

## **JULY 17, 2006 REGULAR MEETING**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on July 17, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Silas Deane Middle School.

Present: Councilors Adil, Cascio, Drake, Forrest, Kirsche, Kotkin, Walsh, Deputy Mayor Fortunato and Chairperson Morin.

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 Councilor Kotkin.

### **Tourism Commission Report**

Chairperson Morin introduced Tourism Commission Chairperson Charlie Forsdick to present the Commission's Annual Report. Mr. Forsdick discussed some of the highlights of the report which included the close working relationship established with the Greater Hartford Convention and Visitors Bureau to promote Historic Wethersfield as a primary destination for visitors; the creation and distribution of a visitor's survey to be collected and tabulated seasonally; and advertisements in the Greater Hartford Guest Guide, Connecticut Magazine, and on public radio. Mr. Forsdick stated that the Commission continues to maintain and upgrade its website with additional links and attractions and as a result, is experiencing double the hits since last year. He said that the Commission participated in the Hartford Business Expo with a booth and portable display, which he had on hand to show the Council. Mr. Forsdick stated that the Commission will continue to expand the placement of media advertising into regional and national publications, as well as to develop one and two day itineraries for touring Historic Wethersfield.

Chairperson Morin thanked Mr. Forsdick and the members of the Tourism Commission for their hard work in promoting Wethersfield.

Councilor Adil thanked the Commission for their work, and asked Mr. Forsdick what the Commission's number one priority for the upcoming year is. Mr. Forsdick responded that this would be to continue to promote Wethersfield tourism through the Greater Hartford Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Councilor Forrest commented on the beauty of the Town's rose garden and stated that the Garden Club has requested that this site be included as a stop on the tour of Wethersfield. Mr. Forsdick said that many items are taken into consideration regarding tour stops and that the rose garden is a good suggestion.

Councilor Cascio thanked the members of the Commission for their hard work and suggested that the Tourism Commission coordinate with Wethersfield High School to work together on the walking tour and other programs. Mr. Forsdick replied that the Commission has worked with the High School before and that Councilor Cascio's suggestion is a good one in that the Commission could certainly utilize the technological capabilities at the High School.

### **Economic Development Report**

Town Planner Peter Gillespie gave a presentation of the June, 2006 Economic Development Report which included the following:

- 713 Silas Deane Highway - new business - small office for Merry Maids
- 82-86 Wolcott Hill Road - new business - Just The Basics
- 376 Silas Deane Hwy - new business - Burchell/Wilson Mental Health Services
- 486 Silas Deane Hwy - foundation poured for Tim Horton's
- 416 Silas Deane Hwy - Dunkin Donuts construction underway

- 1715 Berlin Turnpike - Gator Wash car wash facility construction underway
- Ridge Road - Church Homes - ribbon cutting ceremony held for the first two model units. P&Z approved permit for Phase 2 of the project
- Silas Deane Hwy - Kainan Restaurant converted to a Thai food restaurant
- 884 Silas Deane Hwy - City Fish - plans and applications filed with PZC to add some office space, enclose the loading dock, and add some inside and outside seating
- 91 Nott Street - zone change application filed to rezone for 55+ single family style homes
- Progress Drive - progress made to encourage existing property owners to complete work required for the subdivision

Mr. Gillespie stated that Fuss and O'Neill has submitted a draft of the final report/plan for the Silas Deane Highway Revitalization, and will be making a presentation to the PZC at their July 18 joint meeting with the Rocky Hill PZC. He reported that the EDIC has completed the finishing touches on the façade improvement program for the Silas Deane Highway and it is anticipated that they will solicit interest from property owners and merchants in July. Mr. Gillespie reported that the EDIC recently held a breakfast seminar on business assistance programs and speakers from local banks, CL&P, and the Town discussed financial opportunities available to small businesses in Town. He said that the Preserve America Committee has met three times and is currently working on the RFP for consultant selection.

Councilor Kotkin asked for an estimate of the number of homes to be constructed at 91 Nott Street. Mr. Gillespie said that the developer has yet to submit detailed plans; however the preliminary plans indicate approximately twenty single-family homes. He said that this matches the density of the surrounding neighborhood, and is less than what the zoning regulations permit.

Councilor Forrest asked for an update of the façade improvements along the Bliss Market corridor. Mr. Gillespie said that there are three façade loans that were previously granted; however the funding has yet to be distributed.

