

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 27, 1996

6:30 P.M.

AGENDA

1. Blessing - Rev. Dr. Richard E. Diehl
2. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance
3. Consent Agenda
  - a. Consider and Approve Tax Refunds (#238-247) Totalling \$5,939.41 - Tax Collector
  - b. Approve and Accept the Minutes of the 2/13/96 Town Council Meeting
  - c. Consider and Approve Merit Increases (5) Approved by the Mayor
  - d. Note for the Record Financial Reports of the Wallingford Public Library, Senior Citizen's Center and the Visiting Nurse Association
  - e. IBEW Local #457 Binding Arbitration Award (Requires no Action - Recommendation not to Reject)
  - f. Consider and Approve the Use of the Town Green, Hall Avenue and Parking Area West of the Railroad Station for Celebrate Wallingford Festivities to be Held on October 5 & 6, 1996 - Wallingford Center, Inc.
4. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda
5. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD
6. Consider and Approve Confirmation of a Mayoral Re-Appointment to the Public Utilities Commission for a Term of Three (3) Years to Expire 3/1/99 - Mayor's Office
7. Progress Report Out by the Ice Rink Committee (30 min.)
8. Consider and Approve an Appropriation of Funds in the Amount of \$34,912 to Recovery Damage Town Property Acct. #1065-060-6370 and to Self-Insurance Claims Acct. #001-8030-800-8280 - Department of Law
9. Report Out on the Progress of the Yalesville School Project by the School Building Expansion Committee as Requested by Vice Chairman Raymond J. Rys, Sr. (30 min.)

10. Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-18a(e)(2) of the CT. General Statutes Regarding Pending Litigation Involving Tax Appeals
11. Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-18a(e)(2) of the CT. General Statutes Regarding Pending Litigation
  - Town of Wallingford v. Thurston Associates
  - Authorize Town Attorney to Negotiate and Settle Tax Appeals

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 27, 1996

6:30 P.M.

SUMMARY

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
3. Consent Agenda - Items #3a. - 3f	1
4. Withdrawn	
5. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD - Question re: Tenant/Landlord eviction process	5-6
6. Approve the Re-Appointment of Michael Papale to the Position of Commissioner on the Public Utilities Commission for a Term of Three Years to Expire 3/1/99	6
7. Progress Report Out by the Ice Rink Committee	6-15
8. Approve an Appropriation of \$34,912 to Recovery Damage Town Property Acct. and to Self-Insurance Claims Acct. - Department of Law	15-16
9. Report Out on the Progress of Yalesville School Project by the School Building Expansion Committee	2-5
10. Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-18a(e)(2) - Pending Litigation Involving Tax Appeals	16
<b>Authorize the Town Attorney to Negotiate and Settle Tax Appeals as Discussed in Executive Session</b>	16
11. Withdrawn	

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 27, 1996

6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting of the Wallingford Town Council was held on Tuesday, February 27, 1996 in the Robert Earley Auditorium of the Wallingford Town Hall and called to Order by Chairman Robert F. Parisi at 6:32 P.M. All Councilors answered present to the Roll called by Town Clerk Rosemary A. Rascati. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr. and Comptroller Thomas A. Myers were also present. Assistant Town Attorney Gerald Farrell, Sr. arrived at 6:34 P.M.

Reverend Richard Diehl of the Evangelical and Reformed Church bestowed a blessing on the Council.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given to the Flag.

ITEM #3 Consent Agenda

ITEM #3a Consider and Approve Tax Refunds (#238-247) Totalling \$5,939.41 - Tax Collector

ITEM #3b Approve and Accept the Minutes of the 2/13/96 Town Council Meeting

ITEM #3c Consider and Approve Merit Increases (5) Approved by the Mayor

ITEM #3d Note for the Record Financial Reports of the Wallingford Public Library, Senior Citizen's Center and the Visiting Nurse Association

ITEM #3e IBEW Local #457 Binding Arbitration Award (Requires no Action - Recommendation not to Reject)

ITEM #3f Consider and Approve the Use of the Town Green, Hall Avenue and Parking Area West of the Railroad Station for Celebrate Wallingford Festivities to be Held on October 5 & 6, 1996 - Wallingford Center, Inc.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Approve the Consent Agenda as Presented, seconded by Mr. Knight.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

ITEM #4 Withdrawn

WAIVER OF RULE V Motion was made by Mr. Centner to Waive Rule V of the Town Council Meeting Procedures for the Purpose of Moving Agenda Item #9 Up to the Next Order of Business, seconded by Mr. Renda.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

ITEM #9 Report Out on the Progress of the Yalesville School Project by the School Building Expansion Committee as Requested by Vice Chairman Raymond J. Rys, Sr.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Hear Discussion on this Matter, seconded by Mr. Centner.

