

NOVEMBER 20, 2006 REGULAR MEETING

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on November 20, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Silas Deane Middle School.

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

Chairperson Morin announced that there will be an Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting.

Town Hall Film Results - "Fishwrap"

"Fishwrap" Film Director Jim Fiorino stated that approximately six months ago the Town Council approved his use of the Town Hall offices for filming. He said that he has completed the filming and cannot say enough about the support he has received from the Town staff, Town Council, and Town residents. Mr. Fiorino showed a brief three-minute segment of the film showing the locations used at the Town Hall. He said that he will have a rough cut of the film by the end of December, which will be edited in finer detail and then sent to film festivals.

Councilor Walsh thanked Mr. Fiorino for presenting the clip and asked if he will be making an effort for a special showing of the film in Wethersfield. Mr. Fiorino said that the first premier will be open to the general public and he can look into a location in Wethersfield with digital projection to show the premier.

Chairperson Morin told Mr. Fiorino that he's happy that the Town was able to work with him on this project.

2006 Business Survey Results - Frank Frago, EDIC

Mr. Frago provided a brief overview of the 2006 Business Survey and explained that it has been decided that the survey will be conducted every other year. He thanked the office of the Town Planner and GIS staff person Bill Holler for their help in compiling the data, and announced that the Salute to Business is coming up on December 7. Mr. Frago stated that the survey was sent to 792 businesses in August, with a 10% response received back, compared to a 12% response in 2004. He stated that the overall conclusion to be drawn from the responses is that they were both positive and favorable, with insurance costs being the greatest challenge expressed, with property taxes second. Mr. Frago stated that Wethersfield must make an effort to be accessible and be a destination for people to come to shop and buy.

Councilor Kotkin asked if health insurance is considered an insurance cost or a labor cost. Mr. Frago answered that it would be considered a combined insurance cost. Councilor Kotkin stated that he would not be surprised if health insurance costs are becoming a bigger item than property and other insurance costs. He asked Mr. Frago how he compiled the list of 792 businesses to whom Business Surveys were sent. Mr. Frago answered that the list was compiled from the Tax Collector's list with some national businesses eliminated.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato asked if the survey questions have been modified over the years. Mr. Frago answered that an attempt has been made to keep the statistical questions consistent over the years for comparison purposes. He said that completely changing the survey format is being discussed for two years from now. Deputy Mayor Fortunato asked if businesses submitting the survey opt to remain anonymous or do many of them provide their name. Mr. Frago answered that, in most cases, the business name is provided. Deputy Mayor Fortunato said that this allows for comparative analysis of a particular business from survey to survey. Mr. Frago replied that a comparison of particular businesses from year to year is not currently being done although names are used so that any really negative responses

can be addressed. Deputy Mayor Fortunato commented that perhaps some businesses have stopped submitting the survey if they have not seen any results from their opinions. She said that in looking at the downward trend of responses, it may be helpful to revamp the questions, and even ask if businesses are aware of the façade improvement loan program available through the Town. Mr. Frago stated that this is a good suggestion since he has been disappointed with the lack of response to the façade programs. Deputy Mayor Fortunato stated that it has been her experience that sometimes a phone survey has worked better than a paper survey as a method to collect data.

Councilor Drake asked where the current survey stands compared to the 2004 survey with relation to the concerns of businesses in Town. Mr. Frago answered that the biggest challenges stated in the current survey are pretty close to those conveyed in the 2004 survey; those being insurance costs and property taxes.

Chairperson Morin commented on the response percentage stating that overall the 10% is probably a pretty good average. Mr. Frago stated that the biggest response of 20% was achieved several years ago when two mailings were sent out. Chairperson Morin said that he appreciates the work put into the survey and hopes that the EDIC, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Town Planner's Department can all work together to make positive things happen.

Economic Development Report

Town Planner Peter Gillespie distributed a memorandum summarizing the Economic Development Loan Program status, and also provided a presentation of the October, 2006 Economic Development Report which included the following:

- 1866 Berlin Turnpike - People's Choice Pizza, plans and PZC application approved
- 190 Silas Deane Hwy - Teddy's Department Store, plans for renovation submitted
- 486 Silas Deane Hwy - Tim Horton's, CO issued, grand opening December 6
- Silas Deane Hwy - Metropolitan Furniture Store, opened for business
- 1260 Silas Deane Hwy - Hartford Medical Group, construction for addition underway
- 1105 Silas Deane Hwy - Sake Café Japanese Restaurant, renovation underway
- 884 Silas Deane Hwy - City Fish, construction underway
- Folly Brook/Spruce Street - Folly Brook Commons, building permit application filed and site work underway
- 150 Hartford Avenue - New England Retail Properties, building sold and interior renovations underway
- 61 Arrow Road - Crane America, building permit application filed
- 2138 Berlin Turnpike - restaurant renovation to hibachi-style restaurant
- 25 Wells Road - TD Banknorth, plans approved for an addition, exterior and interior renovations
- 91 Nott Street - Stillman Walk, zone change and site plan application approved for 55 and over single family style homes
- Old Reservoir Road/Back Lane - Harris Property, appeal of the PZC zone change approval dismissed
- Main Street - Masonic Hall, preliminary discussion held with representatives of the property owner to renovate the vacant building

Mr. Gillespie stated that a wide range of interest has been received from potential developers in Town. He said that the Town continues to move forward with the Church Street/Silas Deane Highway STEAP improvements and a reasonably positive meeting was held last week with Connecticut DOT staff to discuss the concept plan. Mr. Gillespie stated that a flyer announcing the availability of the Silas Deane Highway Façade Program has been mailed to all businesses and property owners on the Silas Deane Highway and several inquiries have been received. He stated that the Redevelopment Agency has begun the process of reviewing and discussing potential redevelopment opportunities throughout Town. Mr. Gillespie announced that the EDIC continues to work with business beautification loan recipients and that they closed on their first loan for 136 Main Street - Ascot Catering. He said that the Town has received an additional \$200,000 in State funds for the STEAP façade program. Mr. Gillespie invited all to attend the 2006 Salute to Business event to be held on December 7 at Wethersfield Country Club presenting awards and recognizing the significant number of businesses that have been in Wethersfield for 50+ years. He stated that the Tourism Commission continues to promote Wethersfield as a destination for visitors to Connecticut with an advertisement in the next edition of the Greater Hartford Hotel Guest Guide and an ad in the 2007 Greater Hartford Visitor Guide. Mr. Gillespie said that the Tourism Commission is putting the finishing touches on a compilation of

responses to their first visitor survey, and will most likely be presenting the results to the Council at a meeting in the near future. Mr. Gillespie announced that he anticipates having the first public information meeting on the Preserve America program in early to mid-December.

Councilor Adil commented on the paperwork and administration of the façade program being processed by someone other than Town staff. Mr. Gillespie said that he is still researching this option and the costs involved. Councilor Adil asked about a previous potential buyer of the Masonic Hall and the parking issues he had which caused him to drop the deal. Councilor Adil asked how the parking issues will be dealt with at the Masonic Hall on Main Street. Mr. Gillespie stated that there were other issues other than the parking; mainly the costs of the anticipated renovations that which the potential buyer could afford. He said that the parking is really not an issue at all at this point.

Councilor Drake asked for a description of the 1866 Berlin Turnpike location. Mr. Gillespie stated that Atlas Tile is at this location. Councilor Drake commented on a location on the Berlin Turnpike north of Wells Road on the east side which has been deteriorating for some years now and the safety issues that seem to exist there. Mr. Gillespie said that this property was a former gas station and the owner is currently under an order to progress with the project; however, he started without the required permits from the Town. He said that if the owner does not soon move forward properly with the project, the Town's Building Inspector will be pushing the issue in terms of closing the building up. Councilor Drake recommended that the Building Inspector take a look at the building soon in terms of safety issues.

Councilor Forrest commented that the Town is doing a fantastic job being reactionary and providing valuable tools when someone is interested in a property, and he asked how the Town is being proactive in drawing businesses into Town. Mr. Gillespie answered that under the direction of the Town Manager, the EDIC has formed a new action group to look at a short list of properties on which the Town should focus in terms of being proactive. Councilor Forrest asked if there is a plan being developed to determine what players are in the area locally, regionally and nationally who may be interested in specific properties to bring a greater variety of "vitality-based businesses" to Wethersfield. Mr. Gillespie reiterated that the subcommittee of the EDIC will be taking on the task of looking into a marketing strategy.

Councilor Cascio asked if there has been any discussion regarding the location of a grocery store in Wethersfield. Mr. Gillespie said that there continues to be an effort in this regard. Councilor Cascio asked for an update on the FunZone property. Mr. Gillespie said that the Medical Group has looked at the building; however, they seem to be leaning more toward expanding their current location instead. He said that there are others on an ongoing basis who are looking at that location and having discussions with the current owner. Councilor Cascio commented that the FunZone building is a hot topic and he just wants to make it clear to the public that the Council is very concerned about it. Councilor Cascio asked what is being done about the building just north of the Grand Buffet location on the Berlin Turnpike. Mr. Gillespie stated that this building is on the blighted property list and is handled through the Building Department therefore he cannot speak to the status of the property, although he knows that there has been dialogue with the current owner. Councilor Cascio commented that it is important to address these locations since they are very visible in the community and project an image of Wethersfield.

Councilor Adil asked if the blight ordinance has been considered with regard to the FunZone property. Mr. Gillespie said that he, the Town Manager, the Building Inspector, and the Code Enforcement Officer recently met with the owner of the property who has made some minor improvements to the property. The Town Manager commented on an ordinance she is aware of in Wilmington, Delaware which states that for every year a property is vacant, the owner is assessed a fine which increases every year the building continues to be vacant. She said that she has asked administrators in Wilmington for a copy of the ordinance.

Deputy Mayor

Chairperson Morin stated that last year when the Council was sworn in after the election, it was decided that the role of Deputy Mayor would be served for one year by Councilor Fortunato and for the second year by Councilor Adil. Chairperson Morin said that Deputy Mayor Fortunato has been a great advocate for the Town and has provided him with much support in the past year as well, and he thanked her for her dedication. Chairperson Morin stated that, as of tonight, Councilor Adil will be serving in the position of Deputy Mayor and he thanked him also for his passion for the Wethersfield community.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HEARING

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

RESOLUTION INCREASING BY \$50,000 THE \$13,025,000 APPROPRIATION APPROVED AT REFERENDUM HELD NOVEMBER 2, 1999 FOR THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A POLICE FACILITY, ACQUISITION AND INSTALLATION OF A RADIO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM AND DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF RENOVATIONS TO THE TOWN HALL AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$13,025,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION

RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE CREATION OF AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A SALARY RANGE FOR THE TOWN CLERK POSITION

Chairperson Morin stated that he received a letter from Donna Hemmann stating that she does not agree with the amendments made to the mission statement of the Advisory Committee on Information and Technology, and that although she is not against a salary range for the position of Town Clerk, she would like to see a job description included as well as an evaluation process.

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

GENERAL COMMENTS

George A. Ruhe, 956 Cloverdale Circle, spoke to the recent rally in Town for Ned Lamont at which he saw many Councilors, and stated that he was very pleased with the comments made by Councilor Walsh at the rally. Mr. Ruhe commented on others who spoke at the rally as well, especially those regarding a government out of touch with its people. He congratulated Chairperson Morin for being elected as a State Representative stating that he was pleased with the decency of both Chairperson Morin and Mrs. Hemmann's campaigns in comparison to the campaign behavior on both the National and State levels. Mr. Ruhe stated that Chairperson Morin, during his campaign, stated that he listens, and Mr. Ruhe said that he hopes Chairperson Morin will listen to the people when serving in his new capacity. Mr. Ruhe addressed the Council in stating that it should be their top priority to listen to the people whom they serve. He stated that reinstating the five-minute public comment at the end of Council meetings would prove to the citizens that the Council is interested in what they have to say.

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

COUNCIL REPORTS & COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Adil reported that he attended a recent meeting of the Redevelopment Committee at which a presentation of the redevelopment plan for the Windsor train station was given, as well as a presentation from the city of New London regarding their redevelopment efforts, and a presentation from the Ethics Committee. Deputy Mayor Adil said that he attended the Park & Recreation Board meeting and reported that they approved a Ski Club for the elementary school program. Deputy Mayor Adil stated that he also attended a meeting of the Library/Town Hall Building Committee and reported that Phase I will be finishing up and Phase II is partly underway since some of that work could be done while parts of the building were opened during Phase I work. Lastly, Deputy Mayor Adil stated that during his recent Councilor Office Hours, a resident came to speak to him about the need for Council support of the Library during the next budget deliberations.

Councilor Kirsche stated that he attended the recent meeting of the Wethersfield Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities and he announced a number of their upcoming events. Councilor Kirsche said that at the meeting the concern over efficient snow removal was raised and he asked the Town Manager if the Police Department will continue to enforce the Town's ordinances regarding snow removal on sidewalks. The Town Manager said that she will be publishing press releases soon regarding the importance of the required snow removal.

Councilor Fortunato stated that she attended the recent Library retreat at which the focus was on the support of the Friends of the Library group as they restructure to become a non-profit organization. She said that the Friends of the Library are seeking volunteers to serve on their Board of Directors which will consist of fifteen qualified individuals dedicated to supporting the Wethersfield Library. Councilor Fortunato thanked the Council members who attended the recent Fireside Chat joint meeting with the Board of Education. Councilor Fortunato apologized for the recent confusion regarding her Councilor Office Hours at the Town Hall, stating that she will be available for Councilor Office Hours sometime in December.

Councilor Cascio stated that he attended the recent Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce meeting and reported that this year's Cornfest was a success allowing the Chamber of Commerce to distribute four scholarships to Wethersfield High School seniors. He thanked all who supported the Cornfest. Councilor Cascio stated that the Chamber of Commerce will be discussing the results of the Business Survey at their next meeting.

Councilor Kotkin said that he attended the recent Insurance Committee meeting and reported that they discussed the bidding for Life, AD&D, and Long-term Disability insurance. He said that a bid has been secured for three years with Cigna at approximately \$23,000 less than the previous bid amount, and will be coming before the Council for approval sometime next month. Councilor Kotkin said that the Committee also addressed the Town ordinance requiring them to go out to bid for an Agent of Record for the Town. He said that they have set up a subcommittee to put together the RFP to go out to potential bidders. Councilor Kotkin stated that he believes the ordinance requires that two bid proposals for both health and property and casualty are brought before the Council for their approval.

Councilor Cascio announced that the Salute to Business will be held on December 7 and stated that he has a conflicting obligation and will unfortunately not be able to attend. He wished everyone involved in the Salute to Business program all the best for their hard work.

Deputy Mayor Adil echoed Chairperson Morin's comments regarding Councilor Fortunato's support over the past year in her position as Deputy Mayor. He said that she is an excellent leader and a great team player.

