

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

ADJOURNED BUDGET MEETING

May 1, 2003

An Adjourned Meeting of the Town Council (adjourned from Wednesday, April 30, 2003) was held on Thursday, May 1, 2003 at 6:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Town Hall with Chairperson Kitch Breen Czernicki presiding.

Present: Councilors Cascio, Fitzpatrick, Flynn, Gardow, Hemmann (8:15), Morin, Deputy Mayor O'Connor (6:40), Sassano (8:30) and Chairperson Czernicki.

Also present: Bonnie Therrien Town Manager, Dolores Sassano Town Clerk, and Joseph Swetcky, Finance Director.

Chairperson Czernicki noted that Councilor Morin would be leaving at 7:00 p.m.

LIBRARY - 710 (C-131 to C-137)

Gregg Curtain, Chairman of the Library Board of Directors, explained that the Board has oversight responsibility for the Wethersfield Public Library. Over the last year, borrowing has gone up 16% over the 2001 year. This is over 250,000 items. Children's programs have grown 18% and the children's staff has answered 59% more requests for assistance. Use of the library web page has gone up 119%. Adult programs have increased by 58% and the adult services department is answering 37% more reference questions per month than the previous year. Requests for items on interlibrary loan have increased 23%. Libraries save people money. In tight times, library use increases. People use the computers at the library if they can't afford their own computer or internet usage. The Wethersfield Library provides a great value for the tax dollars. The Wethersfield Public Library is only 1.9% of the Town Budget. Mr. Curtain thanked the Council for their support.

Laurel Goodgion, Wethersfield Public Library Director, asked Council members if they had any questions regarding the library.

Councilor Gardow asked if statistics are being collected through the use of the new library cards. Ms. Goodgion said that the computer does collect all the circulation statistics. Councilor Gardow asked if the hours are consistent from 2001-2002 or if they've been adjusted. Ms. Goodgion said that the hours have been consistent for the last several years. Councilor Gardow verified that the proposed budget is for the footprint that the library is currently in. Ms. Goodgion said that the budget is not anticipating that the library will be in the expanded facility during the 2003-2004 budget year. Councilor Gardow asked what the anticipated date is for the new facility to open. Ms. Goodgion said that it will be at least a year. The architect has to come on board and come up with a plan. Next, construction has to start on the police side of the building. Recreation & Parks and Social Services then have to move over to that side of the building before demolition can begin on the library side. Councilor Gardow asked if Ms. Goodgion foresees any difficulty running the library operations during the renovations. Ms. Goodgion said that the first stage shouldn't be a problem. There will be some interference with library programming and using the meeting room downstairs. Once the downstairs is vacant, the children's department will move to the lower level and work will begin on the vacated children's department area. After the children's department is moved, there will be a real need to increase staff in that area because of security issues.

Councilor Flynn requested information regarding the modest increase in staffing. Ms. Goodgion said the reason she wanted to increase staffing at the adult services desk because there is usually a line of people waiting for assistance. She cannot manipulate the demand for services in this area, other than locking the doors. In the children's department, she can decrease demand by decreasing the amount of programs offered. The staff in the adult services area is having difficulty keeping up with the demand. There are 8-9 public service computers. The average use is 6 computers per hour. The staff is constantly being asked for assistance on the computers as well as to answer referencing questions.

Councilor Cascio asked Ms. Goodgion to review the process of the library budget preparation.

Ms. Goodgion said she has been with the Wethersfield library for eleven months. As statistics are collected, she could see a dramatic increase in adult services use. One of the most important things library staff does is help people. Through their tax dollars, residents have prepaid for their library use and service. Children's programming could actually be doubled. Parents are insatiable when it comes to programming for their kids. Twenty-five participants were recently turned away from a library craft program because it was full and there was no way to accommodate them.