Councilor Cascio asked if there has been any conversation with the owners of the property where the former Amici's Restaurant had been. Mr. Gillespie said that he has spoken with several interested parties and a realtor who has listed the property, and is surprised that there hasn't been a higher level of interest in the property. Councilor Cascio asked if there has been any activity regarding the old location of Blockbuster Video. Mr. Gillespie said that he's spoken with a couple of people; however, parking is an issue at this property.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

### HEARING

#### **ORDINANCE CREATING THE WETHERSFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

Betty Rosania, 88 Desmond Drive, Chairperson of the EDIC, commented that Wethersfield is pretty well developed; therefore it is time to look at ways to modify and improve what the Town already has. She urged the Council to support the ordinance in order to accomplish a broader tax base, attract younger, more diversified people to Town, and to have businesses supported by a broader population. Ms. Rosania thanked the Council, the Town Manager, and everyone responsible for supporting economic development in Wethersfield.

Phil Knecht, 100 Executive Square, commented that nothing will happen unless an experienced redevelopment agency is formed.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Road, commented that he doesn't see much value in the creation of a redevelopment agency. He said that redevelopment agencies draw a tremendous amount of taxpayer dollars and run as though they are private organizations who do as they please. Mr. Young urged the Council not to approve the ordinance; however, if approved, there should be regular meetings with public oversight and accountability.

Bill Knapp, 171 Collier Road, EDIC member, spoke in support of the ordinance stating that it appears that the

redevelopment agency will be accountable to the people, with authorization required by the Council.

Joe Cornelio, 100 Executive Square, member of the EDIC, stated that what Wethersfield wants is development along the Silas Deane Highway. He said that the Town needs people to come together to come up with ideas for more business in Wethersfield and the proposed redevelopment agency will help to accomplish this.

No one else wished to speak and the Chairperson declared the Hearing segment closed.

### GENERAL COMMENTS

Betty Rosania, 88 Desmond Drive, spoke in support of hiring Keiler and Company for marketing for economic development and tourism, stating that the EDIC has had a wonderful experience working with them.

Charlie Forsdick, 18 Monticello Drive, speaking on behalf of the Tourism Commission, expressed support of the hiring of Keiler and Company.

No one else wished to speak and the Chairperson declared the General Comments segment closed.

### COUNCIL REPORTS & COMMENTS

Councilor Adil reported that he attended the recent EDIC meeting where Betty Rosania was reappointed as Chairperson and Paul Montinieri as Vice-chairperson. Councilor Adil said that new projects and the Silas Deane Master Plan were discussed.

Councilor Kirsche reported on the recent meeting of the Wethersfield Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities where the unveiling of a resource book of services for people with disabilities took place. Councilor Kirsche verified with the Town Manager that the books will be available at the Town Hall and the Library. Councilor Kirsche stated that the Special Olympics was recently held, and the Wethersfield Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities held their summer picnic last week at the Community Center.

Councilor Cascio announced that the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce kicked off a walking tour on June 21 which showcased businesses in Old Wethersfield. He announced that Jeanne Kelly from the Capitol Region Federal Credit Union was elected as the new President of the Chamber of Commerce. Councilor Cascio stated that the Chamber continues to work on plans for this year's CornFest. He announced that Chamber of Commerce meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at the Chamber Office on the Silas Deane Highway.

Councilor Forrest reported that the Conservation Commission met recently to discuss the Trust for Public Land's financial report, and said that it was a very successful meeting.

Councilor Drake moved "**TO HOLD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION AFTER THE REGULAR MEETING TO DISCUSS REAL ESTATE NEGOTIATIONS**", seconded by Councilor Kirsche. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Kotkin stated that he received a call from a resident concerned about fireworks being set off in residents' backyards and in the streets, and that this creates a risk to people, cars, and property. Councilor Kotkin questioned if this is becoming an issue and if there is anything the Town should be considering for the years ahead. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the State law changed about five years ago, and now allows for more serious types of fireworks than had ever previously been allowed. She said that the Chief of Police reported to her that his Department and the Fire Department received 85 complaints of fireworks going off. She said that the Town cannot do much more than is already part of the State Statute.

Councilor Cascio thanked the Town Manager for responding to letters from residents in the Baneberry Lane area regarding the zoning for the parcel of land off of Old Reservoir Road.

Councilor Forrest commented that it is important that any redevelopment be considered in the Master Plan of the redevelopment of the Silas Deane Highway. Councilor Forrest asked that the Council be informed and updated as to the awards offered through the Façade Improvement Program.

Councilor Adil reported that a recent meeting of the Budget and Personnel Committee was held to discuss the elderly tax process and the recent proposed ordinance regarding a fee charged to residents with burglar alarms.

Chairperson Morin announced a number of upcoming community events.

## **COUNCIL ACTION**

Councilor Adil moved "**TO TAKE AGENDA ITEM B.1.c OUT OF ORDER**", seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that when she was hired, one of the mandates of the Council who hired her was to do something with economic development to raise the taxable grand list and to encourage more businesses to come to Wethersfield. She said that with the help of Mr. Gillespie and the EDIC, some progress has been made; however the Town does not have control over the development of vacant properties. She said that a redevelopment authority will have greater responsibility than the EDIC to work with the Town Council to acquire and/or develop some of the properties. She said that she believes very strongly that the redevelopment authority will remain accountable to the public. She said that because of concerns over a previous ordinance regarding eminent domain, Bond Counsel Attorney Doug Gillette suggested that this be referenced in the proposed ordinance.

Councilor Adil moved "**TO APPROVE THE ORDINANCE CREATING THE WETHERSFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**", seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Councilor Adil commented that this has been a long process and he thanked the EDIC, Peter Gillespie, Bond Counsel, and others who have moved this along. He said that progress has been made along the Silas Deane Highway; however without a redevelopment agency, progress will be limited and there will not be much growth in the grand list.

Councilor Kirsche stated that he appreciates Ms. Rosania's enthusiasm and he supports the ordinance; however, he would like to clarify that there is no overlap of the development responsibilities of the EDIC and the redevelopment authority of the proposed agency. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien stated that the State Statutes distinguish the responsibilities of each. She said that members of the EDIC can serve on the redevelopment agency and that the EDIC cannot do redevelopment.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato pointed out that the members of the agency will be appointed by the Town Manager and approved by the Town Council; however, a member may be removed by the Town Manager without the approval of the Council. She asked if there is a specific reason for this. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien answered that the removal process is already in the Charter; however she can ask Attorney Gillette if this could be noted in the ordinance without having to hold another public hearing.

Attorney Gillette commented that this language is consistent with the language in the EDIC ordinance and parallels the existing structure.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato suggested that reference be made to the section of the Charter and any other relevant Town or State Statutes. Attorney Gillette stated that it would be appropriate to include any cross referencing.

Councilor Drake stated that he supports the proposed ordinance although he has some reservations.

Councilor Cascio stated that he had previously suggested that there be some sort of reference to the already existing ordinance regarding eminent domain.

Chairperson Morin asked Attorney Gillette if the references he is eluding to will cover this.

Attorney Gillette said that he added to section 10-98 of the proposed ordinance reference to the power of eminent domain established by section 12.1 of the Code of Ordinances.

Councilor Forrest commented that he agrees with Deputy Mayor Fortunato's concern in that he would like to see an excellent amount of safety shown in the removal of a member from the agency. He said that he'd like to see that both the Town Manager and the Council approve of the removal. He said that he'd be willing to wait a month to get this into a good, solid ordinance.

Councilor Walsh asked if the cross reference to the EDIC would also apply to Section 10-101 of the proposed ordinance. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that they are covered under the Charter.

Councilor Adil asked if in referencing the Charter, the Town Council will have some say in the removal process. Attorney Gillette said that he is not familiar with the particular wording of the Charter. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the Charter provision is only for the Town Council to remove members of most committees and commissions. Councilor Adil asked the Town Manager if she feels comfortable that the Council will have adequate representation in the removal matter. She said that the process is well spelled out in the Charter and reminded the Council that the only reason for removal would be an attendance issue.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato pointed out that she raised the point for consistency purposes, and stated that she's prepared to move forward with the ordinance since the issue is covered in the Charter.

Councilor Drake commented that the Town Manager works for the Council and he feels that the Council is protected.

Chairperson Morin stated that he supports the proposed ordinance. He said that a tremendous amount of work was put in by the staff, EDIC and Council members.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved "**TO AMEND THE MOTION TO ADD TO THE ORDINANCE REFERENCE TO THE TOWN CHARTER REGARDING REMOVAL OF MEMBERS**", seconded by Councilor Walsh. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion to amend passed 9-0-0.

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

Councilor Adil moved "**TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF PAMELA M. RAPACZ FROM THE WETHERSFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, AND SUSAN FENNELLY FROM THE FLOOD AND EROSION CONTROL BOARD**", seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Adil moved "**TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS:**

**BOARD OF ETHICS**

Keith A. Latulippe	U	33 Woodland Street	7-17-06 to 6-30-09
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**TOURISM COMMISSION**

Phil Santopietro (Chamber Rep.)		1330 Silas Deane Hwy.	7-17-06 to 6-30-09
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**YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD**

Officer Alison Sullivan	TE	250 Silas Deane Hwy.	7-17-06 to 6-30-09
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**WETHERSFIELD COMMITTEE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

Karen A. Romaniello	D	100 Executive Sq apt 1101	7-17-06 to 6-30-07
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**FLOOD AND EROSION CONTROL BOARD**

Lorinda S. Coon	D	11 Robbins Drive	7-17-06 to 6-30-07
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## **TOURISM COMMISSION**

alternate (at large)

