

**REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 20, 2014**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Monday, October 20, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield.

Present: Councilors Hemmann, Hurley, Kotkin, Manousos, Martino, Rell, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Barry, and Chairperson Montinieri.

Also present: Kathy Bagley, Director of Parks & Recreation and Social & Youth Services, Michael Turner, Town Engineer, Marlene Desjardins, Tax Collector, Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk.

Deputy Mayor Barry led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Montinieri asked if anyone wished to speak on the public hearing item:
Resolution approving an agreement between the Town of Wethersfield and the Department of Homeland Security for financial assistance

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Rd., urged the town to turn down financial assistance to start a new trend; cut the cord and stop taking money because it's money that has to be borrowed.

After no additional public comment, Mayor Montinieri declared the hearing closed.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Martin Malicki, 79 Southwell Rd. commented against resurfacing the Webb Tennis Courts and believes that the money would better be spent on the Emerson Williams Gym Floor. It is tile overlay on concrete and the mastic that holds it together contains asbestos. Someone falling on this type of floor is at risk for a more severe injury in comparison to the other gym floors in town. The gym is used by approximately 150 kids each day and the community also uses this area at night and on the weekends. He feels replacing the gym floor will have a bigger impact on the community. He suggests an interlocking floor system which can be placed over the current floor so not to disturb the asbestos. A temporary fix would be better than nothing. This should become a Town Council priority.

Tracy Bonvisuto, 30 Orchard Hill Drive, supports the Webb tennis courts. In 2012 her son sent pictures of the deteriorating Webb tennis court to the CEO of the US Tennis Association asking him if their organization can help fix our courts. A short time later he received a response from the USTA explaining how they can help. They delivered the information to Kathy Bagley's

office. Here we are with an \$18,000 grant from the USTA and a winner of our bid R&S Sports. Ms. Bonvisuto asked the Council to please pass the proposal for the Webb tennis courts.

David Caruk, 139 Broad St. commented schools are very important to communities. It's a shame when schools are going into disrepair and nothing is being done despite requests by the public. Mr. Caruk wished Councilor Hurley good luck with the election. He commented that the new restaurant in town called Edo Ichi is really good and they give you a good amount of food with good prices. He believes in and supports that local business.

Lora Klementon, 31 Fairmont St., commented on the soccer fields in town are in poor shape. She asked the Council to walk along the fields of Charles Wright, Silas Deane and Millwoods to see if you agree that we as a town can do better for our kids. Over the years, the quality of these fields, have diminished to where we are unable to use the field at Silas Deane. It was deemed by the town to be unsafe. This impacts the middle school PE program, the high school soccer teams and our travel teams. This field needs our immediate attention to be returned to become a quality field that is properly maintained. She stated that their soccer club is willing to contribute up to \$30,000 for irrigation on Deane field contingent on a plan from the town that would spell out a long-term plan for continual upkeep. She stated that they look forward to a conversation with the town to see how we can be part of the solution.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Rd., asked who is responsible for taking away the political signs that are on the snow shelves because they cheapen the town tremendously and hopes that someone takes action. He is against the Webb tennis courts as it is not a good investment. He suggested cleaning it out and planting trees or flowers there. They never finished renovating the Webb school and pointed out the leaking windows on the building and suggested replacing those windows instead. He added that the Board of Education is not spending their money on fixing the schools. They are spending it elsewhere. The Town Council needs to stop giving money away and then raising our taxes.

Linda Silven, 16 Straddle Hill, commented in favor of the tennis courts. She stated that the courts have been a source of pleasure for her and her children for many years and that it is a place where children can ride their bikes after school or on the weekends and play tennis. She stated that it is an inexpensive sport and a rather long season to play. It is also another form of exercise for the kids and would be an asset to the Town. She feels that we should make a better impression within Town and fix the disrepair of these courts and urges the Council to vote in favor of the tennis courts. She also read a few comments from her son in support of the tennis court repair.

Eileen Candels, 106 Windmill Hill, commented in support of the Webb tennis courts. They should be refurbished; they are an eye sore; a bad reflection of the character of the Town. The tennis courts provide a free resource that is accessible and convenient in the community where people could walk from the Emerson Williams and Webb area. Ms. Candels urged the Council to support the Webb courts.

Mr. Miguel Garcia, Parks & Recreation Tennis Instruction in the Town of Wethersfield, commented in support of the Webb tennis courts. Tennis is one of the fastest growing sports today; kids are starting younger than ever; and that there is a court shortage here in Wethersfield. There is a growing need to support kid's tennis in Wethersfield. He explained that while teaching at Millwoods this past summer, the courts were always busy and he had to actually kick some other players off and they couldn't go to the high school or to Webb. He said that the courts at Webb would have the new modified design that can be set up for younger children. Mr. Garcia reviewed some of the statistics of children playing tennis in surrounding towns and Wethersfield. He urged the council to support the repair of the Webb tennis courts.