Chairperson Czernicki asked if there is a fee for the craft program. Ms. Goodgion said there is not. Chairperson Czernicki asked what the craft was. Ms. Goodgion said that one month it was a bookmark. She stated that she is unaware of any library in Connecticut that charges for either children's or adult programs. There is not even a fee for supplies. Chairperson Czernicki said that the computer usage sounds fairly substantial. She asked if computer classes are run to help make people more self-sufficient on the computer. Ms. Goodgion said the classes are to introduce people to computers. Chairperson Czernicki asked who the staff would be to assist computer users. Ms. Goodgion said that it would be anyone on the adult services desk. Ms. Goodgion's request vs. the Manager's request included an additional 20-hour per week librarian and an additional 20-hour per week associate for adult services to accommodate the workload. Chairperson Czernicki noted that the comment relating to prepaid services actually relates to every department in town. Ms. Goodgion is trying to direct the book and other material purchasing to those items people will use, instead of routinely buying in certain areas. Ms. Goodgion said that there is an interesting statistic that states that libraries need to weed out 10% of their collections to increase use. It's not enough to have a lot of items; they have to be items people want.

Councilor Cascio complimented the Library Board for the work they've done. They are thinking for the future. Next year's budget will be even harder. We need to realize that if we can't service and support the current budget, how will be able to look to the future if next year will be even tougher? The Library Board is trying to look ahead to the future when the renovation will occur. They will need additional staff. Everything has to fit and move along pretty rapidly.

Ms. Goodgion said that the two groups heard from most at the Public Hearing were seniors and children and these are the two groups the library services the most.

The Library monitor to control students in the afternoon is part of the budgeted amounts. Ms. Goodgion increased the hourly amount to be paid to the monitor. The monitor has been very successful in controlling the children in the library in the afternoon. Ms. Goodgion is hoping to reverse the trend of people leaving the Wethersfield Library to go to Newington or Rocky Hill. She is hoping to improve the quality of material at our library.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor arrived at the meeting at this time (6:40pm).

Councilor Morin stated that he thinks the service at the Wethersfield library is excellent. Staff is always friendly and helpful.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor said that he echoes Councilor Morin's comments about the library's service. He asked why the Support Services line of the budget has dropped so significantly. Ms. Goodgion said that she had trouble understanding the current budget. Support Services currently contains the membership and computer network. It also contains some service contracts, the photo copiers, and funds for the website and e-mail hosting. She asked Mr. Swetcky if those items could be rearranged. The funds are all still there, but have been moved to other lines. The Support Services line of the proposed budget now includes the fee to connect to the computer consortium. She asked if the fee for Data Processing Services could be dropped because the library does not use the town's data services department. The library's technical support is outsourced to TSSI. All service contracts and the copiers are now on the line item of Office Machinery Service. Deputy Mayor O'Connor asked about three new categories. They are Repair and Maintenance, Building Materials & Supplies, and Equipment. Ms. Goodgion said the equipment amount of \$12,000 is to replace half of the existing computers (8) that are over four years old.

Ms. Goodgion said that the category of Library Books & Other Media is broken down into three sub-categories. Books are \$102,670; magazines and newspapers are \$9,000 and database is \$10,000. She is trying to acquire databases that children can use such as Encyclopedia Britannica and World Book Encyclopedia. We pay a subscription fee based on

our population.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor asked the same question he's asked in 1999, 200, 2001 and 2002 and has yet to get an answer. The question is what is the per capita expense of other communities in comparison to Wethersfield? It is based on the number of library card holders. Ms. Goodgion said that the per capita is done by number of residents rather than number of library card holders. In 2000-2001 the per capital expense of the library was \$33.14. Newington's was \$43.73. Rocky Hill's was \$39.92. Glastonbury's was almost \$30. The circulation per capita, a very common output measure which is a good indication of the vitality of the library, is 9.5 items per capita. Newington, Rocky Hill and Glastonbury are all around 14.5 items per capita. Wethersfield's numbers are going up; however. Wethersfield has 10,837 cards issued, which is 41.26% of its population. Rocky Hill has 44.3%, Glastonbury has 50% and Newington has 50.6%.

Councilor Fitzpatrick asked if it's possible to tie the library web page into the town web page. Ms. Goodgion said that there is now a link from the library web page to the town web page. Councilor Fitzpatrick said that support issues are important for the future.

