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## **FEBRUARY 7, 2005 REGULAR MEETING**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on February 7, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall.

Present: Councilors Adil, Cascio, Czernicki, Forrest, Fortunato, Hemmann, Montinieri, Deputy Mayor Karangekis 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 Czernicki.

### Proclamation: Robert Brickley - State Athlete Award Winner

Representative Doyle presented an official citation from the Connecticut General Assembly to Robert Brickley, a State Athlete Award winner, who was in attendance with his soccer coach Rob Jachym. Rob Brickley was honored by being chosen as All-Conference, All-State, All-New England and All-American soccer selections as well as MVP of the final championship soccer game, and Academic All-American. Representative Doyle congratulated Coach Jachym and the Wethersfield Soccer team on the State Soccer Championship. He said that Wethersfield has a rich tradition in soccer and he is very proud of how great the squad played not only during the championship, but throughout the entire soccer season. Representative Doyle stated that Rob Brickley is deserving of special merit, and although the citation does not reference Academic All-American, this is Rob's most impressive achievement. Chairperson Morin said that the Town is very proud of Rob's positive representation of the residents of Wethersfield.

Coach Jachym stated that Rob Brickley led by example throughout the soccer season and he is very deserving of the honors bestowed upon him. Coach Jachym said that Rob was also named the Connecticut Junior Soccer Association Player of the Year.

### Economic Development Report

Town Planner Peter Gillespie gave a presentation of the January, 2005 Economic Development Report which included the following:

- CVS Pharmacy, 1078 Silas Deane Highway - Certificate of Occupancy issued
- Mila Fabrics, 976 Silas Deane Highway - Certificate of Occupancy issued for renovations
- Prospect Enterprises, 1160 Silas Deane Highway - renovations
- Quiznos Restaurant, 1074-1092 Silas Deane Highway - Certificate of Occupancy issued
- 150 Prospect Street, addition to the church
- A number of different projects continue to work their way through the development process
- Double A Veterinary Clinic, 106 Nott Street - not yet under construction
- Cumberland Farms Inc., 1855 Berlin Turnpike - not yet under construction
- A number of notable projects are just beginning the permitting process

Mr. Gillespie said that the Town continues to talk with prospective parties interested in coming to Wethersfield. He reported that the Design Review Advisory Committee met for the first time on January 13 and are reviewing projects and providing commentary to Staff and the Planning & Zoning Commission. Mr. Gillespie said that Bruce Bockstael was elected Chairman of the Committee. Mr. Gillespie said that the Silas Deane Highway Revitalization Committee has put together a request for qualifications and have received eleven proposals. The proposals are now being reviewed. Mr. Gillespie announced that the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce will hold their 40th Anniversary

Event on April 30. This event will serve as a fund raiser to support their scholarship program. He also announced that the Tourism Commission is sponsoring a public workshop on February 17 at the Community Center.

Councilor Adil asked Mr. Gillespie to share information on the recent CBIA Conference. Mr. Gillespie said that the conference held specific sessions focused on Hartford and its Convention Center. He said that Wethersfield's proximity to the Convention Center bodes well for business opportunities and the Tourism Commission has met with a representative of the Convention Center to discuss business opportunities of which the Town can take advantage. Councilor Adil asked Mr. Gillespie to provide information on Wethersfield's Grand List. Mr. Gillespie said that there has been a slight increase in the Grand List and the Assessor has calculated that a lot of it was from personal property. Councilor Adil asked for an update of the EDIC loan program. Mr. Gillespie said that the Economic Development and Improvement Committee has requested an additional \$60,000 from the Capital Improvement Program to fund the previous \$40,000 set aside to get the loan program going as soon as possible. He said that the EDIC is waiting for the STEAP monies to arrive.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

## HEARING

### Resolution Concerning an Application to the State of Connecticut to obtain Local Capital Improvement Program Funds to Reconstruct a Portion of Willow Street Between Prospect Street (SR 287) and Wells Road (SR 175)

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

## GENERAL COMMENTS

Carol Adil, 53 Desmond Drive, offered praise to the Physical Services Division who has taught her and the Beautification Committee so much about plants and their care. She said that the Division has created eighty in-ground gardens for the Committee and has aided with the Committee's eighty-eight container gardens. Ms. Adil commended the Division on various other services they provide the Town and she thanked all Town Departments for their care.