Mike Petrella, 306 Brimfield Rd, commented that he keeps hearing a lot of comments around town regarding the beautification of Wethersfield and the tennis situation he is hearing comments from other parents that are coming in from other towns. He stated that as a soccer coach for 15 years and travelling to other towns in other fields, they do not have the reputation that Wethersfield has. He stated that he is also on the Wethersfield Soccer Board and constantly gets calls from different coaches to understand why other coaches are making our fields look so bad. and would ask with the money that we have and that's available that we do spend money to clean up the tennis and the fields because if we want to have this town to continue to grow and strive we need to make sure that we are Wethersfield, we should be Wethersfield and live to our reputation because right now we are falling behind.

Lee Sekas, 117 Wells Rd., commented that all these things are important that he is hearing and asked what the priority is in this town. He stated he thinks sports has definitely replaced academics throughout this country and feels that academics are more important. He stated that priorities are priorities. He stated that the town should try to live within our means and not try to have everything. He stated that he believes that our tax dollars have other priorities.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Martino reported that the Economic Development Commission has met and they are working on the 25th Annual Salute to Business on December 11 which will be held at the Wethersfield Country Club. Staff is currently working on projects for the 2015 Steap Submission which is due sometime in November. They will have their list together and ready for review by the committee at EDIC's next meeting. We've heard from the Shopkeepers that they would like to see Holiday on Main extended in both directions on Main Street when time comes. He stated that under EDIC we have had two ribbon cuttings. One at the Edo Ichi Sushi and Hibachi Steak House on the Silas Deane and another one at Dance 10 where they expanded and took over the whole building so our store fronts are getting filled up and that's great.

Councilor Martino reported that there was a meeting of the Wethersfield Citizens with Disabilities Advisory Commission. He stated that the high school Jets team came to the meeting to show the projects that they are working on for the current year. These students have won

National Honors, took first place the past two years and this year they are working on more and they have got to the point now where they are up to 40 students to the program which says a lot. He stated that we have a lot of smart kids going into that program and the commission itself has a lot of vacancies to be filled so if anyone is interested in that commission if they could let Dolores know or we can see about getting them added to it.

Councilor Martino reported that he met with the Senior Citizens Advisory Commission and stated that this past Sunday they had a bus trip up to the Log Cabin in Holyoke Mass. They left at 10:00 in the morning and returned at 5:00 p.m. On October 23rd there will be a senior fair at Incarnation Church. On October 31st, the seniors will be having their Halloween party. The seniors will be wearing their costumes and interfacing with the children and the pre-K program is there. He stated that Social Services will start accepting applications for energy assistance on November 3rd so seniors that are interested in that should call Social Services to set up an appointment.

Councilor Kotkin reported that the Insurance Committee met last week and stated that on the health care, we are doing o:k this year. He explained that this time the last several years, we were well below budget which allowed us to reduce the amount that we allocated towards health care. So, there is still 9 months to go but our agent of record warned us that if we kept it this rate, we would be looking at a high single digit increase next year and this is like 10-12% of our budget, so hopefully that reverses but there's a couple of warning signs up.

Deputy Mayor Barry reported that he attended the Building Committee last Tuesday and construction continues on. He stated that the gym floor should have arrived by now so that will be going in. Essentially, the new additions are progressing on as scheduled. We do have a few change orders and some value engineering later in the agenda. He reported that essentially everything is progressing well. There are a lot of moving parts on that project so every week things pop up but it's definitely a process and it's ongoing so nothing else going on with that right now that he knows.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Hurley commented that on the issue of Capital Improvements, a few years ago we had some forums on it and thinks it might have been Donna and Jeff that set up some forums on Capital Improvements and we had a few sessions to bring residents in to see what they wanted done in the town and that might not be a bad idea to kind of bring back. Especially the whole capital improvements thing is kind of done in the back room and it doesn't seem like there's a lot of public input into the Capital Improvements which goes to sports and many other things in town, so we probably should have a forum or something to give people the opportunity to come forward to say what they would like to see done.

Councilor Roberts gave a public acknowledgment to the work done by one of the town employees, Lisa Gallipo who is the Senior Center Director who has only been around less than a

year and she has really enlivened the Senior Center. She stated that there was an open house last week, and Tony and I attended and there was a lot of activity, lot of new activities for folks to attend whether it was exercise, yoga, belly dancing, dancing to Broadway tunes. There's a singing group there. It was the first time they had a trip in a long time last weekend and she has really energized the place. Councilor Roberts stated that their computer workshop was open and any seniors that are watching they have great computer classes and one of the nice things they did, they had three kids there from the high school who were explaining the latest in technology to the rest of us and they were very good and very patient and so it was a great intergenerational day because the kids at the high school were interacting with a lot of seniors and a lot of seniors learned a lot about the latest gadgets and how to solve problems with their iPhones and Ipads. She has really enlivened the place and wanted to give her some recognition.

Councilor Hemmann stated that they received some information from their sister city of Nagayo in Nagasaki Japan. Mayor Hemmann then read a short letter from the Planning Division of the Town Hall. The letter spoke of vegetable seeds that they received from Comstock Ferre and the book The Witch of Blackbird Pond that they received from the Wethersfield Library. The letter also stated that they are planning on having a Wethersfield Exhibition at their Town Hall Lobby in November. The letter thanked the town for the friendship that they have shown them.