Chairperson Czernicki asked if the rumor is true that the library will be closed on Fridays. Ms. Goodgion said that this would be a response to the proposed budget. The proposed budget which is a 2.3% increase over the current budget doesn't provide sufficient funds to do what the library wants to do. The Board has made it clear that they do not want to further invade the materials budget. The first response was to close Sundays. This is a key day for library usage. Evenings are also a key time for library usage. Friday is the only day during the week that the library is not open in the evening.

Councilor Gardow commented on the fact that library staff works only 35 hours per week. Ms. Goodgion said that this was in response to the fact that library salaries were so low that they did not meet the Connecticut minimum salary guideline for professional librarians. Councilor Gardow asked if that is still the case. Ms. Goodgion said no, since they've cut back to 35 hours per week. Most libraries work a 35 hour work week.

Councilor Cascio said this question came up last year as well.

Chairperson Czernicki said that the decision to close on Fridays is because the Board did not want to close either weekend days. She thinks that closing any weekday is a poor choice. She would prefer closing every Sunday or shortening the hours at least two days per week in the evening.

Ms. Goodgion has already had to cut the two part-time positions she originally requested and the materials budget has been trimmed. The supplies budget can't be trimmed because the collection needs so much work to mend and repair it. She doesn't want to cut back on programming as it is a major source of bringing people into the library. Closing Fridays would save approximately \$21,000. It would cost \$1,500 to be open the additional eight Saturdays during the summer.

Councilor Morin left the meeting at this time (6:45pm).

Deputy Mayor O'Connor doesn't like the idea of the library closing at all. This will be one of the tightest budgets the town has ever seen. He would rather see fewer copies, reevaluation of subscriptions, and holding off on conferences, training and recruitment. Ms. Goodgion said she's already cut subscriptions and dues.

Councilor Cascio asked Mr. Swetcky about the employee insurance coverage. Ms. Goodgion requested \$160,222 and Mr. Swetcky approved \$174,853. Mr. Swetcky said that there is an increase in insurance in every budget. He instructed department heads to increase the insurance by 10% for this proposed budget. The additional increase is for the pension contributions. Councilor Cascio said that the Library Board did definitely wrestle with the question of closing on Fridays. There are other communities also wrestling with this issue.

Chairperson Czernicki asked if there is any way that Ms. Goodgion could sit with the directors of Newington and Rocky Hill and discuss the best way to service the residents of the three towns.

Councilor Cascio verified that the opening of the library on Saturdays during the summer is only if the library is closed on Fridays.

Ms. Goodgion said that the Library Board spent \$52,000 of the Trust Fund on the library. Some funds are also from the Friends of the Library. The Friends have spent \$10,500 on library equipment this year. They have also agreed to fund the T-shirts for \$1,600 and the museum passes for \$1,000 per year.

Councilor Cascio noted the collaboration Ms. Goodgion has made with the town schools. A goal is to have much more interface with the schools. He thanked Ms. Goodgion and the Board.

SOCIAL & YOUTH SERVICES - 625 (C-125 to C-130)

Nancy Stillwell, Director of Social & Youth Services, said that the Computer Learning Center has been opened. It has done exceedingly well. Many computer courses are being offered. There has been an increase in Senior Center membership and participation. Her department has been working very actively with the Police Department on the OPM grants to reduce underage drinking. There is an action plan for the summer for funding of police overtime for police to do constructive programs with the kids. A grant has been submitted to include residents with disabilities in town wide events. We have made the initial cuts and there are now nineteen communities competing for the three grants. The notable trend deserving of attention is that food bank utilization is up 64%. The number of children in town keeps increasing and the number of seniors needing assistance keeps increasing as well. The budget dollars have stayed constant and this is an issue. It is hard to do more with the same amount.

Chairperson Czernicki asked if there is a senior in an emergency situation, they are not required to wait for assistance. Ms. Stillwell said that is true, everything is done to help them as soon as possible.

Councilor Flynn asked about the increase in the food bank clients. Ms. Stillwell said that this number indicates visits and they are duplicated numbers. Councilor Flynn asked how the food bank is funded. Ms. Stillwell said that donations are received and there are monthly periodic food drives. A small amount is received from Food Share and occasionally the fund is supplemented through the special needs fund. Councilor Flynn asked if the increased need this year has been met and Ms. Stillwell said that it has.