Jim Clynych, 903 Ridge Road, commented on the legal action brought up at the last Council meeting. Mr. Clynych said that the Wethersfield Taxpayers Association, Inc. sued the Town because they did not get their way on the issue of lighting at Cottone Field. He said that once a conclusion is agreed upon, all parties must abide by the adjudicator's decision. Mr. Clynych said that the Wethersfield Taxpayers Association, Inc. has bestowed upon Wethersfield that no lighting shall be allowed in Town if the resolution is passed. This would include the band shell, sports fields, holiday lighting on Town property, and the flags in Old Wethersfield and Nott Street/Wolcott Hill Road.

Ken Milano, 95 Woodside Drive, said that he still has outstanding issues regarding his driveway and Nott Street. He said that he has received a letter from the State saying that no further action on his driveway will be taken. Mr. Milano said he has been through two years of hell with the Nott Street project and has dealt with quality of life issues. He said that this issue is not going away and he will continue to pursue, through all actions necessary, the proper construction of his driveway.

Lee Seekas, 117 Wells Road, thanked the Council for their support of the Nature Center. He said that the new center is progressing and that there will be a fund-raising event on March 12 at the Community Center.

Leigh Standish, 278 Hartford Avenue, announced that there will be an MDC hearing on February 15 regarding the Long-Term Control Plan. He said that it is important that Wethersfield residents appear at the hearing to express their concerns over the Wethersfield Cove.

George A. Ruhe, 956 Cloverdale Circle, spoke as Vice-President of the Wethersfield Taxpayers Association, Inc., commenting that it is important to set the record straight. He said that Wethersfield Town Officials and what appears to be an embedded Press seem intent on continuing to mislead Wethersfield citizens. He said that the May referendum involves a petition ordinance ignored by the Council, making no reference to the lighting of Cottone Field. He said that the purpose of the proposed ordinance is to protect Wethersfield neighborhoods and is limited to municipally owned

property. Mr. Ruhe said that the referendum is the result of Town Officials violating the Town Charter by ignoring bona fide and certified petitions. He said that a "yes" vote will enact the ordinance, save the neighborhood most immediately affected, and preserve the quality of other neighborhoods in Town. Mr. Ruhe read a brief item from the transcript of the appearance before the Court on November 30 regarding what was said by Judge Shapiro. Mr. Ruhe said that the Council, not Judge Shapiro and not the Wethersfield Taxpayers Association, Inc., has made the decision to spend an additional \$20,000 on the issue of a referendum. Mr. Ruhe submitted to the Town Manager a Freedom of Information request for all legal costs associated with the Council's not having followed the requirements of the Charter. Mr. Ruhe asked the Town Clerk to also forward a copy of the request to Superintendent of Schools Proctor.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Road, echoed Mr. Ruhe's comments regarding the Court transcripts. He said that the Council has cost the Town \$20,000 that could have been avoided. Mr. Young voiced his disappointment that Wethersfield did not partake of the grant monies offered to schools who participate in the magnet school program. Mr. Young commented on the budget battles on the Federal, State and local levels. He also commented on the Grand List and what the slight increase represents.

Karen Dobruck, 689 Folly Brook Boulevard, yielded her time to her mother, Mary Dobruck, who provided background information about the current and long-standing residential sewer system problems in Wethersfield. Ms. Dobruck submitted a written addendum of such to the Town Clerk.

Melissa Dobruck, 689 Folly Brook Boulevard, continued reading from Mary Dobruck's written addendum documenting the background information of the residential sewer system in Town.

