

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT

Special Town Council Meeting

APRIL 16, 2015

6:30 P.M.

Town Council Chambers

FY 2015 – 2016 BUDGET WORKSHOP

MINUTES

The Special Budget Workshop Meeting of the Wallingford Town Council was called to order at 6:35 P.M. It began with a Moment of Silence. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were: Chairman Vincent Cervoni and Councilors Craig Fishbein, Tom Laffin, John Letourneau, Christine Mansfield, and Larry Russo. Councilor Vincent F. Testa, Jr. arrived at 6:55 P.M. Councilors Robert F. Parisi and John Sullivan were absent from the meeting. Mayor Dickinson and Comptroller Bowes were at the meeting.

No one from the public attended.

3. BUDGET WORKSHOP

PUBLIC UTILITIES

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

*In attendance: George Adair, Director, Public Utilities
Robert Beaumont, Chairman, Public Utilities Commission*

There were no questions.

WATER DIVISION

*In attendance: George Adair, Director, Public Utilities
Robert Beaumont, Chairman, Public Utilities Commission
William Phelan, Business Manager, Water-Sewer Divisions*

Mr. Adair stated that there is a pattern of declining sales over 20% as is the case for sewer. Not having Covanta as a customer will have a significant impact.

Councilor Letourneau was interested in the sales decline. Mr. Phelan reported that the top 25 customers in the Water Division represent 25% of the total consumption. For those 25 customers, there is a 2.5 to 3.5 decline in consumption equaling approximately \$750,000. On the residential side is more a function of rainfall. Consumption increases during the dry periods when more irrigation takes place. They don't know what it will be this year but it is the average of the last two years. Conservation and the economy drive the decline.

Councilor Fishbein noted the rents (Line 472) show a significant decline. It was determined that a cellular customer is not renewing. Mr. Adair said that staff will pursue another customer. Councilor Fishbein also asked about Lines 641 Chemicals and 651 Maintenance Structures & Improvements. He asked about Line 421 Miscellaneous Non-Operating Income. The Division may be awarded a grant from the State of Connecticut.

Councilor Mansfield asked about the change in Line 673 -Maintenance Transmission & Distribution. She asked about staffing. Mr. Adair said there is no change in staffing or in its needs.

Chairman Cervoni asked is there is any correlation between staffing and declining sales. Mr. Adair said that the Division still needs to maintain the town's systems.

Councilor Fishbein asked for the PUC agenda's backup.

SEWER DIVISION

*In attendance: George Adair, Director, Public Utilities
Robert Beaumont, Chairman, Public Utilities Commission
William Phelan, Business Manager, Water-Sewer Divisions*

There were no questions.

ELECTRIC DIVISION

*In attendance: George Adair, Director, Public Utilities
Robert Beaumont, Chairman, Public Utilities Commission
Rick Hendershot, General Manager, Electric Division
Thomas Sullivan, Business Manager, Electric Divisions*

Mr. Adair commented that there is no change in headcount or in new initiatives but includes a projected rate increase but they are still in the midst of the rate study.

Chairman Cervoni asked for a CMEEC update. Mr. Adair said the demand for arbitration letter has been sent recently which will begin the process to select arbitrators and a location. The anticipation of an arbitration increase in cost is about \$275,000 from Line 923 for this purpose. Process is taking much longer than expected. He said \$15 million is involved.

Councilor Fishbein asked about LS Power rent and the difference between Line 454 and Line 418 and about Lines 582, 904, 419; street light program in industrial and residential areas. They really depend on residents to report lights that are out. There are over 4,000 street lights.

PUBLIC CELEBRATIONS COMMITTEE

*In attendance: Lorraine Devaney, Chairwoman, Public Celebrations Committee
Carolyn Massoni, Vice-Chairwoman
Barbara Kapi, Secretary
Ruth Palmer, Secretary*

Chairwoman Devaney discussed the committee's events every year, including, Christmas season and town's decorations; Memorial Day Celebration; the impact of the weather on planned events; their expenditures and reserves; no longer participate in fireworks for the 4th of July; many variables in their events, sometimes need to cancel performers and equipment if an event is cancelled. The committee is made up of volunteers.

WALLINGFORD EMERGENCY SHELTER

In attendance: Dr. Thomas Thurber, Executive Director

Dr. Thurber thanked Wallingford for being a partner. Councilor Cervoni thanked the Shelter for all they provide to those in need.

Dr. Thurber reported that the shelter's expenses will remain the same but that the State of Connecticut will no longer be providing the annual amount of \$37,000. They have a new case manager, and there are two new units. 38% to 40% of people they serve are from Wallingford or have a family of origin in Wallingford. The communities that have shelters include Wallingford, Meriden and Middletown but not Cheshire or North Haven. There is a higher rate of unemployment in Middletown. He said the shelter is open November 1 to April 15. Dr. Thurber hopes that he can gain more corporate support in light of the loss of funds from the state. Ulbrich Steel has been a strong partner. Choate's Sage Food Service is working with the Emergency Shelter. He talked about the State's Department of Housing protocol for cold weather in that the Emergency Shelter cannot turn away clients in cold weather, so the shelter's costs increase, and that during this time last winter his staff worked for straight pay and did not take overtime pay.

MOTION TO ADJOURN.

MADE BY: LETOURNEAU

SECOND BY: FISHBEIN

7 AYE; 2-ABSENT (PARISI AND SULLIVAN).

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Weekes
Secretary to the Town Council
Meeting digitally recorded

Chairman Vincent Cervoni

Date

Town Clerk, Barbara Thompson

Date