Chairperson Czernicki asked about the senior citizen programs. She asked if the numbers have really dipped so low from the 2001-2002 amount of 5,500. Ms. Stillwell said that during that year, numbers were derived differently. This year and last year's numbers are definitely document able. The Youth Chore Program is showing a decrease in hours and a substantial decrease in clients served. Ms. Stillwell said that is because the only statistics kept now are those that we subsidize. We have cut back through attrition. More clients are being served but those are the ones who are matched with a kid who has requested chore service. We are not subsidizing those clients to pay for the chore service. Chairperson Czernicki verified that we're only working to match 36 subsidized clients to kids. Chairperson Czernicki asked why the Juvenile Diversion Services has gone down. Ms. Stilwell said that there has been a change in the Juvenile Officer and it took him some time to get up to speed. Secondly, the kids who have been nabbed need to go to court and don't get diverted. We are also being more selective in the diversion cases we will select. Chairperson Czernicki asked why there is a breakout of Adult/ Disabled Case

Management and Elderly Case Management. Ms. Stillwell said that this is required by the State. Also, different records are kept on these two types of cases. Ms. Stillwell noted to Council that the After-School Programs should read 545 instead of 945.

Councilor Fitzpatrick asked about Dial-A-Ride and the impact of the changes made to the program. Ms. Stillwell said that there have been very few complaints. Councilor Fitzpatrick asked if from a dollar standpoint are we back on track? Ms. Stillwell said that the budget for the year was roughly \$15,800 per month and in March we came in at about \$20,000. This shows that we are still running over. Mr. Swetcky said that we will be approximately \$70,000 over budget this year in Dial-A-Ride. Councilor Fitzpatrick is becoming less and less enchanted with the Transit District and what they have to offer.

Councilor Flynn is not impressed with the Transit District's supply of information.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor said that Councilor Hemmann requested that we look into other towns. Ms. Stillwell supplied data to Councilor Hemmann of what other towns are doing. Chairperson Czernicki suggested that we piggyback with another surrounding town.

Ms. Stillwell reported that 820 trips were run in March at \$22 per trip. This equates to \$216,500 for the next budget year. Ms. Stillwell reviewed three scenarios for reduction of services or increased revenue. If we institute a \$2 per ride charge, we would realize revenue of \$19,680 which would reduce the amount to less than \$200,000. We could reduce the hours of service from 8:00-5:00 to either 9:00-5:00 or 9:00-4:00; although cessation at 4:00pm could make it difficult for some clients to return from medical appointments. Chairperson Czernicki said that she would rather see the hours changed to 8:00-4:00 rather than 9:00-5:00. We could reduce the service to four days per week rather than five. Another option would be to reduce the geographic range. Lastly, we could limit trip purposes.

Councilor Fitzpatrick said that we have tried to fine tune the Dial-A-Ride service and at this point we need to start looking at other options.

Councilor Flynn is convinced that this is the type of service that Wethersfield has to offer. We cannot; however keep losing \$5,000-\$7,000 per month on the service. The Greater Hartford Transit District is very frustrating to work with. They don't have a clue. We cannot continue this way.

Chairperson Czernicki said that the need is there, but not necessarily for the way it is being done currently.

Councilor Fitzpatrick recommends that we offer \$180,000 (\$12,000 per month) to Greater Hartford Transit as a flat fee for their service for the year.

Chairperson Czernicki said that it was decided that the medical trip travel to hospitals would be based on the need expressed by the seniors. There may not be a need to travel to certain hospitals any longer if seniors are no longer requiring such. Ms. Stillwell said that for the period of July 2002 through September 2002 there were 19 trips to John Dempsey Hospital. She said that 70% of all trips are within Wethersfield.

Councilor Flynn agrees with Councilor Fitzpatrick's sentiment; however before we set a cap for spending, we need to give some serious thought as to what that amount should be.

Ms. Stillwell proposed that she poll the users and provide them with the options. It is important to get their opinions. If the service cannot be provided for a feasible budget amount it may have to go.

Chairperson Czernicki made it clear that because of the tough budget year, the level and amount of services we will be able to provide will be affected across the board. We're very aware of our senior population and their needs, but there must be a cap to the service if we are to continue to provide it. Wethersfield will go out to bid and Ms. Stillwell and Mr. Swetcky will meet with Art Hanman and explain to him that we have \$180,000 to work with for the contract year and can he provide the same level of service for the year for that set amount. Ms. Stillwell is willing, for the meeting, to put together a specific list of what the service is currently offering.

Council agreed to set the cap maximum at \$180,000. The starting negotiating amount will be \$150,000.

Councilor Fitzpatrick asked if we need to be members of both North Central Regional Mental Health and Intercommunity Mental Health. Ms. Stillwell said she can provide information and that the Council can decide. The NCRMH is primarily a volunteer organization. They provide representation and efficiency for mental health services in the region. They evaluate programs, provide community education conferences and share research information with the public. The ICM provides critical services for the chronically mentally ill in this region. We refer many people to them and they use our office weekly.

Councilor Gardow asked about the position of part time Home School Liaison. He asked if it is the responsibility of Social & Youth Service or of the Board of Education. Ms. Stillwell said that the position was originally grant funded as an attempt to involve more parents of children in middle school in school activities. The commitment at the end of

the grant in 1989 was to maintain the position so as to continue participation of parents. This actually has nothing to do with home schooling. A better title would be Parent/School Liaison. This person, in a sense, coordinates the PTO. The cost for the position is approximately \$18,000.

Councilor Hemmann arrived at the meeting at this time (8:15).

Ms. Stillwell said the rate of detentions is down at Wethersfield High School due to the Alternative to Suspension and Detention program offered by the Social & Youth Services. This program offers students the opportunity to serve their "time" by performing community service as an alternative to attending Saturday detention. The cost of this program is very minimal, maybe 2 hours of either Youth Opportunities Coordinator or Social Worker staff time per week. There are 8-10 students participating each week.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES - CENTRAL CONNECTICUT HEALTH DISTRICT - 610 (C-121 to C-124)

Paul Hutcheon, Health District Director, explained that the Health District covers the towns of Berlin, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield. The Health District was formed in 1996 by Rocky Hill and Wethersfield and in 1998 Berlin joined. The District is overseen by a Board of Health. The membership on the Board is dictated by statute and based upon population. There are three Wethersfield representatives allowed on the Board. There is currently one vacancy. There are two representatives each from both Rocky Hill and Berlin. There are six staff members. The proposed State budget shows a 47% reduction in the grant from the State. The total portion of revenue from the State grant has dropped to 13% from 25% in prior years. In response to that revenue reduction of approximately \$57,000, the Board of Health chose to make up the amount by increasing the per capita charge to member towns, raising fees charged for licenses and permits, and to use reserve monies to make up the remaining amount. The population for the district has also decreased by .34%. This affects slightly any grants calculated per capita. One of the things being worked on currently is an independent website to provide information on programs, contact information and forms.

Councilor Fitzpatrick is concerned about the Health District addressing such issues as smoking cessation and weight control. He thinks the District should be concentrating more effort on environmental issues such as mosquito control and lyme disease.

Mr. Hutcheon responded that the District is very concerned with the West Nile virus. They are responsible for collection, storage and analysis of any dead birds. Pamphlets are distributed to the public about mosquito control and protection from the West Nile virus. The public is educated on elimination of mosquito breeding sites. The District is heavily involved in environmental issues. They have been following closely the State-wide plan. Mosquito control is something that the Town Council would choose to pay for. The Town is very well mapped with mosquito breeding sites. Many are on Town-owned property or open space. The Council would be responsible for deciding to what degree those sites are treated. It is expensive (approximately \$25,000) to fully attack the program. A program at this cost should result in a noticeable difference in the mosquito population. Spraying here and there is a temporary solution. The program currently utilized is placing larvicide in catch basins. They cover a thirty-day period and are put in a couple times per season. This will prevent mosquitos from hatching out of that catch basin. This program started three years ago. It is proposed to continue to buy the larvicide so as to continue the program. The cost of the program is \$4,400.

Councilor Sassano arrived at the meeting at this time (8:30).