Joan A. Hughes

R 135 Highland Street

7-17-06 to 6-30-09

", seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Cascio moved "**TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF ERIC T. HART AS AN ALTERNATE TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION FOR THE TERM 7-17-06 TO 6-30-09**", seconded by Councilor Kirsche. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### Cottone Field Lighting

Councilor Forrest moved "**TO APPROVE THE COTTONE FIELD FOOTBALL LIGHTS AND TO HAVE THE TOWN MANAGER SIGN A SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF THE LIGHTS**", seconded by Councilor Cascio.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that a group of five individuals have been working hard to raise funds to install lights at Cottone Field. She said that the Board of Education approved the lighting, and the Council referred the item to the Planning and Zoning Commission who voted on a positive 8-24 referral with the following stipulations: (1) a full scale photometric analysis; (2) a schedule of field usage including days of the week and times of day; (3) a wind study on the light poles; and (4) a narrative explaining the parties responsible for the payment and maintenance of the lights. The Town Manager stated that committee members Sheila Suppicich, Dan O'Connor and Jay Cottone are on hand to answer any questions from the Council.

Councilor Drake asked if the power to the lights is coming from the High School building and Ms. Suppicich answered that the installation includes power supply from the High School. Councilor Drake asked if equipment will be able to go out on the field to maintain the lights. Ms. Suppicich answered that equipment can get to those areas for maintenance, and it has been suggested that the lamps be changed and the fixtures cleaned every other year. Councilor Drake asked if the electricity load capacity at the High School has been looked into since air conditioning has also been proposed. Ms. Suppicich said that even with the air conditioning there is still a significant amount of available power at the High School. She said that she has had both peak load and summer load tested. She said that the air conditioning would not be running at the same time that the football games will be held in the Fall.

Councilor Kirsche stated that he understands the significance of the lighting since, when he was in school team members had to park their cars in a circle around the field with their headlights on. He said that the lighting is a quality of life issue. He asked for clarification of the funding currently available in the Cottone Lighting Fund. Mr. O'Connor explained that rather than asking donors for cash, he requested instead a verbal commitment, which he will call in when the funding is required. He said that there are currently enough verbal commitments to finance the lights. Councilor Kirsche asked if there will be any issues with the path from the parking areas to the football field. Ms. Suppicich answered that this has been addressed. Councilor Kirsche asked if event prices will be increased to keep up with annual maintenance fees. Mr. O'Connor answered that if push comes to shove, the committee will find a way to pay for lighting; however, he believes that it should be the Town's responsibility to pay for the electricity, since the lighting is something that will benefit the entire Town. He said that thousands of children will benefit from this. Councilor Kirsche stated that it is important to put in the best effort to fulfill the original intent of the Wethersfield youth organizations to cover all costs. Mr. O'Connor stated that other sports teams are not charged for the electricity

used during a sporting event, and the Town spoke through a referendum to say that they want lights on Cottone Field.

Councilor Cascio asked if telescopic poles were discussed at all. Ms. Suppicich asked Councilor Cascio if he is referring to the pole being telescopic or the gauge that holds the light being telescopic. Councilor Cascio said that he is referring to the gauge that holds the light. Ms. Suppicich said that she is unaware of any sports lighting that has this option and that the telescopic option is used for ease of maintenance. Councilor Cascio expressed concern over any damage that may occur to the surface of the field, and asked who would be responsible for any damage. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien stated that there is insurance to cover any damage. Councilor Cascio stated that before a contract can be processed, funds have to be in place; so he asked Mr. O'Connor if the verbal commitments will need to be called in now. Mr. O'Connor replied that there is a fine line and he does not want to take the Planning and Zoning Commission vote for granted by purchasing the lighting first. Mr. O'Connor said that he would rather wait for the P & Z vote to take place and then immediately begin to solicit for the verbally committed contributions. Councilor Cascio verified that the cost of lighting the field will be \$4,260 per year and the Town Manager stated that it may be slightly higher due to Northeast Utilities rate increases. Councilor Cascio verified that this amount is only for the light usage and not the maintenance of the lights, and Ms. Suppicich said that this is correct. Councilor Cascio asked if someone will have to be hired to turn the lights on and off and Ms. Suppicich said that this will be the responsibility of the coaches.

Councilor Adil asked if the neighbors will be assured that there will be no spillage from the lights onto their property. Ms. Suppicich confirmed that this is correct as the light levels are quite low along the border of the field, and there are trees along the Westway side. Councilor Adil expressed his support for the lights and said that they are a wonderful gift.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato asked Ms. Suppicich for a report on the wind study. Ms. Suppicich stated that she is unable to provide a report as the wind study is not yet ready since the State has changed the requirements; however at this point she has no concern with the requirements being met. Deputy Mayor Fortunato asked the Town Manager if the Town, or the Board of Education, or a combination of the two is responsible for the cost of maintaining the lights. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that currently the maintenance costs are the responsibility of the Town. Deputy Mayor Fortunato suggested that the Shared Services Committee review the costs approximately a year out from the installation of the lights. She said that she supports everything that the group has done and recommended to the Town Manager that the Town needs to partner with the group and possibly even take the lead.

Councilor Kotkin asked for a comparison of the lighting at the field to street lights on Westway. Ms. Suppicich said that there is a street light on Westway, but she has not taken a meter reading on it. She said that the lighting from a street light could be brighter than the lighting that would emanate from the field. Councilor Kotkin asked if it is anticipated that the lights will not be used at all during the Spring. Mr. Cottone answered that there are currently no plans for the lighting to be used in the Spring. He said that the lighting pertaining to the High School is confined to 2-2 1/2 months in the Fall. Councilor Kotkin asked for a review of how the money is raised if and when the Council and Planning & Zoning approve the lighting, and if the money raised is turned over to the Town. Mr. O'Connor confirmed that his group raises money and then the money is turned over to the Town to write the checks for the project. Councilor Kotkin asked if the Town Manager will initiate a bidding process, and Mr. O'Connor explained that with this scenario there will not be a bidding process since the group will be negotiating directly with a company who can provide the materials at cost. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that, by Charter, any costs over \$25,000 have to go out to bid unless the Council votes to waive the bidding process. She said that anything under \$25,000 requires the acquisition of three quotes and doesn't have to go back to the Council.

Councilor Forrest stated that he supports the motion and that he does not consider electricity as maintenance, but rather a cost to the Town to provide a service. He said that he sees Cottone Field as one of the best fields in the State of Connecticut, and he appreciates the efforts of the committee.

Councilor Drake said that he appreciates all the work that has been done, and asked if the field will be available to any taxpayer to use at night. Mr. Cottone stated that there are some regulations regarding this. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that school events are first on the usage list, followed by Parks and Recreation; Town groups and residents, for a fee; and lastly, non-residents for a fee. Councilor Drake stated that he feels that the use of the field is

very limited considering the financial commitment that has been made to improve it, as well as the annual cost of maintenance. He said that he does not support the motion as he has concerns about the annual grass maintenance fee. He said that as this moves forward, the Town needs to make sure that it is for everybody, since all the taxpayers in Town will be paying for the field. Councilor Drake expressed concerns over groups not affiliated with the Town using the field.

Chairperson Morin stated that there is a fee structure which will necessarily recover the cost for use/maintenance of the field. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that she will furnish Councilors with a revised fee structure that will include lighting the field.

Mr. O'Connor stated that the field is currently available for all kinds of groups to use; however, they are not since they would have to foot the entire bill for the cost of use of the field. He addressed Councilor Drake's concern that all taxpayers will be paying for a project that will not be used by all; however, many projects, including the pool at the High School, are paid for by all taxpayers yet not necessarily used by all of them.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato stated that the Town does not want to prevent anyone from using the field for a legitimate reason; however, it is important to be sure that the cost of the use is covered.

Chairperson Morin thanked Mr. O'Connor, Ms. Suppicich and all those who worked hard on this issue. He said that he supports the motion as it will improve what will be offered at the field. Chairperson Morin reminded Mr. O'Connor and Ms. Suppicich that no Town funds will be used to install the lights. He said that it is his opinion that the Town be responsible for electricity usage at the field during Town events. Chairperson Morin encouraged Mr. O'Connor to try to help with the maintenance as any little bit helps the Town in terms of funding.

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

#### Advisory Committee on Information and Technology

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved "**TO REFER TO THE SHARED SERVICES COMMITTEE WITH INPUT FROM THE LIBRARY BOARD AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TOWN COUNCIL, THE PROPOSED ROLE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY IN OVERSEEING THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER POSITION**", seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the resolution forming the Advisory Committee on Information and Technology states that the scope of the duties and responsibilities of the Committee are to be re-examined every two years by the Council in consultation with the Board of Education and the Library Board of Directors. She said that the Committee has done an outstanding job in guiding the Town along in terms of technology, and that much of what was recommended by the Committee has been accomplished; therefore they and Town staff feel that a new responsibility of the Committee would be to oversee the Chief Information Officer position.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato stated that as Chairperson of the Shared Services Committee and liaison to the Technology Committee, she believes this to be the appropriate step to take. She agreed with the Town Manager that the Technology Committee has achieved a great deal since its inception and this would be an appropriate time to bring all the key players together.

Chairperson Morin commented that the accomplishments of the Technology Committee are admirable and significant, and that he appreciates all of their hard work as a good, cohesive group.

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

#### Marketing for Economic Development/Tourism - Keiler and Company

Councilor Adil moved "**TO AWARD \$25,000 TO KEILER & COMPANY FROM THE ECONOMIC**

**DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION AND TOURISM COMMISSION BUDGETS FOR THE MARKETING OF THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD IN THE AREAS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM"**, seconded by Councilor Cascio.

The Town Manager explained that funding has been appropriated for the EDIC and the Tourism Commission for a marketing firm to help the Town in the areas of economic development and tourism. She said that ten responses to the Request for Proposal were received, and the EDIC decided to interview four of the firms. The Town Manager said that the EDIC's recommendation for Council approval is Keiler & Company due to their excellent experience with web site development and with other municipalities' economic development.

Councilor Adil asked Town Planner Peter Gillespie to provide a quick outline of the process.

Mr. Gillespie explained that a public bidding process was held, with over ten interested firms responding. He said that this was narrowed down to four firms for interviewing, at which point the EDIC decided on Keiler & Company due to their economic development experience, their relationships with both the media and tourism groups, press release work, media contacts, and their experience with website development.

Councilor Adil commented that he is impressed with the experience of Keiler & Company and stated that he'd like to see website development as one of their primary focuses.

Councilor Drake commented that he would like to see the contract between the Town and Keiler & Company, and asked if milestones are being set to insure that the Town is getting what they want and what they've paid for. Mr. Gillespie said that he is in the middle of negotiating the contract, which is pretty detailed, and that he can provide a copy of the completed contract to the Council. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien recommended that Mr. Gillespie provide this information along with his next Economic Development Monthly Report to the Council.

Councilor Forrest asked if the website to be developed will be separate from the existing Town website or if it will be incorporated into it. Mr. Gillespie said that it will be part of the already existing Town website and Keiler & Company will provide a creative approach to analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the website, as well as providing additional content and structure to the website. Councilor Forrest asked if primary focus will be on the economic development section of the website and Mr. Gillespie responded that the focus will only be on the economic development section. Councilor Forrest suggested that the Town ask Keiler & Company to review the entire website to suggest ways to improve it.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato suggested that this suggestion be relayed to the Information and Technology Committee and the Chief Information Officer and that information regarding the website review be shared with them in order to utilize their expertise.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien stated that some suggestions could be taken from Keiler & Company, but to get into the nitty-gritty of the work on the website would be asking a lot of the volunteers on the Technology Committee and the staff person. She said that she would certainly welcome general comments.

Councilor Adil said that the issue has never been about receiving information, but rather that the staff has not had a plan dedicated to the website. He said that he supports reviewing the overall website to make it more attractive for tourism.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato stated that the Wethersfield Library has seen an increase in visits to its web page and she suggested that a connection be made between the Library activity and economic development. She said that the Library Board has representation on the Information and Technology Committee and she suggested that they be included in appropriate discussions regarding the website in order to get their perspective.

Chairperson Morin said that the motion is to vote on the specific contract with Keiler & Company and that, although he appreciates the comments coming forth regarding the improvement of the Town's website, that is a separate discussion for a later time.

Councilor Walsh commented that the Committee for the Master Plan for Old Wethersfield is putting out an RFP and he asked Mr. Gillespie how he sees Keiler & Company fitting into this and if they will be closely involved with it. Mr. Gillespie said that a paragraph was added to the scope of work stating that there may or may not be some overlapping, cooperative work with others such as the Preserve America consulting group.

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

#### Engineering Services - DeCarlo and Doll - Silas Deane Highway

Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO AWARD TO DECARLO AND DOLL INC, THE ENGINEERING DESIGN FOR THE RENOVATION OF THE SILAS DEANE HIGHWAY IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$100,000"**, seconded by Councilor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the final plans for the Silas Deane Highway Design have been completed by Fuss and O'Neill and the next step is to have the plans put into engineering detail so the Town can go to the State for their approval of landscaping, crosswalks, and sidewalk improvements. She said that utilizing the Town's three on-call engineering firms, an RFP has been put together asking a price to complete this phase of the work, and she is hoping to have a shovel in the ground this Fall. She said that DeCarlo and Doll, Inc. has been asked to concentrate their work on the Church Street/Silas Deane corner as well as the Nott Street and Wells Road areas.

Councilor Forrest asked if DeCarlo and Doll has provided an estimated time for getting the work back to the Town. The Town Manager said that if awarded the project, DeCarlo and Doll hopes to have the engineering plans to the State within three weeks, and the State can then take two to three weeks to review the plans.

Councilor Drake said that he is uncomfortable with and concerned that the three on-call engineering firms couldn't have done the work, but rather the Town is going to spend \$100,000 to have DeCarlo and Doll do the work. He said that there doesn't seem to be another choice; however. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the Council does have the choice to vote down the motion and bid the job out instead; however, by doing that, there is no way that the work can begin this Fall. Councilor Drake said that he is concerned that the on-call engineering firms are not really on-call. He said that he wants to see the work get done; therefore he'll support the motion, but with trepidation.

Chairperson Morin commented that he agrees with Councilor Drake regarding the on-call engineering firms and suggested that the scope of their work be reviewed before their contracts are renewed. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that she'll look into this. Chairperson Morin said that he supports the motion as this is a priority of the EDIC as well as some members of the Council. He asked if Rocky Hill is involved at all, or if this is just for Wethersfield's portion of the Silas Deane. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that it is just for Wethersfield.

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

#### Waiver of Police Services Fees - Intercommunity Mental Health 5K Run

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

Chairperson Morin requested that members of the Council consider being part of Team Wethersfield this year.

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

#### Kelly Avenue - Blighted Property

Councilor Cascio moved **"TO ADD 1 KELLEY AVENUE ON TO THE TOWN'S BLIGHT LIST UNDER THE**

**BLIGHTED PROPERTY ORDINANCE"**, seconded by Councilor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that there is a blight provision within the property maintenance code and both the Police Department and Building Department have addressed the ongoing situation at 1 Kelley Avenue for years with limited success. She requested that the Council add this property to the blight list in order to provide the Town with a stronger tool in bringing this issue to court for a final resolution.

Councilor Adil asked what the court will be able to do to resolve the situation. The Town Manager said that the court will set dates by which the property owner must comply and if they don't comply, the Town can then hire someone to clean up the property and put a lien on the property for reimbursement.

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

### Financial Policies

Councilor Kotkin moved "**TO REFER THE PROPOSED FINANCIAL POLICIES TO THE BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**", seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that as part of the Townwide Strategic Plan adopted by the Council, there was a request for a review and update of all Town Financial Policies. She said that the Council has already approved the Debt Management Policy, and having the others adopted will help guide the use of Town dollars as well as being a big plus for the bond rating agencies to see that the Town has such policies in place and up to date.

Chairperson Morin commented that the Town's Finance Director has put a lot of work into this and he looks forward to the recommendations of the Budget and Finance Committee.

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

### Waiver of Refuse Disposal Costs - United Methodist Church Youth Program

Councilor Kotkin moved "**TO WAIVE THE TRANSFER STATION PERMIT FEE AND REDUCE THE PER TRUCK COST BY 50% FOR THE DISPOSAL OF BRUSH AND TREES ONLY FOR THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH YOUTH WORK TEAMS DURING THE MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST ONLY**", seconded by Councilor Kirsche.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the United Methodist Church is sponsoring a program whereby youth work teams will be aiding some Wethersfield residents in need of house repairs and brush/tree elimination. She said that she was told that there will be approximately five homes worked on during July and August and the only materials to be disposed of would be brush and trees. The Town Manager said that she informed them that any construction debris could not be taken to the transfer station. She said that she is not sure of the exact cost, but this is a great program and the homes to be serviced have been recommended by the Town's Social & Youth Services Department.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato commented that the motion supports the homeowners and is a win-win situation for all involved. She expressed slight concern that the precedent being set is one that the Town can financially support.

Councilor Adil stated that the 50% reduction is consistent with prior waiver action on the part of the Council.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the Church volunteers will be issued one permit and the Town Manager said that this is the way she would like to do it so that a whole bunch of different people aren't accessing the transfer station.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato pointed out that there is not currently an official policy regarding the 50% reduction, but rather it has been the practice of the Council to grant the waivers.

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

## **BIDS**

### Gasoline Lock In

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO AWARD A CONTRACT TO DIME OIL FOR THE PURCHASE OF #2 FUEL OIL AND A CONTRACT TO EAST RIVER OIL FOR THE PURCHASE OF DIESEL OIL, AS NEEDED, NOT TO EXCEED \$72,000"**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that as a member of CRCOG (Capital Region Council of Governments), the Town participates in the Capital Region Purchasing Council, which improves the chances of good pricing due to the combined volume of goods or services being purchased by the participating members. She said that the bid price is firm for the one year contract period.

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

### Road Inspection Program - VHB

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO AWARD THE BID FOR UPDATE OF THE PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM UPDATE TO VHB, INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$23,700"**, seconded by Councilor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the Town's Engineering Department relies on a pavement maintenance software program that inventories and maintains a database of all roadways in the Town. She said that the creators of this software, VHB Inc., sent the Town a proposal for updating the current records with an option for digital video of inspections and their proposal is in line with recommendations to update the program every five years. The Town Manager stated that a bid waiver is requested for this update since the fees are reasonable at \$23,700 and appropriate for the services requested, and the amount budgeted in the 2006-2007 CIP Pavement Maintenance Account is \$25,000. She said that the remaining funds will be added to the Capital Reserve Account.

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO AMEND THE MOTION TO INCLUDE THE APPROVAL OF THE COUNCIL TO WAIVE THE BIDDING PROCESS"**, seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion to amend passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Drake asked for an explanation of the justification for the digital video of inspections option. The Town Manager said that the digital video will help the staff of the Engineering Department; however, she does not have the specifics with her at the time. Councilor Drake asked if the digital video is a large part of the fee, commenting that \$25,000 seems to be a lot of money for a software upgrade. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the fee is not only for the software upgrade, but also for the actual inspections as well. Councilor Drake said that he misunderstood and thought that the fee was only for the software upgrade.

Chairperson Morin commented that Town Engineer Mike Turner has provided many presentations through VHB over the years, and it is a good, reliable program.

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

### Paving of Streets

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO AWARD THE BID FOR BITUMINOUS CONCRETE PAVEMENT TO TILCON-CT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$600,000, AND THE BID FOR MILLING/RECLAMATION TO COSTELLO INDUSTRIES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$120,000"**, seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the Town uses the State bid for these vendors.

Councilor Forrest asked if the new milling is for the Fall season and the Town Manager said that this will be done in late summer. Councilor Forrest asked for an update of what paving has been done in the past three years and the Town Manager said that she will provide this.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato commented that the Infrastructure Committee reviewed all of the Town's streets and made recommendations on priorities, and she asked if there will be a need for the Committee to meet again. The Town Manager said that there is not a need for them to meet again as the Town is now simply going down their priority list of streets to be paved.

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

#### Copier Lease Bid

Councilor Adil moved **"TO AWARD THE BID FOR 60-MONTH LEASED FINANCING FOR FIVE COPIERS TO A & A OFFICE SYSTEMS, INC."**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Fortunato.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that Finance Director Lisa Hancock and staff member Janice McDonald researched and solicited bids for the feasibility of entering into a lease agreement with one vendor for all of the Town's leased copiers in order to provide savings of approximately \$238 per month or \$2,856 per year in lease charges.

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

#### Jeep Bid - Physical Services

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO AWARD THE BID FOR A 2006 JEEP WRANGLER TO PAPA'S DODGE & JEEP OF NEW BRITAIN IN THE AMOUNT OF \$28,381"**, seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that only one bid was received for the purchase of a Jeep with plow and hitch for the Physical Services Department. She said that because the bid amount is higher than the amount budgeted, the Council has the option to either approve the purchase of the Jeep without the plow and hitch options, or approve the higher amount with additional funding coming from surplus.

Councilor Drake asked if a less expensive vehicle equivalent to a Jeep could be considered.

Chairperson Morin asked if the bid specifically stated a "Jeep" or if it simply stated "equipment". Town Manager Bonnie Therrien reviewed the bid specifications which state "Jeep - year of 2006" or something "equal to or better than a main item".

Councilor Drake asked how many vendors the bid specs were sent to, and the Town Manager said the specs were sent to nine vendors. She said that many other municipalities have also had trouble obtaining bids.

Councilor Adil asked if the Council could wait another month and re-bid the vehicle. The Town Manager said that this could be done; however, the Council needs to keep in mind that something has to be done before Winter.

Councilor Kirsche asked if the existing plow and hitch are worth anything, and could be transferred to the new vehicle. The Town Manager said that she will investigate this.

Councilor Forrest suggested that the bid specs make it clear that the bid is for a Jeep or equivalent vehicle. He asked if it's really necessary to purchase a 2006 Jeep rather than a 2005 model. Councilor Forrest suggested that the current bid be rejected.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO WITHDRAW THE MOTION TO AWARD THE BID FOR A 2006 JEEP WRANGLER TO PAPA'S DODGE & JEEP OF NEW BRITAIN IN THE AMOUNT OF \$28,381"**, seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Adil moved **"TO REJECT THE BID AND RE-BID FOR A JEEP OR EQUIVALENT VEHICLE"**, seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

## **ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION**

None.

## **MINUTES**

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 5, 2006"**, seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. Councilor Kirsche ABSTAINED. The motion passed 8-0-1.

Councilor Adil moved **"TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF JUNE 6, 2006"**, seconded by Councilor Walsh. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 19, 2006"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Fortunato. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

At 10:30 p.m., Councilor Adil moved **"TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION"** seconded by Councilor Drake. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

At 10:43 p.m., Councilor Drake moved **"TO ENTER BACK INTO THE REGULAR MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Kirsche. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

At 10:43 p.m., Councilor Cascio moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano  
Town Clerk

*Approved by vote of Council September 5, 2006*