Mayor Montinieri commented on the success of the Annual ~~Keene~~ Keane Foundation Cove Carnival last weekend. He commented on all the hours that the Foundation spends to make that event successful for the community. He stated that he always sees Judy ~~Keene~~ Keane at the event working tirelessly who has given to our town and probably supported millions of dollars worth of funding privately not only for the foundation but school events, our community center and he thanked her and her entire foundation again for their effort.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Bridges reported that Proact, which was the company that was doing the discount drug program finished the educational materials and the draft of the prescription card. They will mail a card to every town resident. So you will get those in the next couple of weeks with instructions on how to use it. There will be some press releases produced so people can get the information out into the public through the website, the newspapers. So the next 3 to 4 weeks you will see that initiate. There will be a toll free number on the back of the card on how to use it. People can call Proact rather than the town because we would just refer them to the company. So, in the next few weeks every town resident will get a card in the mail. There will be some here at the town hall in case you lose one or you have a family member who needs another one. They are free and they will be here at the town hall and we will probably have them at some other places.

Mr. Bridges reported that there was an issue with the Silas Deane middle school. There was an issue with the areas that were void of grass. We had some debris from some fill in those areas. We are going to dig those out. Physical Services has been working with the contractor. They will come in and dig those areas out, bring in some clean fill and sod it and we'll be ready for

spring. If the council wants to go forward with a rehab project, we can do that for next fall. We can price it out and design it but for right now it's anticipated that we will just dig those areas out and sod it for now and it will be ready for spring.

Councilor Hurley commented that Mikey's Place 5K run happened this weekend also and it was a great event. A lot of people ran and that also goes along with the whole Capital Improvement thing. They keep that playground in nice shape down there. They do that and they do a golf tournament during the year to keep that playground in great shape for the whole town.

Councilor Manousos asked about the ~~Dean~~ Deane middle school field, for the benefit of the people that are here and talking about that field that may be interested in other projects and asked how much of that field actually needs to be replaced. The debris included shards of glass and things that were dangerous and that's why it was shut down and doesn't think people really understood that. How much of that is really going to be replaced. Mr. Bridges responded mostly around the goals and then the middle of the field where there is no grass. Councilor Manousos commented when it is going to be sod it's going to actually be real sod, not just an over seed. Mr. Bridges responded it's going to be sod. Councilor Manousos commented that one resident and board member had referred to the soccer club being willing to donate up to \$30,000 towards irrigation or improvements, what would be the commitment or is that something we would need to work out to maintaining the field going forward. I think that's one of the concerns that they have. Mr. Bridges responded sure and one of the hurdles we struggle with as a town now is that the State has changed the laws on the herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers and recreation fields, particularly ones directly adjacent to schools. So we can't go out there and do herbicides on those fields for weed control and none of our fields are irrigated or actually very few are irrigated. We fixed DiCicco's field with part of the renovation, but none of the other fields are irrigated and they are all overused. They are substantially utilized. Most of our system was developed at a time when sports had one season. Now sports have three seasons and they are all maxed out. Mr. Bridges responded that he thinks we need to put some money in the fields and thinks there should be some money given to those. Councilor Manousos commented that State law prohibits the application of pesticides but how about fertilizers. Mr. Bridges responded that we can do fertilizer but without irrigation it's tough to make that work. Councilor Manousos commented so irrigation is done and the program is put in place it would include fertilizing on a regular basis and we could do that on all the fields. Mr. Bridges responded yes. We fertilize now but without irrigation and the herbicides, it's tough to get the grass to grow. Councilor Manousos stated that he had a conversation with the Athletic Director, Mike Maltesse that part of the reasons why the fields are in such disrepair is because of the overuse and he thinks going back to the club's commitment to contributing to the fields one other reasons why a few years ago there was a contribution of \$33,000 towards the lights was in anticipation of being able use those more to relieve the stress on the playing fields and reduce the maintenance cost on that. So that's something I'm not sure, I think is going to go through Kathy's office or Marty on how we work that out, but that's something that I think we need to keep on the radar as well. Mr. Bridges asked keep what on the radar. Councilor Manousos responded more use on Cottone Field especially at night or in the afternoons when we can get more usage on it and relieve those grass

fields unless we have a plan to start turfing other fields, we are going to need to do our best that those fields are in the best condition we can. Mr. Bridges responded sure.

TOWN CLERK

Dolores Sassano reported that she received 18 emails over the weekend regarding the Webb tennis courts. Ms. Sassano read the letters received. They will be included as part of the minutes record. The emails were from Staci Lynch, Joe Demonte, Elaine and David Paradise, Nasser Zaer, Tougas Family, Thomas Dolan, Brad Strong, Ana and Kiet Huynh, Andrew Salak, Kathryn Lipka, Don Bonvisuto, Steve Randall, Camille Mogelnicki, Peter Nower, Caroline Nower, Duke Nower, Sophia Nower, Margot & Larry Orkins, Tom Landers, David Paul.

COUNCIL ACTION

Deputy Mayor Barry moved **“TO APPOINT TO THE DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE, FLADORIK HIMA, 136 BUNCE RD. FROM 10-20-14 TO 1-1-17, LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS, PETER DENEGRE, 527 MAIN ST. FROM 10-20-14 TO 6-30-16 AND TO THE WETHERSFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REAPPOINTMENT OF JAMES HULBERT, 25 MOUNTAN LAUREL DRIVE, FROM 10-20-14 TO 6-30-16,”** seconded by Councilor Roberts.