Deputy Mayor O'Connor asked if based on the winter we had, the mosquito population is expected to be greater this season. Mr. Hutcheon said that the effect would be that the mosquitos wouldn't be coming out as early because it stayed colder longer. A heavy, wet winter will provide more breeding sites. Deputy Mayor O'Connor asked if we're spending more by spot spraying than we would if we spent the \$25,000. Mr. Hutcheon said that spot spraying costs approximately \$1,500.

Councilor Cascio asked if we are competitive with our fees charged for licenses and fees. Mr. Hutcheon said we are competitive with area health districts. Most health districts are raising fees at this time.

Councilor Gardow asked why the Town Manager increased the requested budget amount for the Central Connecticut

Health District from \$94,806 to \$103,734. Mr. Hutcheon said that the Board of Health had a public hearing on the budget and set the budget amount at an increased per capita charge of \$3.65 from \$3.50. Then, the State's proposed budget came out showing the reduction in funding and the Board had another meeting to increase again the per capita fee to offset that reduction in revenue. Councilor Gardow asked if the monitoring of progress eliminating combined sewer overflows to the Cove refers to the MDC situation. Mr. Hutcheon said that it is the MDC's situation. Councilor Gardow asked what type of leverage the Health District has with the DEP and the MDC to remedy the problem. Mr. Hutcheon said that the District has very little leverage. This issue has grown way beyond the Health Department although Mr. Hutcheon stays abreast of any information regarding the situation.

Councilor Hemmann asked if the Health Department is doing water monitoring of the Cove. Mr. Hutcheon said that the Department does not do Cove sampling on a regular basis. Councilor Hemmann asked if the sample came back with results of a high level of bacteria, would Mr. Hutcheon close the Cove? Mr. Hutcheon said that he would close the Cove only under extreme conditions. It is extremely difficult to close the Cove as there is no swimming allowed there. He has asked that signs be posted warning people that the water may be contaminated and advising them that certain activities are prohibited. Fishing is permitted in the Cove as the flesh of the fish does not absorb the bacteria.

Councilor Cascio stated that much of the discussion with the MDC had involved water sampling and testing. The MDC representative clearly indicated that it is the local Health Department's responsibility to sample and test the water. In light of this, he asked Mr. Hutcheon if Wethersfield could get on a sampling schedule of the Cove to have an in-house record of the levels of bacteria. Mr. Hutcheon said that this could be done. There was discussion at one time of posting sample results on the web to have timely data for decision making with reference to the Cove. It will need to be determined what the frequency of testing will be and what will be done with the data collected.

Councilor Hemmann said that this could leverage objective information to continually place in the MDC's and DEP's files. It is currently tested too infrequently. Our collection of data would show that we are keeping track and paying attention to the situation. Simply testing once or twice per year is not compelling anyone to do anything about the situation.

Mr. Hutcheon said that if the collection of the data is used to solve the cause of the problem, which are the combined sewer overflows originating in Hartford; then it would be justified. Mr. Hutcheon said that the Council should consult with Robinson & Cole to determine to what degree this information would be useful.

Councilor Cascio said we need to know what we, as a community, need to document in order to be proactive in the safety of those who use the Cove.

Councilor Gardow said that the one-year storm is the threshold for bad things to happen. Many in the community say that this is not enough. Mr. Hutcheon said that the degree to which the community wants the Cove clean will depend upon the success of Robinson & Cole requiring that to be done.

Chairperson Czernicki said that one request of the MDC is that they need to police the Cove as they are the one's polluting it. The condition of the water should be posted.

Mr. Hutcheon said that if the data is to be used for the legal process with MDC, the attorney must be involved so that the Health Department obtains the information needed.

POLICE - 420 (C-59 to C-76)

Acting Chief James Cetran said that there haven't been many budget changes from last year to this year. The biggest change was the new facility and the overhead expenses now added to the Police budget. The other big increase is the contribution to the Pension Fund which hasn't been made for the past 7-8 years and also the 20% increase in Workers Compensation. In the Support Services account (423) there is a need for \$6,500 of seed money for a \$25,000 grant for traffic. In the category of Equipment the request was for \$8,000 and the amount was cut by Mr. Swetcky to \$1,500. The funds were to purchase two motorcycles through an inexpensive lease program. They would be a significant enhancement to the department. Mr. Swetcky is going to check to see if the insurance would increase significantly or not. The backup plan, if the insurance is too much, is to purchase traffic cameras for the Silas Deane Highway which

could be remotely controlled from Police Headquarters to control traffic flow and also for law enforcement.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor asked if the acquisition of the two motorcycles would eliminate the need for a patrol car. Acting Chief Cetran said that the need for the patrol car would not be eliminated. He said that you cannot write reports on motorcycles or chase cars or other things as well. The motorcycles would be used for selective enforcement such as community policing of parks, parades, funerals, and honor guard.

