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DECEMBER 5, 2005 REGULAR MEETING

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on December 5, 2005 at 7:00 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.

Chairperson Morin announced that there will be an Executive Session following the regular meeting to discuss real estate negotiations.

All stood for the pledge of allegiance to the flag which was led by Councilor Drake.

Economic Development Report

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

- 1151 Silas Deane Highway - Renovated and reopened as Firehouse Grill
- 13 Wells Road - Ocean State Job Lot, ribbon cutting ceremony held on November 10
- 1943 Berlin Tpk - Greenman's Landscaping, P&Z approved plan to permit occupancy
- 1155 Silas Deane Highway - Copies Now, relocated from Rocky Hill
- 1206 Silas Deane Highway - William Raveis Realty
- Ridge Road - Church Homes, application approved for development of thirteen age-restricted apartment style condominiums
- 1532 Berlin Tpk - Nathan Hale Apartments, AHEPA, Inc., application approved by ZBA and P&Z to permit construction of addition to accommodate forty-two additional units
- 685 Wolcott Hill Road - Wolcott Center Condo Association, façade improvements approved
- Folly Brook Blvd - Age-Restricted Housing, application approved for twelve units of age-restricted 55+ housing units
- 1715 Berlin Tpk - Car Wash Facility - application filed
- 286 Silas Deane Highway - Express Dental Lab - renovation plans being reviewed by P&Z
- 411 Hartford Avenue - Art Academy - Doug Buck, applications filed to renovate historic barns
- 7 Railroad Place - Gift Shop and Coffee Bar - Carol Narciss, applications submitted to convert building
- 181-187 Main Street - Old Town Café, applications filed to construct small addition
- 370 Silas Deane Highway - Office use, plans submitted to renovate building

Mr. Gillespie said that the preliminary report was submitted by Fuss and O'Neill on November 14 which is presently being reviewed by the Silas Deane Highway Advisory Committee. Mr. Gillespie announced that the Annual Salute to Business event will be held on December 14 at the Wethersfield Country Club. He said that an additional STEAP application for \$400,000 for a façade improvement program and \$500,000 for the Silas Deane Highway Improvement Plan were filed with the State in late November. Mr. Gillespie said that the Tourism Commission placed a full page ad in the new Greater Hartford Guest Guide which will be placed in hotel rooms in the region. He said that the Planning and Zoning Commission will be reviewing the proposed zoning regulation amendment that will cover the regulation of outdoor lighting. Mr. Gillespie announced that Wethersfield has been designated as a Preserve America community which may open up additional grant funding for the Town.

Councilors had questions for Mr. Gillespie regarding Porch & Patio, Church Homes, small businesses moving into Wethersfield, and the recent medical convention held at the Convention Center.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HEARING

None.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Mary Dobruck, 689 Folly Brook Boulevard, congratulated all of the Councilors on their recent election and asked that attachments to the Council agenda be provided on the Wethersfield website for public reference, as well as the 2006 meeting dates of the Town Council and Board of Education. Ms. Dobruck commented on the Strategic Plan and Wethersfield's inflow and infiltration issue.

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

COUNCIL REPORTS & COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Fortunato reported on the Shared Services Committee meeting which included discussion of the next Fireside Chat meeting and school parking situations.

Councilor Forrest reported on the recent meeting of the Conservation Commission and the Trust for Public Land at which discussion was held on saving open space and natural resources and the funding of such.

Councilor Cascio thanked the Town staff for putting up flags along Main Street in observance of Veterans Day and announced that Channel 14 is currently running notices regarding snow and leaf removal.

Chairperson Morin congratulated the WHS football team for their victory over Newington High School on Thanksgiving, and commented on Wethersfield's recent hosting of the State-wide field hockey championships. He also made various public announcements of upcoming events and provided a brief update of the FEMA reimbursement requests for recent flood and sewage issues.

COUNCIL ACTION

Councilor Adil moved "**TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF JOHN B. TOOMEY, JR. FROM THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND RELATIONS COMMISSION**", seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Adil moved "**TO APPOINT JOHN W. BRADLEY, JR. OF ROME, MCGUIGAN, PC AS INTERIM TOWN ATTORNEY UNTIL SUCH TIME AS A PERMANENT TOWN ATTORNEY IS APPOINTED**", seconded by Deputy Mayor Fortunato.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that in accordance with the Town of Wethersfield Charter, the Town Council shall appoint a Town Attorney for a two-year term from the third Monday in December of each odd-numbered year. She said that she has prepared the Request for Proposal which will be advertised this week with a December 23 deadline. She said that the Council should appoint an interim Town Attorney until interviews can be held in January.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Forrest moved "**TO TAKE OUT OF ORDER ITEM B.3.b**", seconded by Councilor Walsh. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Memorandum of Understanding - Statewide Fire-Rescue Disaster Response Plan

Councilor Adil moved "**TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER AND THE FIRE CHIEF TO SIGN THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE ADMINISTRATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE STATEWIDE DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN FOR THE EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTIONS OF FIRE FIGHTING (4) AND SEARCH & RESCUE (9)**", seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the State put together a mutual aid agreement between the Town and the Office of State Fire administration for participation in the Statewide Fire-Rescue Disaster Response Plan. She said that this agreement was not endorsed by the previous Fire Administration and current Fire Chief Flynn would like to move forward with the execution of the agreement. She said that Town Attorney Bradley has reviewed the document and is very comfortable with the language.

A discussion ensued regarding adequate ground communication, the participation of neighboring communities, Wethersfield's obligation, and coverage of any damages.

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

Library - Technology Plan

Library Board member Donna Brown presented the highlights of the goals and objectives of the Library Technology Plan for the next two years, which was approved by the Library Board on June 28, 2005 and updated by staff November 17, 2005 to the Council.

A discussion of the Plan ensued and Councilors posed questions and comments to Ms. Brown regarding the financial assessment of lost materials, internet use policy, technical support, the strategic plan's affect on the technology plan, sources of funding, benchmarks, and the creative acquisition of resources.

Dog Park - Mill Woods Park

Councilor Adil moved "**TO AUTHORIZE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DOG PARK IN MILL WOODS PARK, AS PROPOSED, TO BE FINANCED AND MAINTAINED BY FUNDRAISING EFFORTS OF THE INTERESTED RESIDENTS**", seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the Planning and Zoning Commission has returned a positive referral to the Town Council regarding their 8-24 review of the proposed Dog Park in Mill Woods Park. She said that the Council needs to vote on this and send it back to the Parks & Recreation Board so that they can move ahead with the project.

The possible contamination of the swimming area was brought forward and the Town Manager said that the Health Director is involved and finds no issues with this. It was asked of the Town Manager if the Town is covered for liability and she said that the Town will be covered. The Town Manager said that she and the Parks & Recreation Director are making sure that the Town is complying with all issues. Councilors raised questions regarding other issues such as safety standards, contacting other Towns who have experience with a dog park, and the restriction that the park be available to licensed dogs only.

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

Health Insurance Agent of Record - Change in Company - Recommendation from Insurance Committee

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN A CONTRACT THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2006 WITH CHRISTOPHER MONROE OF SAVINO, STURROCK, & SULLIVAN TO ACT AS THE INSURANCE AGENT OF RECORD FOR HEALTH, DISABILITY AND LIFE INSURANCE BENEFIT PROGRAMS"**, seconded by Councilor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that Chris Munroe, an agent with R.C. Knox, the Town's Agent of Record for Health, Liability and Worker's Compensation insurances, has left their employment and negotiated with them to retain the Town of Wethersfield as a client at his new firm, Savino, Sturrock, and Sullivan. She said that the Insurance Committee voted to approve this change and the Council needs to authorize her to sign the new contract.

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

Van Lease - Board of Education

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE BOARD OF EDUCATION'S LEASE PURCHASE OF THREE VANS FROM FORD MOTOR COMPANY OVER A FIVE YEAR PERIOD"**, seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the Board of Education has voted on this and the funds to cover the first year payment would come from the current Board of Education budget. She said that the lease purchase agreement was reviewed by both the Board's Attorney and the Town Attorney who added a municipal non-appropriation clause to the contract.

Councilor Forrest left the meeting at this time (8:30 p.m.).

Councilors discussed the terms of leasing and the condition of the three vehicles being replaced.

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

December 2006 Town Council Meeting Date

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO APPROVE THE CORRECTED SCHEDULE OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETING DATES FOR 2006"**, seconded by Councilor Cascio.

The 2006 Town Council meeting dates were corrected to read that there is a meeting on December 4, 2006, rather than December 5.

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

Budget Transfer - Building Department

Councilor Adil moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TRANSFER OF \$8,525 FROM CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT T1910900 5250 AS FOLLOWS: \$6,600 TO BUILDING INSPECTION WAGES ACCOUNT T1530 5001; AND \$1,925 TO BUILDING INSPECTION EMPLOYEE INSURANCES ACCOUNT T1530 5100"**, seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that this transfer is necessary because Worker's Compensation Insurance is not covering the entire salary of the full-time injured staff person in the Building Inspection Department.

It was asked what happens when the full-time employee returns and the Town Manager said that the staff person covering her position will return to part-time status and that there is no obligation to employ her as a full-time staff person.

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

Memorandum of Understanding - CRCOG Regional Homeland Security Grant Funds for 2004 & 2005

Councilor Walsh moved "**TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN THE CONTRACT AMENDMENT TO THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE CAPITOL REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TO ADMINISTER THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD'S HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT FUNDS**", seconded by Councilor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that since the actual funds for both 2004 and 2005 for a series of regional emergency management projects supporting regional homeland security training and response, communications interoperability and data sharing for uniform services were not released by the State of Connecticut until very recently, the Town needs to sign an amendment to the original agreement extending the term and also adding the 2005 funds.

The Town Manager was asked what will happen in 2006 and she said that she is looking to go forward independently in 2006.

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

BIDS

None.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Manager, Bonnie L. Therrien, is empowered to execute, amend and deliver in the name and on behalf of the Town of Wethersfield a certain contract for \$9,652 with the Department of Social Services of the State of Connecticut for a SSBG Social Services Block Grant and to affix the town seal.

MINUTES

Councilor Cascio moved "**TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF NOVEMBER 14, 2005**", seconded by Councilor Adil.

Councilor Cascio amended the minutes on page 17365 to read "Matthias" DeAngelo rather than Matthew DeAngelo.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. Councilor Drake ABSTAINED. The motion passed 7-0-1.

Councilor Forrest returned to the meeting at this time.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved "**TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 21, 2005**", seconded by Councilor Walsh. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. Councilor Drake ABSTAINED. The motion passed 8-0-1.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:43 p.m., Councilor Adil moved "**TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**" seconded by Councilor Kotkin. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

At 9:11 p.m., Councilor Adil moved "**TO ENTER BACK INTO THE REGULAR MEETING**" seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

At 9:11 p.m., Councilor Kotkin 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