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REGULAR MEETING

November 4, 2002

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on November 4, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall.

Present: Councilors Cascio, Fitzpatrick, Flynn, Gardow, Hemmann, Morin (arrived at 9:50) Deputy Mayor O'Connor and Chairperson Czernicki. Absent: Councilor Sassano. Also present: Joseph Swetcky Interim Town Manager and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

Chairperson Czernicki announced the executive session to discuss possible litigation would be held immediately prior to the public meeting. At 7:15 Deputy Mayor O'Connor moved to go into executive session, seconded by Councilor Fitzpatrick.

Also present were: Karen Perry, Richard Smith from Robinson & Cole, Peter Grose from Fuss & O'Neill and P.J. Cimini from Capitol Strategies Group.

AT 7:41 p.m. Councilor Fitzpatrick moved to return to public session, seconded by Councilor Flynn.

All stood for the pledge of allegiance led by Councilor Hemmann.

PRESENTATION: Central Connecticut Health District

Chairperson Czernicki introduced Mr. Paul Hutcheon, Director of the Central Connecticut Health District and Ms. Carolyn Wysocki, Chairperson of the Board of Directors. Ms. Wysocki said the District was developed in 1996; Wethersfield was one of the first to become a part of it. It is a separate entity; representation on the Board is by population of the towns, Wethersfield, Rocky Hill and Berlin. Primary functions of the Board are policymaking and strategic planning. The Board and Staff have worked together gathering information for their first strategic health plan. The vision statement is: Healthy People in a Healthy Community. They are committed to preserve, protect, promote and improve the quality of life in a healthy environment through the prevention of diseases, ongoing health education opportunities and the enhancement of the well being of it citizens. A power point presentation clearly illustrated the Community health profile, the Community health survey and a three-year strategic plan. Goals were turned into service areas.

PRESENTATION: Robinson & Cole

Attorney outlined the status of the Cove problem. November 25 will be a workshop with MDC, Council and legislative delegates. Reason development in the issue, Wethersfield formally intervened into the DEP permit process for the authorization for the sewer plant to discharge directly into the Connecticut River. Application includes the plant itself but the sewage process system, CSO issues, and compliance with other related issues. DEP reviewed the application, pending for 10 years, and determined they cannot issue the permit because they cannot confirm that the facility will comply with all the applicable regulatory, discharge, standards and policies. One of the issues flagged was the need to address the CSO policy requirements. At the present time, they cannot say that all aspects of CSO management procedures at the POTW comply with the policy. They must issue a consent order in conjunction with the new permit. New permit standards address other aspects of sewer plant management. They have the consent or details which need to be preformed to the achieve compliance with the CSO policy. It is a long list of specific measures, which need to be implemented to address the nine points in the policy. They have to collect additional research and information. Some will be addressed by the nine points plan and some will be addressed by the long term CSO plan. Implementing a sampling plan, the Connecticut River in Hartford and Wethersfield Cove to identify the following issues in finding the suitable mixing zones for discharges. Also, implementing a solids and floatable control plan and a communication plan specifically identified under the CSO policy as a requirement to insure the public as well as the municipal officials are

fully advised and able to participate in the process of meeting the requirements for the other discharge facility. Schedule of compliance tasks runs out to a period to the end of 2004 as presently drafted. It would be a part of the process by DEP for renewal of the facility permit.

The town is a party to the application at the DEP and would be a party to any formal hearing that might be conducted by the DEP if necessary. The issues may be resolved short of that. They submitted a letter to Commissioner Rock a few weeks ago, asking them for an opportunity to review this issue specifically with them and the MDC as a result of the consent order and its relation to the permit renewal process. They have not yet received a response. The would like to get everyone together, he was unsure if it would be before the planned workshop.

Peter Grose, Fuss & O'Neill, gave an update of the modeling meetings with the MDC. In April predicted they predicted the results of the Combines Sewer Overflow. They have been refining and calibrating the hydraulic computer model they have. It has taken longer than they anticipated. It is a very complex issue. He thought they were almost through that process. They changed the model to reflect the actual changes that have been made in the system. Some are ongoing now, sewer separation and with the flow slipping from Maple Avenue. The last process is to see if they can change on overflow elevations to maximize system storage to reduce the volumes that are discharged. They have some results of the last round of the modifications they were reviewing. They have not issued model results but they have said the flows coming out of the model are significantly higher than they had been in the model in April. They fine-tuned the model to reflect reality. There were a few hydraulic incidents, which did not match, and they were able to modify the model to reflect what was in the field. They will report the results, hopefully prior to the November 24th meeting. The numbers are higher, perhaps significantly higher.

They have started, at the direction of Council, some water quality samplings in the Cove, and around some areas around the Folly Brook, above and below some combined sewer overflows. They did one dry weather and one wet weather sampling, they do not have the results yet, and they are out for processing.

PRESENTATION: 2002 Annual Wethersfield Business Survey

Frank Frago gave a brief overview of the survey the Council had received. Sent out 750 surveys to businesses in Town and received a 17 % response. Most of the businesses that responded were retail. The overall feeling was less positive over the next three years. Most reported under \$500,000 in revenues. Half of the businesses were in town more than 10 years. They are staying longer in Wethersfield. One of the questions asked where the business comes from and 61 % said it comes from out of town. It means we have to be a proactive community, for the first time in nine years people said their business decreased. A good comment was that 94% were not planning on relocating out side of Town. Consistently top three problems: high cost of insurance, under-pricing by competitors and the high cost of labor. They rely most of CPA for business advice, next were lawyers. There were good comments about what they liked best about the Town. This will help us in attracting businesses to Town. Deputy Mayor O'Connor asked if the thought of doing the survey every two years and who in Town should be responsible for what we do with the results of the survey. There was a comment he thought someone from Town should be contacting that particular party to see what it is they are referring to in the reply. We could be learning from them to the benefit of the whole Town. Mr. Frago said he thought it was up to the three agencies that sponsor the survey, the Chamber, the Economic Development and Improvement Commission and the Town. Mr. O'Connor wanted to know if the Town had someone who would follow-up on these comments. Mr. Swetcky said they will get the surveys and they will go through them, especially those that will benefit the town or Community. Specific staff will work on those areas that are appropriate for them. Councilor Gardow was concerned with the number of respondents. He wanted to know if the same ones respond each year or are they a different 17%. Mr. Frago thought it was not a very big response, the same core ones respond.

Councilor Cascio moved, "**TO TAKE ITEM C2j BID WAIVER-PERSONAL COMPUTERS FROM THE TABLE**", seconded by Councilor Flynn.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion carried 7-0-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HEARINGS

RESOLUTION REGARDING THE AUTHORIZATION AND SUBMISSION OF A GRANT FROM THE CAPITAL AREA SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNCIL TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND YOUTH SERVICES AND THE WAIVER OF FUNDS FROM THE GRANT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND YOUTH SERVICES

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE CAPITOL REGION EMERGENCY SERVICES DIVE TEAM AGREEMENT

ORDINANCE GOVERNING THE LOCATION OF CELLULAR EQUIPMENT ON TOWER AT KELLEHER COURT

No one wished to speak and the Chairperson declared the hearings closed.

Chairperson Czernicki stated there have been several meetings with items before the Council, which were very emotional. She wanted to remind Council and members of the public of process. We would prefer no ad hominem attacks and that you keep your questions addressed to her and she will direct them to the Manager or to Town Staff. When you have opportunity to speak at the podium it is to Council. She opened the floor to public comments

GENERAL COMMENTS

Marguerite Alpert, 7 Morrison Avenue, spoke on the sidewalk at Charles Wright School. The sidewalk from the corner of the gym all the way to the back is a mud pit. The snowplow causes grooves on either side of the walk. Thinks it needs a double sidewalk.

Greg Curtin, Director of the Library Board, thanked the Mayor and Councilor Cascio for moving the Library Grant application along. \$400,000 was received for Phase 1 of the planned Library renovations.

Lana Angelo, 109 Robbins Dr., addressed the Charles Wright sidewalk issue. It is a safety issue, the children get so muddy and wet, they are sent home to change by the school nurse.

Ric Garrey, 35 Harding St., President, WCTV 14, had replaced the speaker's microphone with a longer cord and better voice pickup at the podium. Also concerned parent at Charles Wright and would like the issue addressed. He thought the Council handled the unfortunate meeting well, they do a great job as volunteers. Asked them not to censor public comment as was suggested. Concerned about a catastrophic communication failure, how did we get to this point if in 1996 it was noted as being needed. Also what is the backup system, do we or do we have one?

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Rd. attended earlier workshop, employees work for the citizens who fund the payroll. Wanted the Board of Education to be told not to have meetings when the Council meetings are being held. Cannot attend both and Council is more important. The tower is up and ugly, the employees and volunteers failed the people, he did not hear Council ask the right questions.

Rob Garrey suggested removing a row of seats for easy access to the exit door in Chambers. Gateways to town, liked the way the medium at Jordan Lane and Wolcott Hill Rd looks. Gateway in old Wethersfield needs work. Olsen House needs better care, they are now cutting the lawn themselves and picking up garbage around the public parking lot off of I-91 needs lights.

Paul Courchaine, 481 Main St, presented an oral report on the Silas Deane project. He suggested they might have funds for signage through EDIC, first phase will start at Jordan Lane on the Hartford line and continue down to Nott Street. Knows that CCROG has approved two bus stops for town, would like one to be the Jordan Lane/Silas Deane area. The STP grant is due January 15, there will be a meeting with the Transportation Committee. Trying to get cost the lighting, pavers and planting of trees on islands. He met with the Interim Manager regarding next year's Capital Improvement Budget. Hopefully they will have the support of Senators Ciotto and Fonfara and Rep Doyle, and sit down with them and DOT and contacted Senator Dodd's office for federal highway funds. He found there are two funds which he will request funds from: Save Americas Treasures, administered by Dept of the Interior and

Highway/T21, TCSC accounts, do not directly go to local groups but will go to the Town for the committee to use. There are two others, HUD, which does not have any money available, and Congestion Litigation and Air Quality, which will require some creativity. Bridgeport did their municipal garage with it, saying "if you build the garage they will come and park", they got the money. Bev Pierz, the original architect of the 1987 plan, said she would be able to guide the Silas Deane Revitalization Committee by the pitfalls. As they move forward with town projects, keep in mind what they want to do, so a contractor comes in the building committee won't just nod approval but look at the plan for the Silas Deane. If the area, like Nott St, where you might want to tie into Old Wethersfield and tourism, we might look using the same type of pavers as in Old Wethersfield.

Channel 30 presented Brad Brazen in Wethersfield this evening and Mayor Czernicki came across very well in the presentation of Wethersfield.

Arthur Nacht 374 Main Street maintains that Wethersfield needs three main things: economic development; excellent public schools; and improved physical appearance of the Silas Deane Highway and the Berlin Turnpike. Mr. Courchaine announced a citizen based initiative to improve the appearance of the highway by implementing a plan that is now 15 years old. On the status of the Blight Ordinance he thought it was in the hands of the town attorney and wondered how long the review would take. Chairperson Czernicki said the Manager said it would probably be ready for the next meeting. It would be an important step forward to improving the physical appearance in commercial areas that need attention. He wanted to raise the question of Design Review. Planning and Zoning Commission was asked to consider questions of design. His opinion is that they have failed consistently to prosecute a reasonable and aggressive level of commercial design review. Mr. and Mrs. Sy Adil went before them two years ago when they were updating the zoning regulations to include design review. There are no new zoning regulations and no design review. There have been some successes, the Extra Storage. When they came before Planning & Zoning some citizens also appeared to voice their concerns and Planning & Zoning did have a favorable impact on getting a better looking building. It was an informal way of doing it. Planning and Zoning says they are doing a good job but look at the Silas Deane Middle School. Planning and Zoning Commission approved it and they are putting in a parking lot in one of the only green areas on the Silas Deane. He reviewed what other towns are doing and then drafted a proposal for Commercial Design Review Regulation for the Town of Wethersfield. Now Planning and Zoning has referred the entire question to the same consultant who has been working on updating the zoning regulations for two years. Urged the Council to say to the commissioners the job they are doing for design is inadequate and that they must do better at formalizing design review by adopting the draft and any changes they can add to it to make it a worthwhile document. Needs to be done and needs to be done now. Handed out draft of the regulation summary page.

Marilyn Mayer 133 Griswold Road addressed the Millwoods Master Plan on the agenda. Chairperson Czernicki said the original walk through was rained out and it has not been rescheduled yet. Ms. Mayer said the Plan was from March 8 2002, and she did not know if it was further modified. Chairperson Czernicki said she thought Mr. Bagley said the plan was modified since then. Ms. Mayer asked if it would be in the Library. The Chairperson said the communication states that it has been modified to some extent since then. It is hard to follow the plan. Deputy Mayor O'Connor said they received a memo received from Mr. Dobmeier, Director Recreation and Parks Board. The change was from a soccer field to be a multipurpose soccer/football field, and the location of the trail near the back portion of the picnic area near the pond so it was not close to neighbors property line. Ms. Mayer said that in September they were told that the upper pond might or might not be part of the Master Plan. It is a significant component. Her evaluation of the plan, it is not a park plan but a parking lot plan. It will end up with a lot of land just sitting there, unavailable for other uses.

Ed Tevald 894 Ridge brought in the Connecticut Magazine which distressed him. Out of 17 town, they rated the top 10, quality of life, Wethersfield did not make it. Newington, Rocky Hill and Berlin made it. We do not know where we came out. He also saw the Mayor on TV earlier in the evening and asked her to see if they could do better on another survey.

Alex Pappas 282 Ridge Rd have been waiting to speak out against the tower. Upset others think they do not care about public safety. It devalues their homes. Several real estate agents in the area said it would limit the market for those wanting to sell. Decrease the demand, devalue the property. Devaluing property takes away tax dollars. On September 3, John Dagata, the Tax Assessor said it would devalue property. The tower will cost the town more than they will make in revenue from it. 1926, it was stated that single homes were to be the most protected by zoning boards, 1996

Telecommunications Act states municipalities have the right to stop these towers on devaluation of property. Thinks the town should work with the residents for some type of compensation. They want resolution and compensation, not a long drawn out legal battle. Council asked the right questions but did not get the right answers. Faults the paid town staff for not getting the right information to the Council.

Peter Maxwell 117 Maple Street said the school administration offices in Rocky Hill, the storage area is across the hall from offices, 5,595 sq. feet. fewer employees and fewer student than Wethersfield. Francis Stillman has 6,700 sq. feet or 258 sq. ft. per person. Also they have 1000 sq. ft. extra space there. Thinks it would take \$1million to renovate that building. Gain control of the process. Give the consultant a budget to work with to come up with a design for the building.

Rocco Orsini 95 Broad Street, Wethersfield Taxpayers Association Inc commented on the workshop meeting, it was informative. There are alternatives, keep probing. Some towns have already negotiated with CL&P and are already saving money on street lights. Dial-A-Ride is over budget \$25,000. Chairperson Czernicki said the Major Contracts has met and had more questions, they will have an answer soon, perhaps next meeting. Charles Wright School, Mr. Turner told us how to fix the problem. People have come in and said that will not solve the problem with the mud and water. Look at our processes, talk to those in the area. Solve root cause. Council is being asked to approve the WSAA contract, they have already negotiated with their maintenance staff. People are losing jobs, pay is frozen, benefits eliminated it seems government doesn't see the problem. Private sector is funding the public sector. State is looking at a billion dollar shortfall, Governor said everything is on the table, that could be funding to the towns. WSAA gave them 3% increases for the next three years. Core inflation is 2%. Increased term life, better fringe benefits. Ask the unions to go with zero for one year. Council and Board should have had a chat as to where we want to go with union contracts.

Ed Kardas 805 Cloverdale Circle several questions arose as to what should be done with the process employed at arriving at a solution to the problem. Council could indicate the level of information it desired to receive from the staff. He thinks the more information you receive the better informed you are for the decisions you will make. The better informed the community is, the better it can help the Council at arriving at a better decision or more informed decision. He thinks they would benefit from an ombudsman system. The public could have their issues and resolutions made without having to go to court. They could recommend undoing of an administrative practice and argue for a better resolution.

Patti Silva 24 Hillcrest Avenue adds her voice to the Charles Wright sidewalk project to be sure the sidewalk is repaired correctly. Thank you for addressing the Cat Nuisance Ordinance and hopes it would be put into place in town. Thank you to the Police for all of their efforts in fund raising on behalf of Special Olympics, they are always out there.

COUNCIL ACTION

Councilor Flynn moved, **"TO ACCEPT THE RESOLUTION REGARDING THE AUTHORIZATION AND SUBMISSION OF A GRANT FROM THE CAPITAL AREA SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNCIL TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND YOUTH SERVICES AND THE AWARD OF FUNDS FROM THE GRANT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND YOUTH SERVICES"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor O'Connor.

Councilor Gardow asked what would be done with this money that is different than the ads on TV or DARE. How are we going to use this money? Manager Swetcky responded that the money is targeted for two groups. It is used for the ROPE program, for our sixth graders and also for various literature and training aids for our third graders. Councilor Gardow asked who ran this? Schools or Social and Youth Services? Manager Swetcky said the Department of Social and Youth Services runs it. Councilor Gardow asked when it is done? Manager Swetcky said it is done during the school day. Councilor Gardow asked if there were any way it could find its way to Dial-A-Ride or is it going to be used in the school, is it part of the budget? Manager Swetcky said the Department of Social and Youth Services uses this money for alcohol substance abuse counseling and prevention. It does not go to the school system, it comes to the town and is used as a grant program by town staff. It cannot find its way to Dial-A-Ride or any other type of service. Councilor Gardow asked how many man hours for teaching are provided for by this money? Manager Swetcky said

this money will mainly be used for materials, journals, t-shirts, red ribbon week activities, basically for the supplies that are handed out in the programs. Councilor Gardow said part of our normal budget process is to use the Rope program and this is to supplement that, so it isn't part of our regular budget? Mr. Swetcky said it is a part of our regular planning for years, the consider it part of our budget, if we need \$20,000 to run the ROPE program, we fund it at \$20,000 less the grant that we anticipate receiving.

Councilors Cascio, Fitzpatrick, Flynn, Hemmann, Deputy Mayor O'Connor and Chairperson Czernicki voted AYE, Councilor Gardow abstained. The motion passed, 7-0-1.

Councilor Fitzpatrick moved, "**TO ACCEPT THE RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER OT EXECUTE THE CAPITOL REGION EMERGENCY SERVICES DIVE TEAM AGREEMENT**", seconded by Deputy Mayor O'Connor.

Councilor Hemmann asked of the cost and is there an recurring cost associated with this.

Manager Swetcky said we have a dive team, we have the largest boat, acquired by \$65,000 grant. People use this boat, because it is the only boat large enough to be used for diving. We have the program already.

Councilor Cascio wanted to know when the State becomes involved. Manager Swetcky said the have a dive team and they can be called in, our ability to respond. With the drowning on the Connecticut River this past summer, our team was out and recovered the body by the time the State team arrived on the scene.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor asked, since it is our boat, do we charge the other towns? Manager Swetcky said we do not charge other towns nor do we incur any expenses for them. If their diver comes out and there is any overtime involved, they pay.

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

Councilor Fitzpatrick moved "**TO ACCEPT THE ORDINANCE GOVERNING THE LOCATION OF CELLULAR EQUIPMENT ON TOWER AT KELLEHER COURT**", seconded by Councilor Flynn.

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

Deputy Mayor O'Conner moved "**TO ACCEPT THE APPOINTMENTS OF KEITH A. LATUILLPE TO THE ETHICS BOARD, FROM 11-4-02 TO 6-30-03, JOHN C. LEPPER, ALTERNATE TO THE ETHICS BOARD FROM 11-4-02 TO 6-30-04. PAUL T. CAMARCO TO THE HOUSING AUTHORITY FROM 11-4-02 TO 8-31-04 AND CHARLES E. FORSDICK AS AN ALTERNATE TO THE TOURISM COMMISSION FROM 11-4-02 TO 6-30-04 AND MARY PEZZLO AS AN ALTERNATE TO THE SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEEE FROM 11-4-02 TO 6-30-04**", seconded Councilor Flynn.

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

Councilor Flynn moved "**TO ACCEPT THE BID WAIVER FOR PERSONAL COMPUTERS**" seconded by Deputy Mayor O'Connor.

Councilor Flynn asked the Manager to talk about the warranty coverage the town will be getting. Mr. Swetcky said the warranty coverage is 3 year limited parts and labor, 3 year limited on site and a life time support warranty.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor appreciates the comparison information. He has concerns about the company as a whole, Gateway, they are suffering severely. Warranties and support would be the cut back first. He does not see the need for flat screen monitors but he does not want to slow the process down. He is not comfortable with Gateway but would be with Dell. The difference is only \$20.

Councilor Cascio said that in the first bid, and in the one received tonight, there are no shipping charges anymore in the narrative. Manager Swetcky said the shipping is included in the cost figure. Councilor Cascio asked if he has

concerns about Gateway? Manager Swetcky said he attempted to find out about it, there was talk on the street about everyone, except Dell. They could not find anything substantial. They actually struggled about this last year with the Compaq servers they bought. the did buy them they have been performing well and are serviced adequately.

Manager Swetcky said he had no objection to going with Dell. The concern is they have not performed well on our network, they are not sure why, they have not solved that problem yet. If it is the Council's desire to go with Dell because they are more financially stable he would not be opposed to it.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor moved **"TO AMEND THE REQUEST TO PURCHASE DELL COMPUTERS RATHER THAN GATEWAY"** seconded by Councilor Flynn.

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

On the original motion to accept the bid waiver, all Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Wethersfield School Administrators Association (WSAA)

Manager Swetcky outlined the options Council has in regard to the Contract Settlement between the Wethersfield Board of Education and the Wethersfield School Administrators Association (WSAA).

This contract was received, last week, the 23rd of October. Under State law Council has 30 days to review it. There are three options: you can accept it in total; reject it in total; or do nothing between now and November 21, in which it will go into effect, be considered to be approved. If you reject it, it goes to binding arbitration. Chairperson Czernicki asked if that occurs, are all aspects of it reopened? Yes that is correct, everything can be reopened.

Chairperson Czernicki asked the Council what they wanted to do. Do they want some time to further time to digest this?

Councilor Flynn wanted to know the fiscal impact of the contract. Normally, we to know the dollar amounts of our contracts, could we have that information. Manager Swetcky said he would try to get that for them.

Councilor Morin said in the past, sometimes the arbitrators look at Wethersfield's ability to pay. Sometimes when they go back you get more than you bargained for.

Councilor Fitzpatrick agreed with Mr. Morin. And asked if there was any reason history of contracts going to arbitration. He knew of two towns who sent teachers contracts when to arbitration at 3 1/2 % and the arbitrators accepted them at 5%. There is something to be said for looking at recent history. It is not necessarily what is going on in the private sector unfortunately.

Councilor Cascio said having lived through that with Councilor Hemmann, in 1996 they sent that contract back and the town lost everything. They should have accepted the one they sent back. It went back with a 3 1/2 % raise and came back with a 5% raise plus everything else is on the table, opened up.

Councilor Flynn said he was not suggesting sending it back, at least at this point. He would like to know what the dollar impact is, particularly since we are going into negotiations with just about every one of our bargaining units over the next six months. He would like to use this as a reference.

Councilor Gardow said they were coming into contract season. Does this set the tone? Are we going to see everyone else wanting the same?

Manager Swetcky said he believes this is the last educational contract to be settled right now. The other education contracts have all been settled, so it will not have any impact on those. Realistically, this contract is too beneficial. The

town groups would like to obtain something like this but realistically they will not be able to attain something like this even with arbitration. In terms of this being a leader for any of the town groups, it is very unlikely.

Millwoods Master Plan

Chairperson Czernicki said she mistakenly said the memo received was from Ms. Bagley, it was in fact from Mr. Dobmeier, Director of the Parks Board. She asked the Manager to address the issue with an overview of the letter.

Manager Swetcky said they had two additional public meetings since they met with the Council on September 3. One was at the Community Center and the other at Millwoods Park. On September 26, it rained, he attended that meeting to listen to the architect. There was a good crowd of residents at the meeting. After the June 27th they made changes. They took a soccer field and made it into a multipurpose field. They also moved the location of the trail but the upper pond away from the property line. The Parks Board feels after the September 26 meeting there was not any need for additional changes. They are requesting that it be moved onto the Planning and Zoning Board for review and comment. They are not asking for any funding opportunities at this time, they are just looking for comments on it. The question came up about the upper pond and what was mentioned that is was being incorporated into a larger study of several ponds in towns and the need for dredging and maintenance and care of those ponds. That is why it is not incorporated in the park plan.

Councilor Cascio said he thinks they all realize there needs to be some work done on Millwoods Park. When the public has questions that may not been answered he would like to know if they could send something conceptual, a conceptual idea, to Planning and Zoning.

Manager Swetcky said he believed they could. It is a plan like a plan of conservation and development.

Councilor Cascio asked if they had to do it right now. Maybe there are some questions Ms. Mayer may have that have not been answered. What is our rush? If there are some questions and there seems to be, are we going to hurt anything by not sending tonight?

Manager Swetcky said he did not think it would hurt anything by not sending it tonight. He thought the Parks Board is posing a what do they do next question. They are looking for input. By sending it to Planning and Zoning you are not agreeing or disagreeing to the plan. Planning and Zoning is not agreeing or disagreeing with the plan. They are providing input as to what they think, they may generate more questions about the plan, they may disagree with points in the plan and come back with a report that says no or they may say this is a good idea.

Councilor Cascio said the question he has, is there a charge? We know we are going to be renovating the park, we all agree with that. He does not want to see unanswered questions not being addressed. If Ms. Mayer seems to have a question, maybe the question should be answered. She came here a month ago, she understood she would be going on a tour with Ms. Bagley and that was not arranged. He does not want to start another community issue.

Councilor Flynn said he does not disagree with what Councilor Cascio is saying. He thinks the best course of action is to forward this conceptual plan to Planning and Zoning. He thinks what the Park and Recreation Board is telling us is that they have taken it as far as they can go and he thinks Council would benefit from having a fresh set of eyes look at it. He thinks they should have Planning and Zoning look at and follow Councilor Gardow's idea that they give public notice and have a public hearing on it to assess the residents concerns and give their input from a planning perspective. The next step would be to go back to the advisory Park and Recreation Board to take those comments into account.

Councilor Cascio said if Council did that and the comfort level from the residents is not there, do we lose our ability, once we send it to Planning and Zoning, to review it again?

Councilor Flynn said no.

Councilor Cascio said he wants the people to know what is out there. He does not want an issue to happen which doesn't need to.

Councilor Flynn said, ultimately the final features would be decided by this Council. When we decide what, if any part of it, is to be funded in the Capital budget.

Councilor Hemmann wanted to express concerns in regards to sending a conceptual plan to Planning and Zoning. In the workshop we had earlier, concepts come forward and it always come back to proper communication. It is not that she does not want it to go forward, she is worried that it says changes can be made as needs and conditions warrant. If they are done without notice Council will end up in a similar situation, difference circumstance, but the situation is the same. If we have input, and can take the information that comes out of Planning and Zoning and bring it back to the public though this forum again with the Advisory Park and Recreation Board at their meetings so there is proper communication.