Councilor Flynn said that he is concerned with the overtime usage allotment in the budget. The decision was made to hold overtime to this year's level. He said that overtime has had to be used to make up time for staff who have retired. He asked if this is the reason the overtime usage for this year has been so high. Acting Chief Cetran said that it is for that and for training which is considered overtime. Each officer needs twelve hours of training which comes out of the overtime account. There are anticipated retirements in the coming fiscal year that will put stress on the overtime budget.

Councilor Sassano noted that there is no request for furnishings in the Police Facility budget. Acting Chief Cetran said that the facility is all set with furniture.

Councilor Fitzpatrick asked how the Taurus' are working out as police vehicles. Acting Chief Cetran said that the Taurus' are useless. Police vehicles are rotated to get the maximum life out of them. The department can usually get 11/2 years out of a vehicle in the administration and detective division. Next, they go into patrol where they are used 24/7. The cars are monitored and moved around to maintain the mileage. You can typically get 4 years out of one car. The Taurus' throw the system off by cutting the life expectancy of the cars by 3/4. It is actually more cost efficient, because of the rotation system, to stick with the previously purchased cars. He argued against the Taurus' and although they are cheaper vehicles to purchase, they cost more in the long run.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor asked Mr. Swetcky what we are currently ordering and Mr. Swetcky said that we have gone back to ordering Crown Victoria's.

Chairperson Czernicki asked if there is anyway to do the training for computer and dispatch and records management on a non-overtime basis. Acting Chief Cetran said that the whole department has to go through the mobile training and there is no way to do it without overtime. Chairperson Czernicki asked if the training could be time shifted so that officers patrolling low-call areas could attend during the low-call time periods. Acting Chief Cetran said that you never know what calls could come in at any time. Visionair only provides a certain amount of training and adding to the time allowed would be quite costly.

Councilor Gardow asked how the budgeted figures for the past three months in the new facility have coincided with the actual amounts. Acting Chief Cetran said that there are still bugs in the building. There is a problem with both the heating and air conditioning systems that are expected to be rectified. The biggest problem is that the electronic doors on the patrol side don't work properly. Councilor Gardow thinks that the motorcycles would be a great morale booster and the kids in Town would think they're cool too.

Councilor Sassano asked if it could be looked into to enter into the motorcycle lease agreement with the Indian motorcycle retailer in Wethersfield. Acting Chief Cetran said that it would be not problem to look into this option, but he can guarantee that the cost would be very expensive.

Councilor Gardow asked about the \$100,335 in State grant monies and whether or not they could become part of the budget. Acting Chief Cetran said that it cannot be made part of the budget and that some of the \$100,335 has already been cut back. Councilor Gardow asked what is on the horizon for the department. Acting Chief Cetran said that because of the grant cut-back there will be a narcotics problem. The first areas attacked are the schools to try to eliminate narcotics trafficking. He also said that much of the police equipment has been bought with asset forfeiture money. We will not be able to obtain this equipment any longer because the narcotics task force grant has been cut back.

Discussion ensued regarding the patrol of Mill Woods. Acting Chief Cetran said that he has stepped up enforcement. The cost of the increased enforcement in overtime has come from the Youth Alcohol Drinking grant. As a last resort,

Acting Chief Cetran is considering blocking off the driveway to the pool area forcing people to park in the west-side parking lots. Acting Chief Cetran noted that crimes such as the two homicides and numerous bank robberies in Wethersfield last year kill the overtime budget.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:45 p.m., Councilor Cascio moved "**TO ADJOURN TO THE BUDGET WORKSHOP SESSION ON MAY 7, 2003 AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE TOWN HALL**" seconded by Councilor O'Connor. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk