

[NOTE: These minutes are made available to the public prior to Town Council acceptance.]

DECEMBER 19, 2005 REGULAR MEETING

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on December 19, 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.

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

Chairperson Morin clarified that item B.3.a is an ordinance for introduction and should not appear on the agenda under Other Business.

Councilor Forrest moved "**TO MOVE ITEM B.2.a TO ITEM B.5.b AS AN ORDINANCE FOR INTRODUCTION**", seconded by Councilor Walsh. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

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

Proclamation - Winter Wonderland Walk

Chairperson Morin read the proclamation proclaiming January 21, 2006 as Winter Wonderland Walk For The Cure Day in Wethersfield to benefit Breast Cancer Research and the Susan G. Komen Foundation Connecticut Affiliate Breast Cancer Alliance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HEARING

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

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

GENERAL COMMENTS

Dick Lasher came forward to speak of the Griswoldville section of Wethersfield and to present holiday gifts to the Council members.

Paul Gionfriddo, 64 Ox Bow Drive, Glastonbury, a former resident of Wethersfield, spoke of a script he has written to promote Wethersfield's historical sites and Silas Deane, and requested some funding assistance from the Town to turn this into a television program on PBS.

Lee Seekus, 117 Wells Road, commented on the problem of snow removal on properties along the Silas Deane Highway. He said that a solution needs to be found and action taken.

Ken Sokolowski, 79 Main Street, commented on the proposed change to Town Council minute format and stated that

he does not support the proposed "Rocky Hill format".

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Road, commented on the Town Council Rules and Procedures changes stating that the budget hearing speaking time for a second time around should be left at twenty minutes rather than reduced to ten minutes.

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

COUNCIL REPORTS & COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Fortunato announced that the Council's joint meeting with the Board of Education will be held on January 28, 2006 at the Stillman Building at 9:00 a.m.

Councilor Adil reported on the recent meetings he attended of the EDIC and Parks and Recreation Board. He said that some Councilors attended the Annual Fireman's Dinner and that there was a meeting this evening of the Budget & Finance Committee to discuss elderly tax relief and the Veterans' exemptions.

Councilor Cascio announced that the Chamber of Commerce will hold a monthly meeting on January 5 and he requested that one of the other Council members attend on his behalf in his absence.

Councilor Drake commented on unfunded healthcare benefits and said that the Council needs to seriously look at the long-term impact of this. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien recommended that this be addressed during the budget process.

Councilor Walsh congratulated and thanked the Wethersfield Police Department on their apprehension of the suspect for the damage to Firehouse 1.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato suggested that the Public Safety Committee look into the issue with snow removal on properties along the Silas Deane Highway. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that she will be happy to put together a plan that the Council can present to the Public Safety Committee.

Councilor Adil asked if Mr. Gionfriddo's request for funding needs to wait for the new budget. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the Council can take the funding out of the Contingency Fund or hold off and include it in the budget process.

Councilor Kirsche commented that he agrees with Deputy Mayor Fortunato's suggestion to send the snow removal issue to the Public Safety Committee, and asked if there is a system in place for prioritizing streets and cataloging warnings before issuing fines. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that a list of priority streets is kept.

Councilor Kotkin commented on the flu clinics held by the Health District and how he is impressed by their efficiency given the large number of attendees.

Chairperson Morin stressed the importance of the 24-hour sidewalk clearing requirement and he looks forward to recommendations from the Public Safety Committee. Chairperson Morin said that he received a letter from Leigh Standish taking exception to the regionalization of the Dog Pound, and also a letter from the Citizens' Police Academy complimenting Sgt. Scales and Dispatcher Tomczyk for their exceptional work in providing the recent program. Chairperson Morin also congratulated Lt. Kevin Dillon who recently graduated from the FBI Academy. He also congratulated a number of Wethersfield Volunteer Firefighters for their years of service to the Town. Chairperson Morin commented on the continuation of leaf pickup throughout Town and announced the denial of FEMA aid for damage incurred in the rains of the recent past. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien provided an overview of the funding request and results, stating that she will investigate what CROG may be able to do to assist in the matter.

COUNCIL ACTION

Councilor Adil moved **"TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF JEFFREY R. KOTKIN FROM THE SCHOOL**

PROJECTS BUILDING COMMITTEE - WEBB, STILLMAN, & PHYSICAL SERVICES", seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Cascio moved **"TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF DAVID L. DRAKE FROM THE SCHOOL PROJECTS BUILDING COMMITTEE - WEBB, STILLMAN, & PHYSICAL SERVICES"**, seconded by Councilor Kirsche. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Adil moved **"TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF LOUIS P. ROBITAILLE, JR. TO THE CIAC FOR THE TERM DECEMBER 19, 2005 TO JUNE 30, 2007; AND MICHAEL R. CARRAGHER TO THE FAIR RENT COMMISSION FOR THE TERM DECEMBER 19, 2005 TO JUNE 30, 2007"**, seconded by Councilor Walsh. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO AUTHORIZE BONNIE L. THERRIEN, TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CERTAIN CONTRACT WITH THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR A SSBG SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT"**, seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Change in Town Council Minute Format

Councilor Adil moved **"TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED MEETING MINUTES FORMAT FOR TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS AND THE MEETINGS OF ALL TOWN BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS"**, seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Town Clerk Sassano said that the reason for this motion being necessary was discussed since the public has complained that it is taking too long for minutes to appear on the Town website and that the detailed transcription of various minutes is costing the Town approximately \$25,000 per year. It was stated that this minutes format is in full compliance with FOI requirements. A discussion ensued regarding the format change which would provide less information to the public; therefore compromising the public record of the minutes, and also that the purpose of the minutes is to record legal proceedings and actions taken by the body. The Town Clerk provided an overview of the necessity of this type of format for meeting minutes. Councilors had mixed opinions regarding the new format; therefore, it was decided to table the motion until more information is obtained.