Councilor Morin said it was five months ago we were uncomfortable moving this forward. This is not a life of death issue, it is important to him. He thinks the park is overdue for help. It will be a great asset to our families. He is concerned that this woman's questions have not been answered. He will support the plan as presented especially since they are going to insure that Planning and Zoning have a public hearing, let the neighbors be notified. He does not agree with every aspect, but overall they have done a fine job putting the plan together. He wants to see it move along. He does not feel they are rushing it along. He is not diminishing the folks concerns.

Councilor Fitzpatrick wants it to go to Planning and Zoning, Park and Recreation has looked at it several times. They would be sending it to a fresh set of eyes. He has heard Ms. Mayers concerns about the baseball fields. Do we send it back to Park and Recreation? It is going to be our decision if the baseball fields are there or not. He does not want to send it back, but would rather send it to Planning and Zoning.

Councilor Gardow said in June they were asked to move this forward. He mentioned that it did not include the neighbors. At the end of June there was a meeting with the neighbors which raised more questions. He wrote to Ms. Bagley with the six questions and he still has not gotten answers to these questions from her or the Parks Board. He asked her about them in August, and saw her in the hall and wrote another letter. He had not gotten a response to his letter and wanted to know if they were investigated. She said they were not going to change anything and they we going to have a park tour. The tour did not happen. They did change the plans as in the letter from Mr. Dobmeier. He would like his questions answered. He will give his letter to Mr. Swetcky tonight. Earlier this evening the meeting talked about processes, letting people know what is going on and who is in charge. Questions have to be answered.

Councilor Cascio recommended to hold off until the next meeting and maybe the questions from Councilor Gardow and Ms. Mayer could be answered. He agrees with the plan but thinks there are issues that have to be addressed.

Councilor Morin asked when Planning and Zoning meets next? He was told it was the next night. He asked if they could have it go the following meeting. There would be opportunity to have questions answered and to let the public know.

Chairperson Czernicki said it certainly was an option.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor would rather see the answers and make a determination as to whether or not they want to refer it. It would have been nice to have been told why his requests were not going through, they did include one. As he reads the letter, while they are not looking for funding, if it is approved they could investigate funding. They could come back and say put it on a referendum and he would not have to say no, something else is more important and have it interpreted as being anti-Millwoods, which is not the case.

Councilor Morin did not believe they would be backed into a corner. He thought they have put this off for five months. If he had asked a question, last week, two months ago, whenever, he would follow up and find out why he wasn't getting an answer. He will respect the will of the Council if they want to put it off for two weeks. He thought they could get caught in a web, if every time someone asks a question, we put it off. At some point we have to move forward. He moved to go forward with this five months ago, he does not want a heated debate about it.

Councilor Flynn says it has been five months. Unless we are going to send this back to the Park and Recreation Advisory Board with specific changes this Council would like to see made, our time would be better served and we

would see a better plan if we forward this. The woman raised issues as to the impact on her property, and whether the changes were appropriate, whether they took into account the concerns of the neighbors. That is Planning and Zoning's particular charge. The time has come to take it to the next step. Look to the people with the planning expertise so those issues could be taken into account while the next draft is being prepared. He does not think it is anywhere near going to referendum on it. They need to refine the proposals and suggests they refer it to planning and zoning and ask them to schedule it for public hearing and the proper notices go out to the abutting property owner so they have the opportunity to appear and express their concerns to Planning and Zoning. He thinks they will accomplish a lot more if they do it.

Councilor Cascio said no one wants to stop the plan but it is not going anywhere because it is going to cost a lot of money. He thinks there is a communication breakdown. It is a new day. We see it in the community, they are becoming more involved, they are doing their homework. He cannot support sending it to planning and zoning tonight. He wants a better comfort level. He thought the question Councilor Gardow asked were asked specifically of an employee who is paid, Kathy Bagley. That seems to be the difficulty we are hearing tonight. If Ms. Bagley cannot answer the questions, communicate.

Councilor Cascio moved "**TO TABLE THE MILLWOODS MASTER PLAN**", seconded by Deputy Mayor O'Connor.

Councilors Cascio, Fitzpatrick, Gardow, Hemmann, Deputy Mayor O'Connor and the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilors Flynn and Morin voted NAY. The motion passed 6-2-0.

Chairperson Czernicki asked the Manager to have a conversation with Ms. Bagley so she could answer Councilor Gardow's questions and to have her make contact with Ms. Mayer, so they could possibly move it on to Planning and Zoning next meeting.

Chairperson Czernicki asked if they do all the notification of the neighbors and Planning and Zoning decides that they are changes to be made in the original plan, will there be notification of the neighbors for each change?

She is aware that it sounds like a lot of paperwork, but they hear that people want to be aware of the changes as they happen so they can have the opportunity to make comment.

BIDS

Councilor Gardow moved "**TO ACCEPT THE BID FOR THE SALE OF TOWN OWNED PROPERTY AT 1000 MAPLE STREET FOR \$63,555**", seconded by Councilor Cascio.

Councilors Cascio, Fitzpatrick, Gardow, Hemmann, Deputy Mayor O'Connor and the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilors Flynn and Morin voted NAY. The motion passed 6-2-0.

Councilor Hemmann moved "**TO ACCEPT THE BID FOR THE SALE OF TOWN OWNED PROPERTY AT 1004 MAPLE STREET FOR \$64,000**", seconded by Councilor Gardow.

Councilors Cascio, Fitzpatrick, Gardow, Hemmann, Deputy Mayor O'Connor and the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilors Flynn and Morin voted NAY. The motion passed 6-2-0.

Councilor Flynn moved "**TO ACCEPT THE BID FOR THE PARK AVENUE/GREENFIELD STORM DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS FOR \$43,532.50**", seconded by Councilor Cascio.

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

Ordinances, resolutions and appointments for introduction

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A MASTER LEASE AGREEMENT, EQUIPMENT SCHEDULE NO. 1, AN ESCROW AGREEMENT AND RELATED INSTRUMENTS, AND

DETERMINING OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.

Minutes

Councilor Flynn moved, "**TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2002**", seconded by Councilor Gardow.

Councilor Hemmann had a few questions, but did not have time to email them.

Chairperson Czernicki said she noticed that most of the statements were just about verbatim. Mr. Cronin's remarks address "the riff raff spoke up", and yet those comments were not assigned to Mr. Sparveri. The Town Clerk responded that he did not use that language. The Mayor said her memory is that he did, she has the video. Councilor Hemmann moved, "**TO TABLE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2002**", seconded by Councilor Gardow.

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

COUNCILOR COMMENTS

Councilor Cascio thanked the Manger for putting the letter notifying the Nott Street residents of the renovation.

It is his understanding that after receiving the Bond for the Library, from the written notification they received this day, they have eighteen months to select a contractor and a plan to do the work. He knows the Library is very active in getting information and she has the experience with renovations. He thinks she should be brought up to speed. He knew she was meeting with the Manager monthly, it was a good sign of communication as we go on with this project. They are happy to have received it. There was a lot of work that went into it.

Chairperson Czernicki said they all received the invitation to tonight interview with the potential candidate for the Superintendent search. She knew that it was changed due to a conflict in schedules.

She thanked Councilors who made the effort to be present last Tuesday evening for the interview with Dr. Kathleen Hallogan. It is good to see your interest.

She asked Manager Swetcky to comment on the September 2002 Financial Report.

Manager Swetcky said the report was given out at the last meeting, he wanted to give them time to review it if they had any questions. The report shows for the first three months we continue to do well. Revenues are up. They should exceed the budget by about \$520,000. This is primarily from State grants, specifically from the ECS grant and from our taxes. The taxes are doing well, prior years taxes are doing well. On the expenditure side, we are holding our own. We still have to get through the winter, it is a big cost area. He expects a slight under expenditure by the end of the year.

One of the concerns was raised in public comments tonight, the Dial-A-Ride program, the elderly bus program, is expected to be \$25,000 over budget. They have had three rather large months of use and expenditure. They are monitoring that and Major Contracts is scheduled to meet also.

Chairperson Czernicki said there is also a letter for the leaf collection, which has already started, even though there are lots of leaves on the trees.

Chairperson Czernicki said the final report is the MDC 2003 Proposed Budget. There is a meeting coming up, with a possibility of public comment at the end of it.

Manager Swetcky said the MDC sent their proposed budget. They have a morning meeting, November 12, this year at 10:00 a.m. where they invite all the Chief Executives and Directors of Finance of all the member municipalities to meet their Board of Finance. There is opportunity to ask questions about the budget and items in it.

Later the Board of Finance transmits the budget to the MDC Commission. There is a public hearing at 5:00 p.m. They act on the budget after the public hearing.

There is an overall budget increase of 3.84%. \$3.3 million over the current year adopted budget. They are proposing to raise water rates that we all pay by 2.76%, they are increasing the tax levy on member towns by 2.46%, the key to that is that not every town gets increased by 2.46%. One town is decreased, the City of Hartford, the rest of the towns increased. The levy assessment is based on the tax collection effort. Unfortunately if you have a good collection rate, you get penalized. Our tax increase is 3.73% or \$66,000. On a calendar basis our fiscal year and the MDC fiscal year do not coincide. Because they do not coincide, our actual increase when you calculate it out is \$99,000. This will be over what we have budgeted this year.

Another item is the MDC capital improvement program does make reference of the \$5 million for the Wethersfield Cove. He will get more information on this project. They may be the funds actually appropriated by the legislature last year for the town. He will find out about it and clarify it at the meeting.

Chairperson Czernicki urged Councilors to convey their thoughts on this budget to our MDC Commissioners know in writing and at the public hearing. Both she and the Manager will be attending the meeting. She asked residents if they had concerns about where we are headed with the MDC to attend the meeting and speak out and let them know how you feel.

Manager Swetcky wanted to make another report to the Council. He wanted to let them know we had hired a Town Planner and he will be starting in December. He was Town Planner in Winsted/Winchester with experience both in planning and economic development. He looks forward to him coming on board.

Councilor Morin asked if his name was a secret. Chairperson Czernicki asked his name. Manager Swetcky said it is Raymond Carpentino. The Mayor asked if he could get a copy of Mr. Nacht's design review so it will be sitting on his desk when he arrives here.

Councilor Cascio said there were two dates for the calendar, for the Shared Services Meeting, November 12, 6:30 p.m. prior to the Board of Education meeting and on December 2, at 6:00 p.m. prior to the Council Meeting.