Chairperson Morin commented that he hopes that this Council meeting, since it is not being shown live, will air prior to the Council's December 7 meeting. Town Manager Therrien said that a regular schedule starting right away has been set up to air Council meetings. Chairperson Morin announced a number of community events and congratulated Officer David Scales on his promotion to Lieutenant and thanked him for his service to the Town of Wethersfield not only as a police officer, but also for volunteering in the past to tape the Council meetings.

COUNCIL ACTION

Deputy Mayor Adil moved **"TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF JANE C. ROSENDAHL FROM THE SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE"**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Adil moved **"TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF KATHI LIBERMAN AS A HOUSING AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE TO THE SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE TERM 11-20-06 TO 6-30-07"**, seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Fortunato moved **"TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT"**, seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that this is a yearly grant received and this year will be in the amount of \$9,652 to help support the Social Services staff and programs.

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

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION INCREASING BY \$50,000 THE \$13,025,000 APPROPRIATION APPROVED AT REFERENDUM HELD NOVEMBER 2, 1999 FOR THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A POLICE FACILITY, ACQUISITION AND INSTALLATION OF A RADIO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM AND DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF RENOVATIONS TO THE TOWN HALL AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF \$13,025,000 BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE APPROPRIATION"**, seconded by Councilor Fortunato.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the Library Board agreed to give \$50,000 from the Library Trust to the Library's Phase I renovations to the Children's area, and the Town's Bond Counsel, Sam Caligiuri, has recommended that this be done in the form of a resolution to appropriate the funds, and that Attorney Caligiuri is present this evening if Councilors have any questions.

Councilor Drake said that he's all for adding \$50,000, but asked if any additional money has to be used to offset the bond rather than just spending more money on the project. Attorney Caligiuri said that he will need to review the bond resolution for the project; however, in general, the policy has been that any grants received for the project, anticipated at the time the project was originally put out to referendum, would be used to lower the amount of bonding for the project. He said that the amount being given by the Library Trust was not contemplated at the time the bond package was put out to referendum, which is why he is comfortable that the Town can add to the appropriation for the project. Councilor Drake expressed concerns he still has with adding more money to the project rather than using the funding to offset the bond. He said that it seems to him that it would have just been easier for the Library to donate some type of services on their own. Attorney Caligiuri stated that the question is whether the expenditure is made by the Town, and if it is, it has to be done as part of a valid appropriation. The Town Manager stated that the Library Trust is administered by the Town. Councilor Drake said that he remembers the Council being told in the past that this can't be done; however, he has no problem with doing it. The Town Manager said that perhaps the procedure has changed since the Charter was revised. Attorney Caligiuri stated that under both the old Charter and the revised Charter, this appropriation would not have to go to referendum. He said that Councilor Drake is questioning the adherence to the language traditionally put in the bond resolution regarding grants received for the project being required to defray the amount of the bonding. Attorney Caligiuri reiterated that this can be done due to the timing of the grants being received and not being known at the time of the referendum. He said that he will follow up on this; however, to insure that consistent advice is being offered to the Council.

Councilor Fortunato stated that as liaison to the Library Board, she is aware of discussions taking place and that the Library Board is comfortable with this. She asked if this is a donation rather than grant funding. Attorney Caligiuri answered that this is not a grant in the traditional sense; however, it is clearly a contribution of funds from a source other than bonding dollars. Councilor Fortunato stated that this is a private donation rather than funding received from public grants as in the case of the school projects referred to by Councilor Drake. Attorney Caligiuri said that there is clearly a difference between this set of funds and State grant funds coming into the Town for a project.

Councilor Kotkin verified that the Council cannot increase a bond appropriation amount without going back to the voters for approval, and that what is happening with this motion is that the Council is approving an increase in the appropriation from another source with no additional funding coming from the bonding. Attorney Caligiuri explained that a valid appropriation needs to be made in order to spend the funds and that neither of the two requirements of the bonding ordinance are being met; therefore the Town does not have to go to referendum on this appropriation. Councilor Kotkin asked if Attorney Caligiuri needs to do follow up on this before the Council votes on the motion tonight. Attorney Caligiuri said that it is his understanding that the \$50,000 is going to be used for something authorized within the existing appropriation; therefore there are no issues and he feels comfortable with the advice he has offered to the Town.

Councilor Forrest asked why the language would have to be changed if the new money is intended for something that

is not in the scope of the original bond referendum. Attorney Caligiuri explained that the motion is for an increase of \$50,000 in the appropriation and this is the only change being made. He said that the original bond resolution specifies how the money in the appropriation can be spent. Attorney Caligiuri explained that the bond resolution has two parts; one being the appropriation which indicates how much can be spent on the project regardless of the source of the money, and the other being an authorization to borrow. Councilor Forrest verified that the bond referendum stipulates that the Town cannot spend more than the designated amount in the referendum on the project. Attorney Caligiuri answered that this is true unless, as specified in the Town Charter, the Council approves an increase in the appropriation, which is what is being proposed in the motion currently on the table.

Councilor Cascio commented that the Council can approve the motion at this point and if it turns out, after Attorney Caligiuri's further review, that it's something that can't be done, it just won't be done.

Councilor Drake expressed the same concerns he had previously.

Chairperson Morin stated that he is very comfortable with supporting the motion and that he appreciates the funding being made available by the Library Board. He thanked Attorney Caligiuri for being present this evening to answer questions.

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

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE CREATION OF AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that when this Committee was formed two years ago, it was set up that the mission statement would be reviewed every two years. She said that the Shared Services Committee has reviewed the mission statement and input has also been received from the Library Board and the Library staff, which was brought back to the Information and Technology Committee. She said that the amendments being proposed tonight would be for a two-year period.

Councilor Fortunato commented that the amendments reflect an update of where the Committee started and the implementation of the Committee's goals over the past two years.

Councilor Drake stated that he does not support the motion as it makes the Committee something way different than what he had foreseen it would be. He said that he thought the Committee would be like the Planning and Zoning Committee of the Town's computer systems, and the amendments take out their responsibility to oversee this.

Councilor Cascio stated that it was his understanding that the original resolution was to make the Information and Technology Committee a shared service between the Town, the Board of Education and the Library. He said that he does not see this happening with the proposed amendments.

Councilor Fortunato stated that she sees language in the resolution which spells out that it relates to the Town, Board of Education and Library. She said that the members of the Committee are very skilled and work in an advisory capacity and she is unaware of anyone viewing the amendments as restricting the Committee in its role as advisor. Councilor Fortunato stated that it is unfortunate that there will not be full Council support for the motion.

Deputy Mayor Adil read the final paragraph of the resolution regarding re-examination of the scope of duties and responsibilities of the Committee, and said that he sees the amendment as an update of the Committee's mission statement and their role.

Councilor Forrest commented that he has read the "old" resolution and cannot find any language eluding to what Councilor Drake claimed would be some type of Planning and Zoning oversight.

Councilor Drake stated that the Information and Technology Committee was supposed to be the decision makers and that the IT staff would go to this Committee for decisions for the whole Town. He said that he would like to see the

Committee evolve more toward this rather than merely acting as an advisor to the Supervisor of Information Technology. Councilor Drake said that he wants to see the Committee become stronger rather than weaker, which is why he cannot support the motion.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien stated that any issues and concerns are brought before the Information and Technology Committee who in turn advise back to the Council. She said that this role of the Committee will continue.

Chairperson Morin commented that the original resolution clearly stated that the Committee's role is in an advisory capacity. He said that the members of the Committee, who are very dedicated and serve the Town well, shared in the revising of the mission statement.

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

Deputy Mayor Adil moved **"TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A SALARY RANGE FOR THE TOWN CLERK POSITION"**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Deputy Mayor Adil stated that the Budget and Finance Committee and the Personnel Committee have met several times to discuss this topic. He said that it is difficult for the Council to evaluate the Town Clerk's position since they do not work with her on a day-to-day basis as Department Head's do. He said that it was discovered that there is currently no Town Clerk's salary range, and as a result Town staff determined a range and is recommending it to the Council.

Councilor Kirsche stated that \$6,000 was approved for a salary range study and he asked the Town Manager to provide a synopsis of that study.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the Town Clerk will take part in the classification study and what will result is minimums and maximums for all positions some time in February or March of 2007. Councilor Kirsche asked if it might be wise for the Council to wait until that time to receive results before establishing the Town Clerk position's salary range. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that this is up to the Council to decide.

Deputy Mayor Adil verified that the \$6,000 fee for the salary range study is not just for the Town Clerk's position. The Town Manager said that the study is for all of the Union 818 positions and the non-union supervisors. Deputy Mayor Adil stated that he feels comfortable moving forward with the motion for the salary range for the Town Clerk's position.

Councilor Kirsche said that he can support the motion; however, he wants to make sure that the Council uses the results of the study to check that this range is on par with neighboring communities.

Councilor Fortunato commented that Assistant to the Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer performed quite a lot of research into surrounding communities. She said that the study will provide an even more detailed analysis of the position.

Councilor Drake asked if there is a job description or some sort of required criteria to support the salary range. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that this is part of what the study will do, but that what is used currently as the job description is what is stated in the Wethersfield Charter. Councilor Drake asked if the results of the motion will affect the Town Clerk immediately. The Town Manager said that it does not; that all it does is establish a salary range.

Councilor Kotkin stated that he supports the motion and that he is confident that the salary range will be in the ballpark of the results of the study.

Councilor Cascio asked if the topic of a job description has been discussed by the Personnel Committee. Deputy Mayor Adil answered that the topic has come up and there has been a push to better define the position. Councilor Cascio said that he has no problem with the salary range, but that he is concerned that there is no job description, especially since the position works for the Council and it has been difficult for the Council to evaluate the Town Clerk.

Deputy Mayor Adil said that the Council will need to work through the Town Manager to decide certain goals and objectives for the Town Clerk's job description.

Chairperson Morin said that setting the salary range is the appropriate thing for the Council to do at this time. He said that the results of the study may enable the Council to better draw up a job description for the position.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Report - Alternative Methods of Removal of Snow/Ice

Councilor Forrest moved "**TO REFER ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL TO THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**", seconded by Deputy Mayor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that there are a number of alternative means of snow and ice removal which other communities are utilizing, and she requested that a summary report of pros and cons be put together by Director of Public Works Mike Turner and Assistant Director of Physical Services Jim McDonald. She said that a copy of the results of the study has been provided to each Councilor tonight and they will provide a brief overview of the results.

Mr. Turner stated that the focus of the report is on a product used by Manchester, East Hartford, and West Hartford, and offers both pros and cons of the alternative method.

Mr. Turner sited the following as pros of the alternative method:

- Does a better job than conventional salt in treating roads, although it is more expensive
- More effective in lower temperatures
- Could be ultimate savings due to reduced labor time

Mr. Turner sited the following as cons of the alternative method:

- Problems associated with killing of the grass aprons along the road, as well as tree damage and corrosion, since this is a more aggressive chemical than salting and sanding
- Cannot apply to just one snow area in Town at a time as a trial; must be a program that the Town commits to because of the lack of storage space for both sand/salt and this chemical product
- There is a 5-10 business day delivery period for the chemical

Deputy Mayor Adil commented that the current storage shed is in rough shape and asked what the cost will be to replace it. Mr. Turner answered that the current Capital Budget is carrying the amount of \$400,000 for replacement of the storage shed. He said that he has heard ranges of \$250,000 to \$1 million. Deputy Mayor Adil asked if there has ever been a case where a municipality shares a storage facility with the State. Both Mr. Turner and Town Manager Bonnie Therrien stated that this will absolutely not happen and that the Town actually competes with the State in the salt market.

Councilor Drake asked Mr. Turner if he would switch over to the new chemical product if the Town had enough storage for it. Mr. McDonald said that he would do it as it would make things much easier and the chemical, which is a combination of magnesium and salt, is a good product.

Councilor Walsh asked Mr. McDonald if the magnesium product is anti-corrosive. Mr. McDonald said that it is not anti-corrosive; however, it is less corrosive than the currently used calcium. Councilor Walsh verified that the reports from surrounding Towns indicate that the chemical causes burnout on the snow shelf and damage to trees and pipes as opposed to the standard salt mix. Mr. Turner said that this is what his colleagues in other Towns are starting to see;

however the producers of the chemical mix are starting to react to these results by adding an anti-corrosive to the mix. Councilor Walsh suggested that a detailed analysis be provided to the Public Works Committee for their review.

Chairperson Morin stated that no matter what the composition of the alternative method is, if there is no storage for it, there is a major problem. He said that utilizing the alternative method will benefit Wethersfield in many ways. Chairperson Morin commented that the removal of sand from the gutters will be part of the Stormwater Phase 2 solution as well. He said that he is convinced, after reviewing studies, that the effects of the chemical on the snow shelf and trees are not any worse than what the salt treatment currently does. He said that he'd advise the Committee to hold off using the alternative until next year so that further research can be done.

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

Transfer of Funds - Economic Development Secretary - Minutes

Deputy Mayor Adil moved "**TO TRANSFER \$4,160 FROM CONTINGENCY TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT TO HIRE A PART TIME RECORDING SECRETARY**", seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the Planning Department has become increasingly proactive in reaching out to businesses and because of this there have been a number of new economic development commissions formed. She said that the staff of the Planning Department is currently responsible for taking and then preparing the minutes for four separate commissions and this work uses approximately thirty hours per month of their time which should be used reaching out to the community and businesses instead.

Councilor Drake verified that the amount of \$4,160 is for the remainder of the current year and the Town Manager said that this is correct. Councilor Drake commented that he seems to remember that when the Council approved the hiring of an Assistant Town Planner, that part of the responsibility of the position would be secretarial. The Town Manager said that originally the position of a secretary was proposed; however, secretarial responsibility was not proposed for the position of Assistant Town Planner. Councilor Drake said that he understood that included in the job description of the Assistant Town Planner would be to take on some secretarial responsibilities so as to relieve Mr. Gillespie of this work.

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

Transfer of Funds - Senior Net

Councilor Kotkin moved "**TO TRANSFER \$500 FOR SENIORNET FROM CONTINGENCY TO THE TOWN COUNCIL'S BUDGET AND TO APPLY FOR A \$6,000 GRANT FROM THE HARTFORD FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC GIVING**", seconded by Councilor Forrest.

The Town Manager explained that in the past, SeniorNet received a grant of \$29,500 from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for program start up, operations and replacement computers and that this program has been extremely successful with Wethersfield seniors. She said that the original grant has been expended and the Foundation is considering a continuation grant, and to support the efforts of SeniorNet in applying for the grant, she recommends that the Town make a contribution of \$500 to SeniorNet showing that the Town supports the program.

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

Little Red Schoolhouse Parking Lot

Councilor Walsh moved "**TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN AN APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS FOR A PROCESSED STONE PARKING**

EXPANSION AT THE LITTLE RED SCHOOL HOUSE", seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the members of the Wethersfield Art League have requested that the Town apply to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a processed stone parking area in the back of the Little Red Schoolhouse. She said that this will also allow for safer entrance and exit into the location and that this will be a Town project utilizing Town staff and will cost approximately \$8,000 to complete.

Councilor Fortunato asked how many additional spaces will be provided with the parking expansion. The Town Manager answered that she remembers it to be approximately five additional spaces.

Councilor Cascio commented that this is a much needed project that will help with the safety issues regarding backing out and turning around. He stated that he recently took a walk around the building noticing that there are no gutters on the building, and he asked the Town Manager why. The Town Manager said that she does not know why, but will try find out this information.

Councilor Drake asked if the description of "2" bit conc." refers to pavement. The Town Manager suggested that the motion be amended to remove the terms processed stone until she can verify the information.

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO AMEND THE MOTION TO REMOVE THE TERMS 'PROCESSED STONE' "**, seconded by Councilor Forrest.

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

Use of Town Fence - Resident's Pool

Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE THE PROPERTY OWNER'S USE OF A TOWN FENCE BORDERING PROPERTY AT 381 WOLCOTT HILL ROAD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION AND THE TOWN ATTORNEY"**, seconded by Councilor Fortunato.

The Town Manager explained that this is a request from a resident who is expanding their back yard and in order to install a pool they need to have a fence. She said that there is already a Town fence along the rear of the property and rather than install a second fence parallel to this, they are requesting the use of the Town-owned fence. The Town Manager stated that this was referred to the Planning and Zoning Commission who returned a positive referral; however, they have a number of issues and concerns. She said that she has spoken with the Town Attorney who suggested that the Town enter into a licensing agreement with the owner of the property.

Councilor Cascio asked who will be responsible for repairs to the fence. The Town Manager said that the Town will be responsible for repairs unless it can be proven that the property owner caused damage to the fence. She said that wording to this effect will be included in the licensing agreement.

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

Small Cities Grant - Housing Rehab - \$400,000

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT IF SO AWARDED, A SMALL CITIES HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM GRANT"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the Town has another opportunity to apply for a \$400,000 Housing Rehab grant. She said that the Town currently has an extensive waiting list and has already been able to provide funding to twenty-five homeowners totaling \$516,076.

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

Bond Fund Transfer - Webb School to Stillman Building

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO TRANSFER \$4,887.30 FROM THE WEBB SCHOOL PROJECT ACCOUNT TO THE STILLMAN BUILDING PROJECT ACCOUNT"**, seconded by Councilor Walsh.

The Town Manager explained that used air conditioning pumps were put into the Stillman Building which, unfortunately, did not last; therefore the Building Committee would like to replace them with new pumps using funds from the Webb School project. She said that the money can be transferred between the two since they are part of the same bond issue.

Councilor Forrest asked if the pumps that are being replaced are relatively new pumps. The Town Manager said that they were relatively new when they were put in; however, they were used when purchased. Councilor Forrest asked if the design specs called for used pumps and the Town Manager said that this is most likely how it was put out to bid. Councilor Forrest asked if this replacement is consistent with the normal life cycle of a pump and the Town Manger answered that, from what she has been told, the used pumps did not last as long as expected.

Deputy Mayor Adil asked how the transfer will affect the Webb School Project budget. The Town Manager said that the Webb School Project is just about complete at this time; therefore she does not anticipate any negative effect.

Chairperson Morin expressed that he is not pleased with the results of the use of used pumps and hopes that the Webb windows will be put in next year's Capital Budget so the school can be completed with all renovations.

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

Waiver of Fees - Franklin Avenue Carol Sing

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO WAIVE FIFTY PERCENT OF THE SHOWMOBILE RENTAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$175 FOR THE FAMA CAROL SING ON DECEMBER 1"**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

The Town Manager explained that the non-profit group Franklin Avenue Merchants Association has requested a waiver of the rental fees for use of the Wethersfield Showmobile for their annual carol sing and in the past the Council has almost always offered a fifty percent waiver of the fees.

Councilor Cascio questioned who will ever be required to pay the entire rental fee, since the Council appears to consistently be waiving fifty percent of 100% of the rental fees. Chairperson Morin replied that groups operating for profit would pay the entire fee. Councilor Cascio asked what the Town is gaining from waiving the fees, other than good will. The Town Manager said that the waiver is simply helping a neighbor who will, hopefully, be able to help Wethersfield in some way if necessary in the future. Councilor Cascio commented that he is in favor of helping a neighbor; however he verified with the Town Manager that there will be a cost to Wethersfield to provide the Showmobile and she agreed that there will be an expense to Wethersfield. She said that because the Showmobile is being requested more frequently, she suggests that the Town staff put together a rental policy to be brought before the Council for approval. Councilor Cascio stated that it is not good business sense for Wethersfield to put money out for good will.

Chairperson Morin stated that the waiver has been past practice of the Council for non-profit organizations, and a rental policy makes good sense since the Town needs to be very careful about how it picks and chooses. He suggested that the rental fee should be reviewed and set up so as to cover the Town's setup costs.

Councilor Kirsche asked how often the Town of Wethersfield actually makes use of the Showmobile compared to renting it out. The Town Manager said that she will obtain this information and provide it to the Council.

Councilor Fortunato stated that she recalls in the past waiving fifty percent of the fee, yet still charging the group for the Town's setup costs. She addressed the issue of insurance and the Town Manager said that any group renting the Showmobile has to show the Town of Wethersfield as a cosigner on their insurance. Councilor Fortunato suggested that there be a checklist that is completed before and after each rental to check for any damage.

Deputy Mayor Adil stated that the Showmobile provides sort of an advertisement for the Town of Wethersfield and said that he agrees with Councilor Fortunato's suggestion of a checklist.

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

BIDS

Roof Consultant

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR ROOF CONSULTING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TOWN'S REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TO TREMCO, INC. IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$34,500"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that \$35,000 has been budgeted in the 2006-2007 Capital Budget to develop a roof condition database, a management plan, and a roof preventative maintenance program for all Town buildings, including schools. She said that staff prepared an RFP which was mailed out to five respondents, and three of the five submitted proposals. The Town Manager said that Tremco, Inc. was the lowest bidder meeting all of the proposal conditions. She said that Tremco, Inc. is prepared to begin work as soon as possible.

Councilor Drake asked if Tremco, Inc. is a local business since they have an Ohio address. The Town Manager said that they have a local office in Connecticut.

Councilor Walsh asked if there was a dollar figure put on Vendor #3's proposal of \$.05 and \$.03 per square foot of roof. The Town Manager responded that the Town has 642,500 square feet of roof and that the math was not done, but can be calculated using the proposed price.

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

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

RESOLUTION FOR HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT FUNDS

WHEREAS, The State of Connecticut's Department of Emergency Management & Homeland Security (DEMHS) is the designated recipient and State Administrative Agency (SAA) of the United States Department of Homeland Security, Office of Grants and Training, for the federal Fiscal Year 2006 State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP), Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program (LETPP), Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) and Citizen Corps Program (CCP), Grant Number 2006-GE-T6-0008;

WHEREAS, The Emergency Management & Homeland Security Coordinating Council has approved the allocation formula for grant funds available under the SHSGP, LETPP, MMRS, and CCP Grants;

WHEREAS, DEMHS is retaining local funds from Grant Number 2006-GE-T6-0008 in the total amount of \$6,342,520, on behalf of local units of government for the following six regional set-aside projects designed to benefit the state's municipalities:

1. Expanded Regional Collaboration
2. Connecticut Intelligence/Fusion Center
3. Medical Preparedness and Response

4. Interoperable Communications and State Interagency Coordination Center
5. Natural Disaster and CBRNE Preparedness
6. All Hazards Planning and Outreach;

WHEREAS, The Town of Wethersfield is a sub-state local jurisdiction recognized by the SAA as an eligible jurisdiction to receive grant funds not included in the set-aside projects listed above, in the amount of \$19,818.00, which sum will be made available to the jurisdiction, or to a regional planning organization or other sub-grantee at the direction of the jurisdiction, upon execution of the grant application and the acceptance by the jurisdiction and/or its designee of the grant award and associated conditions;

THEREFORE, the Town Manager is authorized to execute a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) authorizing the SAA to act as the agent of the Town of Wethersfield and allowing the SAA to retain and administer grant funds provided under Grant Number 2006-GE-T6-0008 for the six regional set-aside projects listed above.

RESOLUTION APPROVING REVISED TOWN PENSION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") has issued a determination approving a major revision of the Town of Wethersfield Pension Plan (the "Plan") intended to update the Plan for changes in the tax laws;

WHEREAS, the IRS approval was conditioned on the Town's adoption of a technical amendment to the revised Plan concerning procedures in the event of a hypothetical termination of the Plan;

WHEREAS, the Town's Pension Committee, in its capacity as Plan administrator, has approved additional changes to the Plan subsequent to the IRS approval, consisting of updates to reflect collectively bargained changes and certain administrative and clarifying changes; and

WHEREAS, the revision of the Plan through October 15, 2006, attached hereto as Exhibit A reflects all of the above-described revisions and has been approved by the Pension Committee for adoption by the Town.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Wethersfield hereby votes to approve the Plan in the form attached hereto as Exhibit A.

MINUTES

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF OCTOBER 12, 2006"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Adil. 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 OCTOBER 16, 2006"**, seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Councilor Kotkin amended the minutes on page 13765 to read "4120 kilowatt generator" rather than "total watt generator".

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:39 p.m., Deputy Mayor Adil moved **"TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION"** seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

At 10:30 p.m., Councilor Fortunato moved **"TO ENTER BACK INTO THE REGULAR MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Kotkin. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Adil moved "**TO SET THE TOWN CLERK'S SALARY AT \$54,842 EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2006**", seconded by Councilor Kirsche. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

At 10:46 p.m., Deputy Mayor Adil moved "**TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**" seconded by Councilor Drake. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk

Approved by vote of Council 12/4/2006