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

Councilor Martino moved **“TO APPROVE THE AGREEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE”**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Mr. Bridges asked Mr. Turner to explain the motion.

Mr. Turner explained that Homeland Security Program is a program that came about in 2010 and basically was a vehicle to funnel federal funds into the region for essentially a lot of equipment and training that has been done and since 2010, the Town of Wethersfield has signed an agreement between DEMHS, the Town and CRCOG to basically funnel any money that would have been directly received by the town into CRCOG and have CRCOG and the panel which is the Capital Region Emergency Planning Commission, which we are a member of, administer and basically determine the best location to spend that money. So what we are asking to do is continue even though federal funds are slowing down a little bit we are asking to continue on with that same path and again we have done this every year since 2010.

Former Mayor Hemmann commented that she thinks that this is a really good program and we have been able to take advantage of training opportunities and have participated not only in a drill here in the operations center but in Hartford and mutually beneficial because the scenario

was such that it was a river based tragedy or incident that involved multiple communities and how you would deal with that with other simultaneous things happening on highways and around other surrounding communities. It really taps into different resources and so I think it's a very good way to show regional cooperation and we have learned to work more cooperatively and in conjunction with our regional neighbors and I think it really is a good program.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilor Martino moved to **“TO ACCEPT THE BID FROM R.S. SITE AND SPORTS, LLC FOR \$131,861.30 FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE TENNIS COURTS AT WEBB ELEMENTARY SCHOOL”**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Mr. Bridges explained that this was tabled at the last meeting with the request for additional information on the height of the fencing, the costs of the renovation of the basketball courts at Emerson Williams and Charles Wright which Mr. Turner put together in a memo and would be about \$40,000 each. There is some talk about the fencing. Mr. Bridges asked Mr. Turner to talk about the fencing.

Mr. Turner explained that they looked into the requirements of what little league requires for protective fencing and essentially they set a 60-foot threshold from the edge of the ball field is what they consider the safe zone that there really should be nothing in there and beyond that what would be protected. The closest corner of the tennis courts is about 90 feet away from home plate and the fence that we are proposing is 10-feet high. In talking with Kathy, what it would seem to be is that obviously a 10-foot high fence would protect any of the players on the tennis courts from a line-drive type foul ball but it wouldn't protect anything that would be a high pop foul ball and whether the fence was 15 feet or 20 feet in all likelihood that fence wouldn't protect it. We did some cost estimates to raise the fence. The next normal level is 12-foot, then 16-foot. The thing that works against in raising that fence on the west side of the court is that that's also where AT&T has their service connection box and a lot of underground conduits and what have you. He stated that with obviously a taller fence you need much sturdier supports to be engineered, deeper footings, taller and larger poles and different type of fabric so it is something that would have to be specially made.

Former Mayor Hemmann commented that she thinks that they have had some good discussion about the topic and thinks the important piece about the discussion is being able to look at potential alternatives that could help save the town money. Just because we have always done something the same way shouldn't preclude us in looking at other ways to provide a desired service and have that discussion and on the same topic with what Councilor Hurley talked about in regards to Capital Improvements, I think that is a good suggestion and really does lead into this kind of a project with having the public come out and it's been very helpful having the public come out and it's been very helpful to have the public here tonight to listen to their

feedback, but I think it's helpful to look into alternatives because *public* private partnerships we have experienced in the past and they have been successful.

Councilor Martino commented that he has listened to everyone's comments tonight and on capital projects especially Park and Recreation ones. Every year the various departments submit to the Capitol Improvement Committee their list of what they would like to see accomplished and their list is far greater in cost than money that becomes available and for Park and Recreation, their list is first reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Board and they prioritize what they want to do first and the year that this came up, the tennis court was their first request and I think we have to go on the advice of the group that really knows the sports needs of the town, the Park and Recreation Board, and their advice to give them what they want and their priority and that's what came forth to the Capital Improvement Committee who looks at all the requests and takes them based on the recommendations from the departments and other commissions so I will be voting in favor of these tennis courts.

Councilor Kotkin commented that he went through the reasons for and against doing these courts and there are seven points that he wants to make. First of all this project has been properly vetted through the Capitol Improvements Committee and was included in our 2013-2014 capital budget by the council. It was included by a 7-2 vote. These are the only tennis courts in the west side of town. Kids without cars who live in the neighborhoods of Goff Rd., Willow St., Cedar St., and Ridge Rd. will need to ride their bikes or walk to Millwoods or the High School when those courts become available to play tennis if these courts are not brought on line or they are going to have to depend on somebody with a car. The town is short tennis courts with these two off line and the six at the high school for at least the next two years. We only have four at Millwoods and two at Stillman and the Millwoods courts had waiting lines for much of the summer. 14% of the costs of this renovation would be picked up through USTA private grants. Kathy and her staff have done a very good job working to get that grant money and I don't want to give it up. These courts are more costly than the original estimate but they also are a better quality with 20-year warranties and we have seen courts deteriorate far faster than that in town. In the nine years that I have been on the Town Council we have worked in a bi-partisan manner to enhance recreational opportunities in town. We installed lights at the high school football field, added a skate park, a dog park, a lighted little league field and have agreed to replace antiquated docks at the cove. We have subsidized playscape construction. We have included a new gym at the high school, we have never decided to eliminate recreational facilities in town and I don't think we should start now. We still need to spend money at Webb regardless. The broken fencing, unplayable courts and tree stumps there represent one of the most unsightly properties in Wethersfield and we need to address it.

Councilor Hurley stated that the estimates that we have been receiving on several projects, this being one of them, \$90,000 and then it comes in at \$140,000, and now I think it's down to \$131,000, that he would just like to maybe see if we can get some better estimating done around these things and then we won't have as much confusion when it does come down to a vote.

Councilor Manousos stated that by the public comment tonight and everyone who has come out, it's obvious that there are a lot of worthy projects in town that are competing for dollars so that's our challenge as a council in determining how we take taxpayer money and fund certain projects. That's why to me it's so important that we fully explore other options some of which have come up tonight and sometimes we need to change our plans even though we are going down a path. We have changed CIP recommendations in the past so this would be no different if this is what the council decides especially when it is necessary, when necessary when there is viable alternatives. The option that has been presented and I think a lot of the public comments may have been different if they understood that there was a proposal from Pine Acres in front of us or presented tonight through a letter that the Pine Acres courts were a viable option. In fact, a lot of people here are members of Pine Acres or on the board so the board members probably new but the ones that didn't and some that I had spoken to prior to tonight didn't even realize that. So, when that comes before us I think we have to kind of vet that and I don't think we fully did to Councilor Kotkin's remarks before we actually spend taxpayer money on this. I'm sure Miguel Garcia if he is still here, so if he knew that eight courts were going to be available instead of two, I am sure he would come tell us that it would serve more kids, we would have more courts and it would serve a short-term problem. Then what we could do is wait until these tennis courts at the high school are done and then we could really gauge what the demand is for them and then if we see there is a demand, then there is no reason why we shouldn't support those tennis courts at Webb or elsewhere including Millwoods like it has been brought up. For Michael Garcia's benefit too, the USTA grant, my understanding is that we won't necessarily lose it, it could be repurposed to other tennis courts and that's what I've been told so unless I see something differently, I don't think we'll lose that. I just feel like we are blindly spending without looking at viable alternatives. If the letter that came from Tom Landers and Dave Paul referred to a Council member that met with them and that happened to be me. If that didn't happen, we wouldn't even be talking about possible alternatives for spending taxpayer money. Pine Acres Board approved working with the town yet we are prepared to vote without seeing whether that's a viable alternative. The Newington Tennis Center is certainly an option. We haven't talked to them. Again, this would be a short-term solution until we can find out whether the high school courts when they become on-line will meet the current demand.

Deputy Mayor Barry commented that for all the reasons stated by Jeff and certainly the folks that have spoken, I am firmly in support of the tennis courts at Webb. That said, that doesn't mean that I am not in favor of the soccer fields. Certainly, the field at Dean is not just for soccer, it is the school's gym and that's where they have their gym so it's an important project, so that's a project that I also support and look forward to working with folks on trying to resolve. I do think that's important as well. With regard to the tennis courts, it is a facility that can be used by all ages as everyone has talked about tonight. I support recreational fields and with regard to the safety issues as I said in the last meeting, we can't live in a world where we can make every recreational facility completely safe. We have to invest in recreation in town and I think it's well worth it and I support this project.

Councilor Rell stated that he agrees with many of the people and Jeff as well and they say that

the courts are an eye sore and that Well's Road is a major thoroughfare through our town and it is a black eye on the community to have those courts seen by people who are driving up and down Wells Rd. Councilor Rell commented that he does like the proposal or the alternative that Stathis had mentioned. At least from this side of the isle looking at an alternative to just simply spending \$131,000 on new courts. Stathis had reached out to a group here in our town that provide a service. They have 8 courts at Pine Acres and while ultimately I believe I will support the renovation to the Webb courts, I do commend Stathis for reaching out and looking for at least an alternative rather than just simply spending more money.

Councilor Roberts stated that for her the issue is, this has been on the radar screen for a while and the staff has recommended that the process has been vetted through the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, it's gone through the CIP process, we have a lot of citizen participation on these committees and if I was a member of these committees and spent hours going over these proposals and come up with a viable plan and basically follow the process and then it's get's here, at the last minutes to have it overturned I would be feeling why bother to even do anything in Wethersfield. Councilor Roberts stated that alternatives are great but when there is a process and it's been going on, I would say any CIP project, and Tony you can correct me, is probably on the radar screen at least 5 years before it percolates up this high so we are talking a long period of time when suggestions could have been made or other things, but it is here now, we have an opportunity. It is an eye sore and when I come into town on Wells Rd., you look over at this clump of what used to be trees and now they are tree stumps, rusty fence, the whole thing is a mess and I think it's time to move on. I understand that the soccer field is a problem at Dean Middle School but this I think takes priority right now and the town, according to the Manager sounds like we have a plan to address that issue so I would support this proposal.

Councilor Kotkin commented that as one of the speakers tonight mentioned those courts could be available March through November if you have a reasonably sunny, warm day because you don't have tree overhanging that the courts can warm up, you can play on them. You can play at the High School in March and you can play in November on sunny days. Councilor Kotkin stated that he also played at Pine Acres for 18 summers, two or three times a week but once you got past Labor Day, once the courts get wet, there's a lot of trees around them and as the angle of the sun gets lower, it's tough for those courts to dry out. They are phenomenal courts. The clay and har-true are excellent courts but they don't provide that 8-month potential that the hard courts provide. The baselines on the south side of the courts once you get past Labor Day, its tougher for them to dry out because it's Pine Acres, there's a lot of Pine trees. It's a beautiful spot but it doesn't provide you with the 8-month use that the hard courts around town provide you with.

Councilor Manousos commented that the reality is that most tennis players go indoors in the winter and they are not going to be looking for that sunny day in December to be playing and if we start the project now whether it's done or not it's still going to require dismantling and removal of what's there. By doing this in a step-by-step process we are not really harming anything because it's not going to start again until the spring time so that would give it time to at least vet these other options and let people decide where they would want to play.

Mayor Montinieri thanked the public that came out to speak on the topic and stated that it is always helpful for them when they are making decisions. He stated that all the elected officials try to make decisions with the public's interest in mind and as evidenced by tonight although it was pretty dominantly supportive publicly with respect to tennis courts, there is also competing interest that we all know. He stated that he sat in on several of the CIP meetings over the years and watched that group in action and they represent a very good cross section of our residents who understand the interest of all the sports that compete in our community. Soccer, for example, is extremely popular in Wethersfield. It's got a wonderful reputation and we have been working over the last 10 years to improve our fields and to address some of the concerns that have surfaced on those fields and will continue to do that. Mayor Montinieri stated that one of the things that he thinks is very important for him as one councilor who has sat on the council for almost 10 years, is the CIP process in his mind if we are to properly respect it and watch it in action, as evidenced again by some of the commentary this evening, our community here tonight is representing multiple interests. CIP listens to multiple interests when it makes those choices and so the process of arriving at a project that surfaces to the top is something that he really is aware of and want to put a lot of respect to the fact that that kind of thoughtful analysis, feedback from the community that participates, to Donna and Mike Hurley's point about the forum, we know from talking with our residents and all of us that are involved with sports throughout town, talk to our residents regularly and thinks it is very prudent for us to offer communication to residents to come out and look at our CIP list. Mayor Montinieri stated that he believes our CIP list has over 100 projects on it in various levels of priority and so this one has been, as Gerry said, surfacing for quite some time and we have finally got our arms around it, made a commitment and we voted on it as a council and the budget process this past spring to support it. He stated that it's in his opinion very important to get that one done and off the list now that it is there. It does not mean that we do not hear or understand the concerns about soccer fields, basketball courts, floors over at Emerson Williams. All of the projects are on our screen and are being discussed regular need. So, we might have maybe \$1.2 million in capital improvement project money awarded each year and there's probably \$20 million in projects that are sitting there. Mayor Montinieri stated that the end of the day, he obviously wants to support this project getting done. He supported it during the budget process during the spring as did most of our councilors and is sure that we'll support it this evening and hopefully get to it and get it done and Mike can get the contract started so we can get this one back in play for the spring. He stated that he thinks the demand is much greater than simply accommodating the tennis courts that are off-line over at the high school and while he understands the thought process of looking at an alternative from a private facility, he believes it came up before a couple of years ago and didn't receive wide support primarily because whatever proposal might surface might require some funding to a private facility from the town funds which is not a capital source of dollars which would be a real concern getting that approved so doesn't know that that would have that much viability although he appreciate the gesture.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted. The motion passed 7-2-0. (Councilors Martino, Kotkin, Roberts, Rell, Hurley and Deputy Mayor Barry and Mayor Montinieri vote

AYE. Councilors Hemmann and Manousos voted NO).

Councilor Roberts acknowledged and thanked the family and the children who were present in the chamber for their work and effort in initiating the project and for the concern over the tennis courts.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Martino moved **“TO APPROVE AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD AND THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION FOR THE USE OF A BOAT FOR THE HARBOR MASTER CONDITIONED ON THE FINAL ACCEPTANCE OF AN AGREEMENT BY THE TOWN ATTORNEY”**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Barry.

Mr. Bridges explained that the boat the we have had the harbormaster using was originally the fire departments boat 40 years ago and after 40 years of use by our department we loaned it to other towns, it came back to us and about 10 years ago we had the harbormaster use it for their function. It has outlived its useful life. The motor is shot and it did sink and it's not cove worthy at this point and rather than buy another boat, the MDC has gracefully offered to loan us one subject to their needs coming first, of course. So there is a proposed agreement in the packet. We are still working out the details with the lawyers but the general framework is there. Our costs, we'll have to insure it and we'll buy fuel and maintenance and so forth like we did with the other boat but we won't have to buy another one.

Councilor Martino asked if the \$63.00 for insurance, wouldn't the old boat have been covered by our insurance policy and with this one, just fall over in place of it if the other one is being disposed of. Mr. Bridges responded perhaps. This one is newer so it's probably a higher value boat. Councilor Martino asked with a 20-year old boat with a 2007 motor on it, our repair cost per year should be dramatically reduced on repair costs. Mr. Bridges responded that he would anticipate spending less time keeping this sea worthy than we spent on the other one. The down side is that the motor on the other one was only about 5 years old when it became a submersible.

Councilor Hurley commented about a letter read by Dolores and stated that he believes it was trying to repurpose the police and the fire and maybe you can say it a little better that they are for different purposes and for public safety. Mr. Bridges responded they are and those boats each carry specialized equipment for the police and fire department and they have particular rules on their use and there has to be multiple people on the boat with certain certifications and so forth. So, it's really not a good mix to allow someone who is really not an agent of the town to use those boats, particularly with that kind of equipment on board.

Mayor Montinieri thanked MDC for the offer and he knows that there were some folks who worked behind the scenes for that and stated that hopefully it will be helpful for the foreseeable future.

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

Councilor Martino moved **“TO APPROVE THE WRITE OFF OF \$5,195.00 OF TAXES FROM THE 1998 GRAND LIST WHICH ARE UNCOLLECTABLE”**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Mr. Bridges asked Marlene Desjardins, Tax Collector to come up and explain the item.

Ms. Desjardins explained that there are 13 lots that were left on the grand list that we tried every aspect. The individuals are deceased; family members don't want them so there weren't really any tools left for me to collect on these.

Mayor Montinieri commented that the number keeps going down and the other stuff keeps going the right way and stated that Marlene has done incredible work the last several years. He stated that our collection rate continues to exceed our budgeted amount and in large part is due to Marlene's efforts and the efforts of the tax office doesn't go unnoticed and he is sure that all the taxpayers that pay their bills religiously appreciate that you don't leave any stone unturned and wanted to make sure that we mention that.

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

BIDS

Councilor Martino moved **“TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF THE REPLACEMENT PUMPS FOR CONSTRUCTION SERVICES OF NEW ENGLAND, INC., FOR \$71,000”**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Mr. Bridges asked Kathy Bagley to speak about the pool pumps.

Ms. Bagley explained that these are the pumps for the Willard Pool filter operation. We have three pools there so it's a series of pumps for our filter operation and it's also the replacement of the wading pool filter operation. So it's both pieces and it will completely have been phasing in the replacement of the whole filter operation at Willard Pool and this will actually complete that process.

Mayor Montinieri asked if this was in the CIP. Mr. Bridges responded yes. This came in as multiple different packages through CIP and now we just kind of lumped several projects together for the purpose of mobilization and just ease of getting it done.

Councilor Hurley asked how long did the last pumps and filters that were there last approximately.

Ms. Bagley responded easy 15-20 years. The staff maintains those pumps and the filters pretty well.

Councilor Kotkin commented that it seems like we've been doing work at Willard for a while and asked Kathy to talk about all the work that we've done over the past 5 or 6 years because it seems like we've done a lot there and are we sort of done or are there more things that you still need to get done and you'll be going back to capital improvements for. How is the status of the bath houses?

Ms. Bagley responded we have the filter operation which is like one piece and then the bath houses are a different piece. The filter operation has been the key areas we have been working on probably for the past 5 years. We started with the replacement of the big filter tanks. We used to have three tanks; we went down to two tanks. All of this improvement has been with all the upgraded equipment; it's really been a good savings with our utility and energy costs all for that purpose. So we started with the tanks because they had almost failed, actually one of them had failed and they were all the same age so we figured they were all going to go. Those were replaced. We then replaced all the controllers for each of the filtered tanks that would then do all electronically all the chemical additions, monitor the pool. That was all done as an upgrade where we can actually dial in now to the system through a telephone line that's out there and actually monitor it from the office. So we can spot any issues that might arise whereas before it needed a spot check at the pool to notice something. Ms. Bagley explained that now we are doing the filter. The pumps themselves that go to each of the filtered tanks, but it's taken a while just based on the years to get all that accomplished. The bath house is still identified in Capital Improvements. We always look at the roof, we look at the walls. Those are still in our program for Capital Improvements.

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

Councilor Martino moved **“TO AWARD A CONTRACT TO TREMCO/ WEATHERPROOFING TECHNOLOGIES FOR ROOF SERVICE PER THE ATTACHED AGREEMENT FOR THE TERM JULY 1, 2014 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2015, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$55,165.”**, seconded by Councilor Roberts.

Mr. Bridges asked Mike Turner to explain the item.

Mr. Turner explained that Tremco has been part of our CIP and roof maintenance program for about 8 years. The first time through we bid it twice and then the current version we are working on we bid it with a 5-year term. It was something that the AC Committee at the time recommended that we could probably get a better price if lock someone in for a longer term which we did so what we are asking for is recommendation to award. This is year five of the five-year term so we will put this back out to bid for next year's CIP.

Mayor Montinieri commented that they created a database on all the roofs in town on all of our

public buildings and as a result we have successfully been able to maintain roofs without major maintenance because they preemptedly been able to assess where we are at and this contract covers continued evaluation of that database and minor maintenance.

Mr. Turner responded that's correct and explained that we used to get hit with all of the various departments and sports groups and what have you seeking CIP funds and then all of a sudden physical services would come in and say o:k that's good but we need \$400,000 because this roof just failed, that type of thing. It's just blew all the schedules out of the water. We are much more proactive now. We have 24-hour leak response with Tremco. They are assisting us with our capital planning's so that we have a long-range look-out for when roofs are going to be due so we can plan in our CIP. They have offered some alternative renovation type work to keep these roofs going much longer than they normally would have. Mayor Montinieri commented that it might have been last year or the year before you pointed to that this was a far more cost-effective program than what you described before as a sort of ad-hock on the fly thing. Mr. Turner responded absolutely.

Councilor Martino commented that he has watched this group over the years and besides doing their inspection when the go up on the roofs, if there are minor repairs that are needed, they take care of them right away on the spot, it's part of their contract and that in the long run has saved us from having major problems down the road and unnecessary immediate repairs that have to be done or replacements because things get done when they are little things and don't grow into monsters and they have done well for us over the past 8 years.

Councilor Rell asked if the \$55,000 is just for one year. Mr. Turner responded yes, just one year and that they used to be up in the \$70,000 - \$80,000 range but with the 5-year term they reduced it \$55,000. Councilor Rell asked if they are going out to bid again in June of next year. Mr. Turner responded yes.

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

Councilor Martino moved **“TO APPROVE THE VALUE ENGINEERING REDUCTIONS TO URBAN CONTRACTORS IN THE AMOUNTS OF \$222,134.00 AND \$60,805.00 AND MACKENZIE SERVICE CORP. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,775.00 AND TO APPROVE A CHANGE ORDER FOR ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY WALLS FOR G. DONOVAN ASSOCIATES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$40,871.00”**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Barry.

Mr. Bridges explained that the VE process continues. This is the flooring portion of it along with a small piece on McKenzie and then we had due to the phasing in some of the other work, we had to add some temporary walls to Phase I to get us through in that end and that required a change order. Mikes got the details if you have any questions.

Mayor Montinieri asked Mr. Turner if the temporary walls are near the gym area in the High School.

Mr. Turner responded that these are walls that the contractor is being required by O&G to separate essentially the construction areas from the children. The base contract carried a 2,000 square foot allowance of walls. This is an additional 4,500 sq. feet of walls because we ended up doing the entire guidance and administration wing. It just required a bit more phasing if you will.

Mayor Montinieri commented that that was the only increase and the others are reductions. Mr. Turner responded correct. That's the increase.

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

Mr. Bridges stated that we are looking at the tank, the original tank that still has to be remediated and that the DEP has asked us to use all practical speed to get that done. He stated that we are about to put an RFP out to companies on the state's list of approved contractors to do that kind of work. So we don't have a scheduled meeting until late November, so we may ask at some point for a special meeting to approve that contract to get that done so just be aware of that over the next three weeks or so.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

Mayor Montinieri introduced the following resolution.

RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD AND THE AMERICAN RED CROSS FOR EMERGENCY SUPPORT.

MINUTES

Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO ACCEPT THE MEETING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 6, 2014"**, seconded by Councilor Martino. Councilor Manousos stated that he will approve these but asked the minutes be amended to include his comments regarding the discussion of the Webb Tennis Courts.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gus Colantonio, 16 Morrison Ave. commented that he agrees that those stumps there look ugly and unsightly and they should have been removed. He commented on an article that he read stating that CT is number three of being a tax-friendly nightmare for retirees according to the Tax Foundation. He asked who is responsible to fix the snow shelf, the property owner or the town. He stated that he has asked this before but has not received an answer. He commented on the speed limit and measurements taken along Morrison Avenue.

Lee Sekas, 117 Wells Rd., commented that he wrote a letter to Curtain Transportation and copied several people on the board and stated that some of the vans are falling apart and are not as safe as they should be. He stated that Curtain did call them the same day and will wash the vans. Mr. Sekas asked how is the town going to be following up on Curtain providing safer transportation as it should because we are paying \$30,000 higher than the other bidder when we granted the contract a year ago or so and we should be getting the safety that will prevent any accidents from happening from faulty material and equipment. Mr. Sekas wanted to know who would be following up with Curtain and who he should contact.

Dave Caruk, 39 Broad St. commented on the reservations of the republicans for the need and the cost and demand for the tennis courts and how it was tabled and it upset a lot of people and tonight they showed up to show their need for tennis courts near Webb. He stated that he is glad to see the public participation and he wished it happened more often on issues.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Rd., commented that he does not believe that you voted tonight because you had a good turnout of citizens and believes that if nobody came you would still have voted on it because tax, borrow and spend is what you people do.

At 9:05 p.m. Councilor Roberts moved **"TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION"** seconded by Councilor Hemmann.

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

At 9:29 p.m. Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION"**, seconded by Councilor Hurley.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:30 p.m., Councilor Martino moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

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

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk
Approved by Vote of Council
November 17, 2014

Minutes were amended to reflect the following changes:

Page 5: Change Keene to Keane, Page 6 Dean to Deane, Page 7 & 8 change Mayor Hemmann to Former Mayor Hemmann, and Page 9 first line add the word “public” to private partnerships.