Chairperson Czernicki had an opportunity to participate in the Silas Deane Middle School Project of Stuff-a-Bus. It was a great project. They use a school bus. The students coordinate a non-perishable food drive with all the schools. The students rode the bus from school to school and others came to Town Hall to unload the bus to help stock the shelves. It was a joy to see an assembly line worked to perfection to get the food off the bus and into the building. She wanted to thank them for taking an interest in helping our Social and Youth Services Department.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Jim Clynch 903 Ridge Road said the presentation by the central Health district proved that 4.4% residents were below the poverty level. This proves the need for a tax abatement for disabled veterans. He would like to see it come off the table. He was surprised to see the gas tanks at the Fire Station at Kelleher Court. This was the first time he drove down there in 27 years, he went three times because he could not believe what he saw. He thinks the residents have a right to be upset. Their dumpster was right in a neighbors yard. The sale of property on the Berlin Turnpike has not had anything done to it. He was impressed with Mr. Goldman and hoped he would have stayed on. But should he have been negotiating with WSAA on this contract when he was an Interim Superintendent. Spoke of the eight residents who fought in court not to have condominiums across from Incarnation Church, Planning and Zoning leadership, still the same ones today, would have had condos there rather than the beautiful homes there are today.

Paul Courchaine 41 Main Street is hopeful to make the MDC meeting. He would like the Manager to express the concerns of some of the residents of Wethersfield that if they are going to take another \$99,000 from us, what are they going to give us with the Wethersfield Cove cleanup. He sees a discrepancy between what the Unions need for the members and with what they are teaching in the schools. On the Millwoods Master Plan, there was at least one posted meeting which he attended. He said all the neighbors were invited to attend and ask questions. He was sure there was another meeting also. That does not justify not getting answers for months from a town employee but perhaps the

employee might have thought how many times do I have to answer the questions for these people. It looks like we are going to delay this project again for one citizen's question. It makes us appear to be afraid to govern without 100 % consensus in the Town of Wethersfield.

Rocco Orsini 95 Broad Street he has some questions on the budget report, he thought they budgeted all that ESC grant money, he thought they knew what they would get from the State. Was he misinformed?

Manager Swetcky said the short answer would be yes. There are three numbers provided by the State last year. We chose the middle number on the ESC grant. The previous year they took the higher number and they did not receive that amount. Mr. Orsini requested it go back to the people.

On the computer bid did Council approve flat screens? Chairperson Czernicki said yes.

When you go into executive session, we never say what it is about. Something public should be a little clearer. Ask the Town Attorney. Mr. Swetcky said the attorney said what to put on the agenda which is what he did. Other towns seem to put more on the agenda, contracts, they list a specific contract. It is secretive. Chairperson Czernicki said it is not meant to be secretive, they are guided by the attorney.

Town Planner, what are we paying him and what is it relative to Mr. Popper's pay? Manager Swetcky said it is \$64,000 and it is less than Mr., Popper's pay which was between \$65,000- \$66,000. On Savage Park there are stumps that have to be removed they were left when the crews took down the tree. There is also another dead tree there to be cleared.

Mr. Nacht spoke about the Silas Deane Middle School, and what are they doing there. We talked to Mr. Drake he said they were going in with no parking, maybe some parking, maybe go with the 18 foot roadway. The trees are down, does Council know what is going on there because he does not.

Manager Swetcky said he did not know if the final plan had been decided. It was his understanding that there obviously will be a driveway for a bus drop off and thought parking was still in there. He will confirm that. There are temporary roadways for the contractors and also a staging area. A lot of what is there now will be cleaned up or changed when the final site work is done.

It seems that when they put down rock, it seems like they won't be digging it up and putting down loam. Councilor Morin said it was sound construction and it is called an anti-tracking pad, to keep all the mud and stuff from getting into the Silas Deane Highway. People asked tonight about Millwoods, is it a park or a parking lot, people came and said what are you doing at Emerson, it is all black top.

On the Millwoods Master Plan, Council you are right with what you are doing. If it goes to Planning and Zoning they are going to rubber stamp it, if we try to undo something or if Council wants to undo something it is very difficult. Get your answers, incomplete staff work, get the tour rescheduled. He believes, like Mr. Cascio, the number one priority is schools. It is a harsh environment out there, we have the Police Station, the Radio system, Silas Deane Middle School and Library, Stillman and now we want 10 million for parks. People might want a rest from spending money.

John Daley, 955 Silas Deane Highway wanted to thank the Fire Department, there was an alarm in his building and they responded quickly. Fortunately it was a false alarm but it was good to know they would be there quickly if they were needed.

Chairperson Czernicki asked Mr. Swetcky to get back to Mr. Garrey about the Kelleher Court backup system, he was not at the early meeting. Physical Services is busy with the leaves but is there a possibility they could look at the Olsen House situation.

Mr. Turner was here for most of the meeting but she would like a clearer understanding as to what is going to be done at Charles Wright. Do they have an explanation of what was going to be done there?

Councilor Cascio said at the Shared Services meeting and in the approved minutes of the seventh, it was said that the

total replacement of the sidewalk on that side, it was going to be double width and they were talking about pricing concrete vs. asphalt. So why is there all of a sudden a misunderstanding? Something is happening again. It is in the minutes, there is drainage, sidewalks, both projects and it will be a width so that a plow, children and strollers can fit on the sidewalk side by side. He hopes that it gets done the right way because a lot of energy has been put into it.

Mr. Swetcky did not know what happened and will take to Mr. Turner and bring it back to Shared Services next week to be sure everyone has the same concept in mind as to what is happening here.

There were two letters left at the Councilor's places. A letter was received from Rick Carbray and also one from Carol Adil concerning the last several meetings in which personal attacks were allowed to take place.

Adjournment

Councilor Flynn motioned "**TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**", at 11:05 p.m., seconded by Councilor Fitzpatrick.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 7-0-0. Deputy Mayor O'Connor had left the meeting at 10:30 p.m.