Councilor Adil moved **"TO TABLE THE PROPOSED MEETING MINUTES FORMAT FOR TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS AND THE MEETINGS OF ALL TOWN BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS"**, seconded by Councilor Walsh. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

National Incident Command Management

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO ADOPT THE NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIMS) AS THE STANDARD FOR INCIDENT MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Fortunato.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that in 2006 the Federal Government has mandated that each jurisdiction eligible for federal funds must operate under the National Incident Command Management System. She said that Wethersfield staff is trained in NIMS and prepared to use the system in the event of an emergency and/or disaster.

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

Preserve America Grant

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO APPLY FOR PRESERVE AMERICA FUNDING FROM THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE FOR A HISTORIC WETHERSFIELD MASTER PLAN AND TO ACCEPT THE FUNDS IF SO AWARDED"**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the grant request is \$50,000 for a total project of \$100,000 and if awarded the grant, the Town will need to budget a \$13,667 match next fiscal year.

Councilors commended Rae Ann Palmer, Assistant to the Town Manager for a job well done.

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

BIDS

None.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

ORDINANCE AMENDING PART I - ADDING CHAPTER 2 - LOCAL DISASTER EMERGENCY TO THE REVISED CHARTER AND MUNICIPAL CODE

That Part One of the Revised Charter and Municipal Code of the Town of Wethersfield, Connecticut, is hereby amended by adding a section to be numbered Chapter 2 which said section reads as follows, Local Disaster Emergency.

§ 2-1. Authority.

The chief executive officer of a municipality is authorized to declare a local disaster emergency in accordance with the terms of Connecticut General Statutes sections 28-8a(a) and 28-1 (8).

§ 2-2. Effect.

Upon declaration of a local disaster emergency by the Town Manager, the Town manager and the Emergency Management Director shall exercise all powers and authority granted to the Town of Wethersfield and/or its chief executive officer (Town Manager) under Title 28 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

§ 2-3. Activation.

In times of serious disaster or civil emergency, the Town Manager is authorized to activate the emergency operations center. The Police Chief, the Fire Chief, the Health Director and the Emergency Management Director, or their designated representatives, shall assist the Town Manager in evaluating the need for the declaration of a local disaster emergency.

§ 2-4. Coordination with Area Coordinator.

In times of serious disaster or civil emergency, the Town Manager will coordinate his or her response activities with the appropriate Area coordinator from the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER A180, Town Council Rules of Procedure

Chapter A180, Town Council Rules of Procedure

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Town Council 1-7-1980; amended in its entirety 12-18-1989. Subsequent amendments

noted where applicable, March 1, 2004]

Recommended changes of the Rules and Procedures Committee, as of 12-6-2005 appear in bold lower case.

§ A180-4. Public meetings and hearings. [11-2-2005]

- A. No ordinance or resolution shall be adopted or appointment or removal made except in a meeting of the Council open to the public (Charter, Sec. 305).
- B. At least one (1) public hearing, not less than five (5) days' notice of which shall be given by publication in a newspaper having general circulation in the town and by posting on the Town Clerk's Board, shall be held by the Council before any ordinance or resolution shall be acted upon (Charter, Sec. 308).
- C. Budget hearing. There shall be a public hearing at 7:00 p.m. on the third Monday in April at a place to be determined by the Council, at least five (5) days' notice of which shall be given by publication in at least one (1) newspaper which has a general circulation in the town and by posting on the Town Clerk's Board. At such hearing any citizen or property owner who desires it shall be entitled to be heard by the Council on the town and school budgets, and the hearing shall be recessed from day to day until all such persons have been heard (Charter, Sec. 705), provided that a notice of recess shall be conspicuously posted on the door of the meeting place, stating the date, time and place of the recessed meeting; provided, further, that any person who desires to speak at the subject budget hearings shall initially be heard for no longer than ten (10) minutes. After all persons who desire to speak have spoken at any one (1) budget hearing, those persons wishing to speak for a second time shall be allowed to do so but shall not exceed **ten (10)** ~~twenty (20)~~ minutes. After all persons have had a second opportunity to speak, any person may thereafter speak.
- D. [Amended March 1, 2004] Public comment sections at regular meetings are allowed during each meeting for individual citizens' comments. During the public comment, citizens may speak pertaining to any subject on the agenda or of concern to the Town. Each speaker shall limit **their his/her** remarks to five (5) minutes and shall be heard only once. This time restriction may be enforced by a timing device. If a speaker exceeds the time limitation, the Chair shall so notify the speaker and allow the speaker 30 seconds for summation. The Chair at **their his/her** discretion, may grant the speaker additional time. If there is a large group of citizens who wish to speak, the time limit will be reduced to three (3) minutes to accommodate the crowd, and still allow the Council to conduct their business.

If the Council needs to make a decision or needs additional information, the Council should direct the Manager to get the facts, information and or recommendations it needs to make an informed decision in the interest of all Town citizens. Citizens are encouraged to submit questions/concerns in writing.

ADJOURNMENT TIME: The Council established an adjournment time of regular meetings of 11:00 p.m. If the adjournment time requires an extension, it can be done via motion and a majority vote.

MINUTES

Councilor Adil moved "**TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 5, 2005**", seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Chairperson Morin wished Happy Holidays to the residents of Wethersfield on behalf of the Town Council.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:25 p.m., Councilor Adil moved "**TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**" seconded by Deputy Mayor Fortunato. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Attorney Morris Borrea left at 8:49 p.m.

At 8:59 p.m., Councilor Adil moved "**TO ENTER BACK INTO THE REGULAR MEETING**" seconded by

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

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

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk