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SPECIAL MEETING DECEMBER 16, 2002

The Wethersfield Town Council held a special meeting on December 16, 2002 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Manager's Conference Room of the Town Hall.

Present: Councilors Cascio, Fitzpatrick, Flynn, Gardow, Hemmann, Morin, Deputy Mayor O'Connor and Chairperson Czernicki. Absent: Councilor Sassano.

Also present: Police Building Committee members Joseph Coombs, Chairperson, Louis DelMastro, Raymond Grasso, John O'Brien, Jr., Timothy Tuell, Tony Martino, Town Engineer Mike Turner, Town Attorney Duncan Forsyth, Police Chief John Karangekis, Lt. James Cetran, Joseph Swetcky, Jr., Interim Town Manager, and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

Chairperson Czernicki asked Town Manager Swetcky and Town Engineer Mike Turner and Joseph Coombs, Police Building Chairperson to give an overview of where we are with the facility and how close we are to finishing.

Town Attorney Forsyth said they would not have to go into executive session as long as they did not speak of pending litigation.

Joseph Coombs had not realized Council had not been in the building since the very beginning of the process and apologized for not having the Council view the facility more recently. It had more to do with interrupting the work flow and insurance issues for injuries. The Mayor did stop by when she saw his car there and was able to walk through the facility today. He extended an invitation for the coming Saturday, if it was convenient for Councilors.

The facility is 98 per cent complete. Most major trades have finished work. There are four on the revised punch list, four pages for everything outstanding. Some of the listed items are additional electrical work, Motorola and the security vendor for the building have to work in harmony to interconnect their work; the cleaning contractor did not show up as planned today but will be there this coming Wednesday. He is not satisfied with the heating and ventilating system and will not accept it as is. It is working but he is having them come back to adjust it to his satisfaction. The generator is on auto standby and is working.

Chairperson Czernicki asked when the building will be ready to be opened.

Mr. Coombs said the public could walk through the 28th. The outstanding painting is only touch up, will take two to three days for the interior trades, drywall needs to be painted.

Councilor Fitzpatrick asked where the town stood in relation to the budget? Town Manager Joseph Swetcky said we were \$56,000 over our construction budget.

Councilor Gardow asked if there was a Certificate of Occupancy.

Mr. Coombs said there is a temporary one which allows use of the building. The Police facility will have lock up and a radio system being worked on. They could have administrative people in there. If it were a school or office building, it would be ready to use.

Councilor Gardow asked how long they have had the Certificate of Occupancy. Mr. Coombs said it has been since Thanksgiving.

Councilor Gardow asked what needs to be done to get completed Certificate of Occupancy. Mr. Coombs said the heating system adjustments, painting, small electrical fixtures; light poles need to be straightened; set of doors; block

cylinders for keys; magnetic locks need to be addressed by Motorola and the security company etc. The plumbing is 100% finished.

Councilor Cascio asked if anything is lacking in the building. Mr. Coombs said change orders, particularly based on need of Police, things were architecturally adjusted as equipment comes on the job, they need more light fixtures.

Councilor Cascio asked if there is enough furniture and if we are where we need to be with state of the art equipment. Mr. Coombs said there is partially new furniture, it is expensive, some are budget items and some come out of the Chiefs budget.

Councilor Cascio asked if they are taking some of the furniture from here. If the prisoners cannot go there what are the costs for half of the building being used in both places. Mr. Coombs said the budget for the new police facility is not being used totally. Mr. Cascio asked if anything had been worked out yet concerning the building use. Town Manager Swetcky said they have not decided yet if they would partially occupy the facility.

Chairperson Czernicki asked if we still had a General Manager on duty? Mr. Coombs said, no, he is on call. He [Mr. Coombs] is acknowledging that someone is here to do what has to be done.

Chairperson Czernicki asked how the remaining 2 % of the work would be completed. Mr. Coombs said they have been doing work, just not expeditiously. we have given them a warning.

Town Attorney Forsyth said he would discuss it in executive session.

Councilor Fitzpatrick asked what went wrong with the furniture budget that we were unable to buy the furniture. Was the architect off? Was it just a number plugged in or was it an absolute number? Why did we get desks and no chairs?

Town Manager Swetcky said the Budget for the project was done in 1995. The cost estimate was on the low side. There was 1.3 million we had to purchase the land, it came in over the amount; there was soil removal of contaminated site, the size of the building is actually 26,000 square feet. He suggested to avoid it in the future they should use an independent cost estimator, they come in and give separate cost estimates.

Councilor Fitzpatrick said if we go back to the budget there was \$400,000 for furniture. Town Manager Swetcky said that half way through the project it had to be cut. Go back to the original budget and compare it to where we are now. It was a broad category in 1999, not 7 million for construction. It was not broken out as it was in Silas Deane Middle School. We had three cost estimates, Friar, R2D and Newfield. Timing for the Police Station was at a time when everyone else was building schools. Silas Deane Middle School bid out when contractors were looking for work.

Councilor Fitzpatrick said the Committee introduced the Contractor and Architect together. Why did the Committee override town staff when they voiced opposition to it? Mr. Coombs said he was unaware of opposition from town staff. The design team and construction manager were able to join up with whomever they wanted to. It has worked well for us, it was a good partnership. He could not say it worked against us.

Councilor Fitzpatrick said it was a new concept. Town Staff said in November they were against it. Mr. Coombs said he does not remember the former Town Manager expressing their concerns. Councilor Fitzpatrick said looking down the road maybe they should go to Council as well as to the Building Committee. Mr. Coombs thought the dialogue had been very good, with the Building Committee and the Town Engineer.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor said he did not think they were communicating well with staff, if they voiced opposition before the project started. Why did you go forward with it? \$100,000 over budget, it has not worked out too well, did not work out well for Wethersfield, just why was the Building Committee put there? Interim Town Manager Swetcky, as the Finance Director, said he brought it to the former Town Managers attention.

Mike Turner, Town Engineer said they shared their concerns with the building committee. The Department of Public Works had routinely done it this way. It had been an established way of doing it. He does not think that is why we are not in the building yet.

Deputy Mayor O'Connor wanted to know about the electronic gate problem, he heard to put it in now would require the tearing up of the driveway.

Mike Turner, Town Engineer said it was taken out of the bid before they went out.

Chief Karangekis said it was before the bonding that it was removed.

Councilor Cascio moved "**TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS STRATEGY AND NEGOTIATIONS REGARDING THE POLICE FACILITY**", seconded by Councilor Fitzpatrick.

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

No motions were made and no votes were taken during executive session.

At 7:10 p.m. Councilor Cascio moved "**TO GO OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION**", seconded by Councilor Fitzpatrick.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:15 p.m. Councilor Cascio moved "**TO ADJOURN THE SPECIAL MEETING**", seconded by Councilor Fitzpatrick.

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

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk