant change in that position.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Bonnie Therrien said that the Police budget has gone to zero based budgeting this year. The budget begins on page 75.

James Cetran, Police Chief, said that the Police Department has been ahead of the curve on computers out of necessity. The software that runs the records management system and computer aided dispatching is very intense and these programs require certain computers. There is an Officer in the Department that has a great knowledge of computers and actually builds the computers for the Department. This results in a cost savings. The Town Manager cut the computer budget in half. The Department just went through a software upgrade and needs to upgrade the computers. That is on page 92. The second part of that is the MDT laptops. The

Department was upgrading laptops but then it received a software upgrade that the laptops couldn't handle. Money was found to get the laptops in the cruisers. This is not a luxury, it is a true necessity. Since then, the Department has allotted enough money to replace 1/3 of the laptops. The cut in half of the laptop budget will hurt significantly in trying to stay above the curve. The second account that has been reduced, 5420 is for cameras in the car. There are cameras for five of the thirteen cars. This year he put in for 3 additional cameras. The Town Manager cut it down to 1. If the Department had the cameras in cars for the shooting on the Silas Deane Highway, it wouldn't have taken the State's Attorney six months to rule on the shooting. The State police have all gone to cameras in the cars. It helps with the nuisance law suits and complaints. Also in that account, the District put in for 3 radar units to stay above the curve. Radar units have a certain life expectancy. He said that he will not argue for the Numb John training device, a dummy used for training purposes. He said that he feels these items are necessities, along with overtime. Overtime is almost like a fixed item. Through the years, overtime equates out to be a certain amount per officer number. The Town Manager cut \$60,000 out of that budget. The budget is only \$1,000 more than last year and with the 3.5 percent raise that will be in effect January 1st, he doesn't see how the Department will make it. He said that he thinks the Department will be able to manage if \$30,000 is put back into the account if the Department is as lucky as it has been.

If there is a problem or something significant happens it will go over. Next fiscal year, the law will go into effect saying that 16 and 17 year olds are juveniles. That will create three times the workload for the juvenile officers. He said that he will probably have to pull officers from the detective unit for this work. The one juvenile officer he requested was cut and in reality the Department really needs two additional juvenile officers.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri asked for a prioritization of the cameras and computers.

James Cetran said that the laptops would be the first priority followed by the computers and the radar.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri asked if it was possible to start the juvenile officer later in the year.

James Cetran said that was absolutely possible. It is an excellent compromise. He said that he is afraid that the Department will be overwhelmed in 2010 without this position.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that there are 21 crossing guard positions. In Massachusetts, crossing guards can be compensated with tax relief. He has spoke to Representative Morin about this. If the seniors were compensated by tax relief, the money is not taxable income. Could you get a feeling if that is something that would be feasible?

James Cetran said that he doesn't know how that will work if the crossing guards are sick or pass away. He said he likes that idea, but some sort of system would have to be put in place.

Deputy Mayor Montinieri said that instead of paying them hourly, it is off the tax bill. It would reduce it from \$150,000 to \$95,000 to the budget cost to the Town. He said that there is a legislative issue here as well.

Lisa Hancock said the only thing that she would caution on and more research would be needed is it would be the same situation as with the volunteer firefighters. The IRS required that any sort of tax abatement be a taxable income to those people. The Town had to turn around and make it a stipend and pay it through the payroll and tax it appropriately. There is now some temporary legislation pertaining to firefighters and EMS personnel. The IRS will look upon this as taxable income.

Councilor Roberts said that there are five cameras now.

James Cetran said that they are being purchased and training will follow.

Councilor Walsh asked about the additional Sergeant. He asked if that puts the Department up to six.

James Cetran said that it brings the number up to 7 but will not help with the overtime. The Sergeant is staying with the Mid-State Task Force. Wethersfield is the host agency and should have the supervisor in the Task Force. Eventually, the position will go back to patrol. That Sergeant position may be able to move to another position that could help with overtime in the future. One other item to bring to the Council's attention is within the last six years, the Department has lost a lot of officers living in Wethersfield. The Department went from 65 percent to 38 percent. He said that he is looking for some type of incentive to keep them in Wethersfield. He said that he doesn't know what to do, but it would benefit the citizens of Wethersfield.

Councilor Kotkin asked if these officers lived in Town and were hired and then moved.

James Cetran said that some do. He said that it seems to be a trend.

The Council discussed Chief Cetran's example of a cruiser for each officer that lived in Town. They said that cruisers would last longer and be better maintained but the capital cost would be huge. There may also be negotiated salary and benefits issues, too.

Councilor Forrest said that the juvenile officer would be another body on the force and would that have an impact on the overtime?

James Cetran said that it would not effect overtime. The additional body is so that more overtime is not needed.

Councilor Forrest asked about the ammunition account going from \$18,000 to \$0.

James Cetran said that ammunition is a significant problem in the country. The 223 rounds and the 40 caliber rounds that the Department purchases are being shipped to Iraq. It takes the Town almost nine months to receive an order now. He made the purchase now and it won't be seen next fiscal year.

Councilor Hemmann asked if other communities were seeing a shift of officers moving out of Town.

James Cetran said that he does not know, but could find out if it is happening in similar communities. He said that it is hard to talk to some of the surrounding Towns about this, as their Chiefs live out of Town.

Councilor Hemmann said that a lot of the change may also be from the shift in the workforce. Many of the officers who retired had grown up in Town and worked and lived here and as they retired, new hires have not lived in Town.

James Cetran said that may be true.

Bonnie Therrien said that the Chief asked for five replacement vehicles and she gave him four. She said that there has been three armed robberies in the last two weeks. It is not just Wethersfield, there have been other robberies in the region.

James Cetran said that it is the same guys doing the robberies. They robbed Kips, Valero and Cumberland Farms. He has been identified and has done robberies all around Wethersfield.

#### **AWARD OF BIDS FOR PAVING PROGRAM**

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO AWARD THE BID FOR BITUMINOUS CONCRETE PAVEMENT TO TILCON-CT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$680,000 AND TO INCREASE THE PURCHASE ORDER WITH COSTELLO INDUSTRIES FOR MILLING OPERATIONS BY THE AMOUNT OF \$95,000 AND TO INCREASE THE PURCHASE ORDER WITH GENERAL PAVING BY THE AMOUNT OF \$48,881 FOR MISCELLANEOUS PAVEMENT PREPARATION"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said the Town Council already agreed to Tilcon and Costello for the paving program. The Town needs to start the program now. If Tilcon is awarded the State bid, it will honor that price.

Councilor Cascio said that he has a concern with the streets that are being considered. Some of the major area streets, Highland Street, Highcrest Road, Nott Street are in need of repair. He is having difficulty with the side streets that don't look so needy.

Bonnie Therrien said that she thinks that Highland Street is on the summer list. She said that the Town does an area at a time because there is a cost to move the vehicles during the paving. She will check to see when Nott Street is scheduled. There is also a summer and fall program, too.

Councilor Hemmann asked for a list of what roads are on the other lists.

Bonnie Therrien said that the list will be out in a couple of weeks.

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

Bonnie Therrien said that at the Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) meeting today, there is a possibility that the Town should only use 1/2 of the Connecticut Resource Recovery Agency (CRRA) money now because of lawsuits.

Councilor Roberts said that she heard some Towns were receiving more PILOT money this year.

Bonnie Therrien said that Wethersfield is not, as the Appropriation's Committee as already passed its budget. She said that the PILOT for utilities, like cell towers is going to go down.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:24 p.m., Councilor Forrest moved "**TO ADJOURN TO THE BUDGET WORKSHOP SESSION ON MONDAY, APRIL 28, 2008 AT 5:45 P.M. AT THE ELEANOR BUCK WOLF NATURE CENTER**" seconded by Councilor Cascio.

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

Dolores Sassano  
Town Clerk

*Approved by vote of Council May 19, 2008*

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