Dennis Dobruck, 689 Folly Brook Boulevard, yielded his time to his wife, Mary Dobruck, who continued reading from the written addendum documenting the background information of the residential sewer system in Town.

Mary Dobruck, 689 Folly Brook Boulevard, offered suggestions for action the Town should take to remedy the residential sewer system problems in Wethersfield. Mrs. Dobruck said that she and her husband attended the citizen's meeting at the MDC and were allowed to speak. She said that they received positive feedback, but nothing concrete. She said that the deadline she gave the Council to deal with the problem remains in effect.

Dennis Walter, 326 Hartford Avenue, stated that, after listening to Mrs. Dobruck, he is floored that residents have to put up with such a situation. He said that many Councilors were elected on the notion that they would do all they could to clean up the Cove and he requested that all attend the meeting at the MDC next Tuesday regarding the Cove. Mr. Walter asked the Council to urge the Town's MDC representative to stand up for Wethersfield's rights. He said that he finds it depressing to read in the newspaper that Wethersfield is known for its sewage problems, when there are so many great things in Town to be known for instead.

Judy Emmick, 88 Westway, congratulated Bob Brickley on his academic and athletic achievements. Ms. Emmick commented on the Northeast Utilities lighting figures provided in the Town Manager's Report. She requested information from the Town Manager as to how the High School events will be funded. Ms. Emmick questioned the Board of Education's request for \$650,000 and asked why this wasn't included in their budget. Lastly, Ms. Emmick commented that there is a very large group of people in Town who do not believe any invasive lighting should be a part of any neighborhood.

Ron Rodd, 88 Westway, praised the Dobruck family for their courage and fortitude to stand before the Council to lay out the crisis they are facing. Mr. Rodd commented that Cottone Field marks the midway point between the Dobruck property and the other stated sewage backup. He said that the renovated Cottone Field is essentially a subsurface retention pond with a perpetual flow of water coming off the field through a discharge point along the Heritage Trail. Mr. Rodd said that as a member of the Artificial Surface Football Field Committee, he fought vigorously to have the Committee incorporate into their majority recommendation, a comprehensive environmental study to determine what impact additional flows would have on the Wintergreen Woods wetlands. He said that the Committee decided not to incorporate this as a requirement of the recommendation. Mr. Rodd said that the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission ignored in May, 2004 the petition of concerned residents abutting Cottone Field that a hearing be held to determine the environmental impacts that the improvement of the Field would have on the wetlands, by determining that it had no jurisdiction over the improvement of Cottone Field because it was not in a wetlands. Mr. Rodd said that

this decision was completely irresponsible.

Joe Cornelio, 100 Executive Square, thanked the Council for doing a great job in handling difficult problems. He suggested that the MDC deal with the issues of the Cove which may affect the water runoff into sewers.

Helena Reilly, 1 Avalon Place, encouraged all to attend the hearing with the MDC on February 15. She said that a good presence by the people of Wethersfield will be helpful.

Thomas Wraight, 22 Coleman Road, commented that the five-minute rule to speak at a Council meeting should be suspended in the case of an extreme issue such as human waste in residents' homes.

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

### COUNCIL REPORTS & COMMENTS

Councilor Czernicki left the meeting at this time (8:25 p.m.).

Councilor Fortunato reported that the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee (CIAC) met and has received requests for capital projects from all Departments. She said that a preliminary list has been developed at a tentative cost of \$1.4 million and the Committee is currently evaluating and determining the need of some of the requests. Also, the concept of creating a CIP escrow account has been raised by the Committee. Councilor Fortunato reported that she attended the Library Board meeting and they are getting ready to undergo a strategic planning process with a Grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. She reported that the Board has created community outreach, board development, and strategic planning subcommittees. Councilor Fortunato urged the Council to provide budget increases to the Library in the areas related to the renovations. Councilor Fortunato represented the Town of Wethersfield at a recent Riverfront Recapture meeting where a representative from the MDC gave a presentation of the Long-Term Control Plan. She reported that she attended the Infrastructure Committee where recommendations were made regarding roads and drainage sidewalk projects. She said that the MDC will be developing an ordinance for the disconnection of sump pumps and storm water. The MDC is recommending that all Towns adopt the ordinance. Councilor Fortunato recommended that the Council refer the item regarding the matter on Folly Brook Drive to the Infrastructure Committee and she requested that the addendum items submitted be made available to Mr. Moore from the MDC.

Councilor Montinieri reported that she attended the Shared Services Committee meeting earlier this evening and agenda items for the fireside chat were discussed. Regarding the Historical Society, Councilor Montinieri reported that a new roof has been put onto the Hurlburt Dunham House and the Historical Society has received a grant from the Greater Hartford Arts Council to fund an education coordinator position. Councilor Montinieri reported that the Webb Building Committee has put out a bid for windows along Willow Street and results are expected next week. Councilor Montinieri visited with the Strategic Planning Committee which is moving along with their agenda. Councilor Montinieri said that she attended the Employee Recognition Luncheon and enjoyed the event.

Councilor Adil said that the Town Hall Building Committee reports that work is proceeding on schedule. He said that at the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board meeting Director Kathy Bagley updated all on the progress of the Moeller Home and other projects. Councilor Adil said that the kids on the Skate Park Committee are doing a great job and have narrowed their choices down to two architect/developers. Councilor Adil reported that the EDIC met and is considering recommendations to ease the burden of assignments to Town Planner Peter Gillespie.

Deputy Mayor Karangekis reported that he attended the Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) meeting at which there was a discussion of many ongoing projects in the region. Because of the weather, there was no quorum; therefore no votes were taken.

Chairperson Morin reported that he has put a lot of time into the Cove issue with the MDC and urged all to attend the public hearing on February 15. He said that neither he, nor any other member of the current Council has taken the Cove issue lightly.

Councilor Fortunato thanked Chairperson Morin for attending MDC meetings on behalf of the Town of Wethersfield. She said that she recently attended the first meeting of the North Central Regional Forum on the Community Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, hosted by Town Manager Bonnie Therrien. She said that advocates and staff from surrounding communities met to discuss ways to integrate those with disabilities into the community. Councilor Fortunato reported that Wethersfield has approximately 3,800 residents with disabilities.

Councilor Czernicki returned to the meeting at this time (8:40).

Councilor Fortunato said that she represented the Mayor on Sunday in presenting an award for the Girl Scout Silver Award, the highest award for a Girl Scout in grades 6-9, to Victoria Clarizio. Councilor Fortunato announced that Mr. Sal Menzo has resigned his position at the Silas Deane Middle School and will be moving on as Superintendent for the Town of Marlborough.

Councilor Adil commented that the Silas Deane Middle School has been offered a second scoreboard for their gymnasium and there is a labor issue with the Board of Education; therefore he has been asked to see if there is anything the Town can do to have the scoreboard installed.

Councilor Cascio commented that he brought the issue of the scoreboard to the Town's attention a couple of months ago. Councilor Cascio asked the Town Manager if she has responded to the requests of Mr. Lasher. The Town Manager said that he and some of his neighbors have sent in letters and the requests have been forwarded to the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee for review. Councilor Cascio asked the Town Manager to update the Council on the driveway issue at 95 Woodside Drive. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that Council received back up information as well as a copy of the letter to Mr. Milano from the DOT stating that they would be doing no extra work. She said that the State will not take this on, but the Council could take action; however a signed release will be required as well as the removal of the entire driveway. Councilor Cascio asked if there could have been a communication problem with regard to the original release being signed. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that there was absolutely not a communication problem. She said that Mr. Milano and his attorney were advised a number of times to sign the release by a particular date which was extended numerous times.

Councilor Montinieri asked if the \$650,000 referred to by Ms. Emmick is a capital improvement request from the Board of Education. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that she has no idea what Ms. Emmick was alluding to.

Chairperson Morin responded to the Wethersfield Taxpayers Association, Inc.'s repeated comments that the Charter was not followed by the Council and he respectfully disagrees with these comments based on the opinion of the Town Attorney. Chairperson Morin said that the Wethersfield Taxpayers Association, Inc. should make such comments stating that they are strictly their opinion. Chairperson Morin announced that on February 15, Wethersfield will be receiving the Silver Cup best voter turnout in the November, 2004 election for a midsize Town. Chairperson Morin announced many various upcoming community events including the "Wethersfield We Care" program which is collecting supplies for the troops in Iraq. He thanked the residents of Wethersfield for their generosity in giving to this program and said that the Wethersfield website has information on collection sites and dates.

### COUNCIL ACTION

Councilor Fortunato moved "**TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION CONCERNING AN APPLICATION TO THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT TO OBTAIN LOCAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FUNDS TO RECONSTRUCT A PORTION OF WILLOW STREET BETWEEN PROSPECT STREET(SR 287) AND WELLS ROAD(SR 175)**", seconded by Councilor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that this is State funding to reconstruct Willow Street and that this is only a portion of the money needed to complete the project. She said that the Town will wait for the upcoming year's LoCIP allocation in order to have enough funds to do the actual project. She said that the Infrastructure Committee will probably recommend that the Town use some of the bond money to get the street done immediately and this will likely appear on the next Council agenda.

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

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Transfer of \$100,000 - Snow

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the entire snow budget has been expended due to so much overtime being paid. She said that the transfer of \$100,000 from the Contingency Account will get the Town through the fiscal year. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that Governor Rell has instructed Towns to complete forms documenting expenditures from storm Charles for possible reimbursement from FEMA. Should this be approved, the Town will receive approximately \$57,600. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the budget for snow is based on a five-year average of previous expenditures.

Councilor Adil moved **"TO TRANSFER \$44,100 FROM THE CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT T1910900 5250 TO PHYSICAL SERVICES SAND AND SALT ACCOUNT, T1550559 5340; \$2,700 FROM THE CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT T1910900 5250 TO PHYSICAL SERVICES SNOW MEALS AND MAGNESIUM CHLORIDE ACCOUNT, T1550559 5370; \$4,200 FROM THE CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT T1910900 5250 TO VEHICLE MAINTENANCE OVERTIME ACCOUNT T1555 5002; AND \$49,000 TO PHYSICAL SERVICES OVERTIME ACCOUNT, T1550 5002"**, seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Councilor Cascio asked the Town Manager what the Contingency Account balance will be after these transfers. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the amount is \$93,684 and if the FEMA money is received, it will probably not be until the next fiscal year; therefore it will not affect this balance.

Councilor Czernicki asked what happens to any funds not expended from the Contingency Account. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that they will revert to the General Fund/Fund Balance.

Councilor Forrest asked if the money put into the Fund Balance can be put back into the Contingency Account. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that once the Contingency Account runs out, the Town uses funds from the Fund Balance which is actually the Town's "savings" account.

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

## BIDS

### Road Work/Storm Drainage Separation - Lindberg and Byrd

Deputy Mayor Karangekis moved **"TO AWARD THE BID FOR LINDBERGH DRIVE AND BYRD ROAD CSO SEPARATION/STORM DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS TO M.J.D. CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, INC. AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$23,207"**, seconded by Councilor Montinieri. 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 APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 4, 2005 AS AMENDED"**, seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. Councilor Cascio ABSTAINED. The motion passed 8-0-1.

Councilor Montinieri moved **"TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY**

**18, 2005"**, seconded by Councilor Fortunato. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Hemmann moved "**TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 18, 2005"**, seconded by Councilor Montinieri. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Dolores G. Sassano  
Town Clerk