Jon Walworth, School Building Expansion Committee (SBEC) Member and Dirk van Luling of Gilbane Building Company were present to give a brief overview of the project. SBEC Chairman Don Harwood arrived during the presentation.

Mr. Walworth stated that the committee is making substantial progress, the project is ahead of schedule and the budgets are on line.

Mr. van Luling added that the contract date to finish the project is June 15, 1996, however, the project is expected to be completed two to four weeks ahead of schedule, most likely the end of May.

Mr. Walworth explained that some interior work remains to be completed, i.e., the painting of walls, installation of floors and ceilings. It is expected that the exterior site work will be performed next week. The Route 68 bypass lane remains to be built and should be completed in May with traffic signalization in place by D.O.T. in August. The State's share (9%) towards the cost of the signal light has yet to be confirmed. The widening of the road will occur at the school area with the cost for said work amounting to less than the cost of the signalization work. The widening project may entail some land acquisition required by the State. The information is sketchy at this point in time but the committee has vowed to come before the Council should such acquisition be necessary.

With regards to the master control budget, the committee has experienced some overages in specific project components but have remained favorable overall. The contingency account is functioning as anticipated and has been utilized to address unforeseen conditions and related design and construction costs. Upon closer inspection of the roof it was found to be in much worse condition than expected which reduced the contingency account substantially as did the unexpected removal of two hundred fifty thousand (250,000) pounds of construction debris, left behind from a previous construction project, that was uncovered upon removal of a staircase. The committee anticipates completing the project with the contingency account exhibiting a balance of over \$150,000 in remaining funds.

Construction has begun at both Moran and Dag Hammarskjold Middle Schools and asbestos abatement, site work, structural steel and

masonry is currently underway. Dag is currently tracking approximately two and one-half (2 1/2) months ahead of Moran. The completion date targets are December 1996 and January 1997, respectively.

Mr. Harwood stated that the committee should not be coming back before the Council for additional funds barring any unforeseen problems.

Mr. Centner stated that at the SBEC's last meeting held February 1, 1996 Gilbane (Building Company) did provide a break out of expenses starting with the original balance of \$386,000 in the contingency account and all of the change orders to date. The committee listed as of February 1, 1996 a balance of \$58,137. and presented a page of anticipated other changes that may or may not be experienced by that particular account. If that account is depleted are there other surpluses in other accounts and is the committee considering transferring those funds over to cover those expenses as a contingent matter?

Mr. van Luling responded, there have been two forms of reporting by the committee. The first report was the contingency report which shows when that account has been drawn upon for direct construction costs. An evaluation of other costs related to the project has been performed. The business manager for the school system has been diligently preparing the furniture bids and he is projecting approximately \$100,000 in savings in that area alone. That surplus has been "rolled in", the committee has looked at other line accounts and has identified areas in which we will be under budget and those accounts are also being "rolled in" to the contingency account. The committee will begin to look at a re-allocation of costs to more appropriately reflect each line item.

Mr. Centner asked, do you expect your original budget of \$386,500 to increase by what ever funds have been transferred over?

Mr. van Luling responded, yes.

Mr. Centner asked Mr. van Luling if he expects to see all of the additional anticipated changes addressed which total over \$75,800?

Mr. van Luling responded, whenever there is an instance where we think there is going to be a potential cost we immediately identify it and keep track of it. Sometimes the issue goes away, other times it solidifies and becomes a full-fledged change. There will be fluctuations in the anticipated cost column you are referring to month to month. We updated the cost report this week in preparation for the end of the month reports and we are currently projecting about \$56,000 - \$57,000 worth of anticipated costs. It has come down from last month's report and it is expected to vacillate as the end of the project approaches.

Mr. Centner asked, are the grading revisions listed an intermediate grading step or is that getting towards your final landscaping grade?

Mr. van Luling responded, that particular item had a great deal of discussion surrounding it...the adjusting of grades to improve the drainage on-site and as it has been looked at more and more closely, especially with the recent thaws, we have eliminated that line item altogether. That is part of the fluctuation that you see.

Mr. Centner then asked, have you been experiencing any damage on the site now that all the glass is in and the shell complete?

Mr. van Luling answered, during the initial weeks of the project the neighbors were used to crossing the site and that has nearly stopped. We have not had that many people on site. There has been no damage since those early weeks. Even with the recent wind storm a day or two ago we did not sustain any damage to the building.

Ms. Papale asked, if the contingency account is depleted there will be funds to take from other accounts to cover expenses?

Don Harwood, Chairman of the School Building Expansion Committee explained that the committee is very comfortable that the project is running very favorable, overall. We anticipate ending with a favorable balance. The contingency account is being used as it should be, to handle unforeseen conditions, and it has been managed very tightly and aggressively. He has no intentions of returning before the Council to seek additional funding.

Mr. Doherty asked, what is the time line for the middle schools? What does the contract read for completion on the middle school project?

Mr. Harwood responded, currently our projection for the middle school completion date is December of 1996 for Dag and January 1997 for Moran. During the winter months the committee shut down the Moran project and were able to focus some continuing activity at Dag. We are running ahead of schedule. The contract date was February 15, 1997 for completion.

Mr. Doherty asked, what is the total budget for both?

Mr. Harwood responded, \$16, 167,234. Dag's cost is \$7,809,437 and Moran is \$8,276,797.

Mr. Centner asked, how is the hazmat abatement proceeding at the middle schools? There was work to be done in February?

Mr. van Luling responded, during the Christmas break the cafeteria, shop/art room areas were abated and with the short weekend vacation

recently the administrative areas were abated. The abatement activity is proceeding very smoothly, there have been no difficulties to speak of. We will be having substantial work performed in the academic wing during the April week long break and a final abatement carried out in the latter part of June when the children are out of school.

Mr. Centner asked, during this phase when you perform your air quality surveys post abatement, are these surveys coming in on your time projection?

Mr. van Luling answered, yes, the building committee and the school district use Enviromed Services as their consultant to monitor the work. Enviromed takes the test, processes them and returns them to Mr. Powers in the Business Office within one week after the work is completed.

Mr. Centner asked, are you finding that the air does stabilize within your estimated time frame?

Mr. van Luling responded, we generally give ourselves a day or two as a cushion between the completion of the abatement activity and the children returning to school so that if re-tests are required we will have time to perform them.

Mr. Doherty asked, what is the total figure on Yalesville?

Mr. Harwood responded, \$10,182,613.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville asked, is the State following up on its promise to pay their reimbursement on this project?

Thomas Myers, Comptroller responded, the State will reimburse the Town for fifty-three percent (53%) of eligible costs. The approximate combined ineligible costs for Yalesville and the middle school projects totals \$800,000 of which the State will not reimburse the Town for. He felt that the ineligible costs were minor in comparison to the \$24 million overall project cost.

Mr. Harwood invited the Council to visit the site and asked that those wishing to do so first contact his office to schedule an appropriate date and time.

#### PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville asked, why was a very nice young lady in Wallingford served eviction papers for feeding stray cats?

Mr. Parisi informed Mr. Melillo that the incident is a private

matter between a tenant and their landlord, not Town business.

Mr. Melillo was of the belief that the Town was involved in the matter.

Mayor Dickinson disagreed but promised to look into the issue for Mr. Melillo to see if the Town was involved in any way.

ITEM #6 Consider and Approve the Confirmation of a Mayoral Re-Appointment to the Public Utilities Commission for a Term of Three (3) Years to Expire 3/1/99 - Mayor's Office

Motion was made by Mr. Zappala to Confirm the Re-Appointment of Michael Papale as Public Utilities Commission for a Three Year Term, seconded by Ms. Papale.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

ITEM #7 Progress Report Out by the Ice Rink Committee

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Hear Discussion on the Matter, seconded by Ms. Papale.

Thomas Wall, Chairman of the Ice Rink Committee stated that the group has been studying this project for more than three years. The members of the committee have visited every hockey rink in the State and some that are out of State. They have met with managers, elected officials and people involved in rink operations. One of the prime users of the rink would be the Wallingford Hawks hockey program. Mr. Ed Makuch who is in charge of the building committee for the Hawks Association was present with Mr. Wall to offer any information the Council requested.

Mr. Makuch stated that the Wallingford Youth Hockey Association was first formed in the Fall of 1946. This is the organization's fiftieth year of continuous operation which makes it the first oldest youth hockey association in the United States. Over the last five years the league registration has grown from 123 skaters to this year's preliminary total of 374, that is over a 200% increase. There are twelve travel teams, four in-house teams as well as a Learn to Skate Clinic program for approximately ninety youths. The skaters range from four to eighteen years of age. Skating fees vary according to ice time provided to each player which ranges from \$250 for the Learn to Skate Clinic to a maximum of \$750 for the older travel teams which equates to approximately \$10 per hour of ice time, per child. Thanks to what he believes is an excellent fiscal management program, the Hawks' skating fees have always been among the lowest of all youth hockey organizations in this state. The league's current ice expenditures for the 1995-96 season, to date, is \$156,000 making their total operating budget just under \$200,000 for the 1995-96 season. Of that figure the

league receives from the Town of Wallingford \$1,800., the same cash disbursement as the baseball, football and soccer youth groups. The hockey league, however, does not receive an additional benefit that the other groups derive and that is a place to play their sport. It has become a year round chore to find rental ice. Bookings are normally made by rinks in July and early August for the entire season. The demand far outweighs the supply. No rink has failed in the State in at least the last twelve years. There have been approximately six new rinks that have opened in that time and all are completely booked as well. Choate has been gracious to the Hawks, renting them unused ice time at a reasonable rate but even Choate is in need of additional ice time for their own programs. They have stated to Mr. Makuch that they are interested in securing ice time at a new town rink, should one be built. Add to this the other fast growing skating sports such as precision skating. There is a shortage of ice time in this town for public skating also. All women ice hockey team registration has increased 217% in the last five years. Locally, the Polar Bears, which is an all girls ice hockey league has developed and grown from one team in 1985 to six teams this year. They can claim four Division 1 National Titles in that brief period of time. There are a number of girls from Wallingford among their ranks.

In conclusion he stated that the league is not before the Council seeking a place to skate for free, nor do they expect the Town to maintain the facility. They plan to continue paying their full share of ice rental fees at the prevailing rate, what ever that may be, and rent the remainder of the ice time for the many, many groups that are looking for a place to skate. This rink will pay for itself. In 1994 the Town hired a firm to investigate the feasibility of building a rink in Wallingford at a cost of \$12,000. That study confirmed what is being stated here, tonight...a rink is viable. The Wallingford Hawks needs the Council's help. We believe it is imperative to provide positive supervised activities for our community's youth year round. Please help us to make this a reality.

(applause)

Mr. Wall added, so much can be learned from competitive sports that you don't learn in a classroom, friendship, compatibility, teamwork, etc., it builds better citizens. Don't deprive our children from getting scholarships, give them the opportunity to play. Universities give more scholarships for athletic ability than any other reason. We are here tonight looking for guidance. What does this administration want us to do?

(applause)

Mr. Zappala stated, last time Mr. Wall was before the Council he stated that he would be meeting with Cheshire and North Haven to discuss the possibility of a joint venture. How has that

proceeded?

Mr. Makuch responded, the Town of Cheshire did vote to give the Hawks land and up to \$350,000 worth of site development costs to build a rink in their town athletic complex. The proposal was studied and the league's Board decided that if they did that they would no longer be a Wallingford Hawks organization. They would be developing a Cheshire Youth Hockey Program. Also, that particular rink would have been funded through a much higher rate of interest, approximately 9%. We felt it was not economically feasible at that time to proceed at that rate.

Mr. Zappala stated, it was his impression that there was no specific location picked and the Hawks were trying to organize the three towns to join in the effort so that it would be easy for the surrounding towns to use the facility and to alleviate some of the expenses by having the three towns committed to the project.

Mr. Wall responded, the powers that be that he has spoken with have expressed a desire to rent (ice time) from Wallingford.

Mr. Zappala stated, the ice rink has been studied for a long time and the proposal has not been a welcomed one.

Mr. Wall once again asked for guidance from the Council, do they want to go ahead with the project or turn it down? The ball is in the Council's court.

Mr. Knight pointed out that the study that was performed was sketchy and was not as thorough as it really needed to be.

Mr. Wall did not disagree with Mr. Knight and that is why the committee had come to the conclusion that another feasibility study was not necessary.

Mr. Knight stated, the interest rate seems to be a critical point in whether or not this project is a viable one. Tri-Town is a private organization and appears to be a profit-making operation. Has the Town of Cromwell contributed anything to its success?

Mr. Wall responded, not to my knowledge.

Mr. Knight asked, why does the committee feel that Tri-Town was a financially-viable operation but they don't feel that the Cheshire project was because of the interest rate? What are the differences as the committee sees it?

Mr. Makuch responded, we were looking for a facility that we could easily cover all costs and debt service primarily from our own teams. We kept our figures extremely conservative when it came to revenue income. The facility in Cromwell is not only an ice surface but it is also an athletic facility and fitness center.

Actually, the ice rink is keeping the operation going. When we consider that a 9% interest would mean a \$300,000 debt service on a loan of approximately \$2.5 - \$3 million and that the Town could possibly provide a 4% bond at \$125,000 per year debt service, why would we want to go to Cheshire and pay that kind of rate when we can come here. The cost of the 9% was not the primary concern, the main reason the Hawks did not consider the Cheshire proposal was because it would mean that we would leave Wallingford.

Mr. Knight asked, what percentage of ice time would have to be rented out in order to derive income to cover the cost?

Mr. Makuch responded, that is approximately 4,600 hours of ice time rented, only if we are renting fifteen hours a day. Most ice rinks operate eighteen hours a day, especially during the hockey season. A lot of the rinks close down during the summer season due to the fact that they are located in schools and their maintenance and support staff are no longer working indoors.

Mr. Knight felt that the Council was lacking detailed financial information in terms of cash flow, debt service, etc.

Mr. Wall explained that the information would have been included in the second part of the feasibility study that the committee decided not to go ahead with. A lot of the cost will depend on what type of rink will be put in, how much it will cost, etc., it is premature at this time.

Mr. Knight asked if the proposed rink will be similar to the type discussed with Cheshire?

Mr. Makuch responded, the rink discussed with Cheshire is expected to cost approximately \$3.2 million to construct and was a more elaborate facility. Cheshire wanted to attach a pool to their rink which would be leased out separately. The construction costs will vary greatly depending on the land, amount of site development required, exactly how elaborate the rink is designed. If you build in certain areas you are restricted by building codes with regards to facades, the facility may also boast a concession stand which will increase costs as well.

Mr. Knight stated that he was interested in the project, however, he requires more data in terms of finances.

Mr. Wall stated, no matter who uses the facility, whether it is the local high school team or the Hawks, they will have to pay the prevailing rate, there will be no freebies. It will not work if there is. It is the committee's wish to see that the Wallingford groups be the recipients of the prime time use of the facility.

Mr. Zappala asked Mr. Wall what the committee's recommendations

are?

Mr. Wall responded, the committee is seeking guidance from the Council as to whether or not to go ahead with the project. Is the Council willing to bond the project? The committee has gone as far as they can, they are asking for guidance. They cannot go out to find land for the rink, they cannot talk about a building, they have to know where they are going. Does the Town Fathers want to back the committee or not? The committee is recommending that we need a rink and the Town would have to bond it at 4% - 4.5%, that is the whole key.

Ms. Papale recognized how hard the committee has worked for the past two years and appreciates that they are seeking direction from the Council tonight, however, she, too, requires additional information with regards to the costs involved before giving it a go ahead. She asked if the committee had any suggestions as to where to locate the rink?

Mr. Wall responded, we have looked at different parcels and there is one large building the committee was considering renovating. Until they know that the Town is willing to go ahead....

Ms. Papale stated, the question truly is, will the Town bond this project?

Mr. Parisi stated, in all fairness the Council has received the report from the Ice Rink Committee tonight. It is his recommendation to table this item, study the report and if the Council has questions, they can contact the appropriate individuals to have those questions answered. This project should be decided within the next two months but the Council needs time to review the data carefully.

Mr. Wall stated, this is the one project that will pay for itself and will give so much to the youth of the Town of Wallingford.

(applause)

Mr. Centner asked, during the committee's planning phase did they consider any joint venture or partnership with any local businesses to offset some of the cost of construction?

Mr. Wall answered, no, but we have considered it. Again, how can we proceed in that area if we are not sure that the Town is willing to go ahead with this?

Mr. Centner responded, he is having trouble with the magnitude of the project and what is being looked at in terms of bonding it. It would be helpful for him to know if there was a willingness on the part of any other entity to help out.

Mr. Doherty asked, on a figure of \$3 million over a twenty year period, what would our financial obligations be, what type of rate would we get from the bank with our Aa credit rating?

Mr. Myers responded, we would have an obligation to re-pay about \$300,000 for the first year, principle and interest. Each subsequent year would successively be a lower amount for as the principle is paid off the interest declines.

Mr. Doherty asked, if we were to include the \$300,000 in this year's tax bill what would it amount to per taxpayer?

Mr. Myers answered, approximately \$20.00 each....figured on a 5% interest rate.

Mr. Doherty asked, are there any ways through innovative financing that we may be able to cut the \$20.00 per taxpayer cost down?

Mr. Myers responded, that is if the taxpayer pays. Mr. Wall and Mr. Makuch have indicated that the project would be self-supporting. If that is true there would be no effect on the taxpayer, the fees from usage would pay the interest and principle payments on the bonds.

Mr. Doherty stated, the initial construction cost and the \$300,000 first year's payment has to be forwarded by someone.

Mr. Myers answered, the Town would time the issuance of the debt on the project with project completion so that there would be revenue to offset the debt payments as they came due.

Mr. Doherty asked the Mayor if the Town is in a financial position to take on this project at this time?

Mayor Dickinson responded, we have not yet gone to bid on some projects that were mentioned, the Community Pool, Recreation Center, downtown project and the school project has yet to be completed. There is always a question of whether or not additional monies will be needed for the school additions. There is also the Senior Center that has been discussed without a price tag. He is anticipating a tax increase this year given what he has seen in budget requests in order to handle what we have now. It becomes a judgment call for each individual as to whether the Town can afford this project or not. We have a lot of committed projects without bid prices. He could not say that we are in a position at this time to bond an additional project.

Mr. Myers added, an ice rink, golf course, any project that may be considered self-supporting...the exposure to the Town on such a project is, what if revenues fall short on any given year? If the revenue projections are not met the bond still has to be paid twice

a year.

Bill Palmer, Head Hockey Coach, Lyman Hall High School - There has always been a need for a hockey rink in Wallingford. If we were to build a rink it would be utilized twenty-four hours a day. Currently, Lyman Hall practices at 4:30 a.m. which is tough on the athletes and coaches. Sheehan practices at 10:00 p.m. or 11:00 p.m. which is just as difficult. If properly managed the rink will never be dormant. The cost of incarceration is approximately \$40,000 - \$50,000/yr. per person. The price of \$300,000 offered earlier as the first year's bond payment equates to the cost of incarcerating six people. We can put that money to better use. Choate offers public skating time via the issuance of four hundred passes. Recently, the passes were being offered for sale between the hours of 12 noon and 5:00 P.M. on a weekend. A friend of his traveled to Choate at 2:00 p.m. on the date of issuance to find that the passes were already sold out. There are a multitude of families in this town that would love to use this rink.

Paul Leahy, 58 Nod Brook Road, Hawks Coach - He has two children in the Hawks program and personally spends approximately \$3,000 per year between ice fees, travel, concession stands, etc. It is a way of life from August to the end of March for his family. If tournaments are held in town it could mean business for the hotels on Route 68, restaurants on Route 5, as well as other businesses in town. The Council should not only consider the financial impact of building the rink but the positive financial impact it would have on the businesses here as well. We were fortunate that Choate was gracious enough to open their rink early for us this year. This provided an added opportunity for him to teach the youngest group of skaters new skills. With that head start over the other children in the State the group finished the season ranking third Class B team in the State. There are plenty of baseball and soccer fields in town to play on and what we really need now is a rink.

Geno Zandri, Jr., 37 Hallmark Drive - What we are looking at here is an investment in the youth of Wallingford. We are looking at a project that, regardless of what the bonding is, will pay for itself and will not effect the taxpayers in Wallingford. The only flaw that has been mentioned by Mr. Myers was the risk to the Town should a shortfall occur in the revenues in a given year that are to be used to pay for the bonding. That can be taken care of by having a one year cushion built into the project so that you will always have at least one year's worth of payments set aside so that if a problem arises in a given year it would not effect the tax rate. It is a good project and we should proceed forward with it.

(applause)

Ray Crew, 8 Docker Drive - He was one of the originators when the Hawks were first incorporated and in the past he drew up a plan for Mayor Carini, before he passed away, to put an ice rink in. Back

then they said we couldn't do it because we needed libraries and everything else. This is not a new project, this has been put on the back burner all this time. Hockey has skyrocketed in Connecticut because of Brian Leach (Cheshire) and Craig Janney (Enfield), this is why people come to our state to look at our hockey players. Look after the children we have in Wallingford, never mind professional hockey players, that is what we are here for.

(applause)

Vic Kadulis, 440 S. Main Street, Director of Coaches for the Wallingford Youth Hockey Program - The league has grown quite a bit since he became involved in it in 1978. The children will get up for practice at 3:00 a.m., 10:00 p.m., it is the love they have for the game. We have scouts that come to our state, Todd Hall who skated at the high school in Hamden was drafted by the Whalers. It would be a wonderful opportunity to have a rink in this town.

(applause)

Charlie Burns, President of the Wallingford Hawks - He was involved in the discussion held on the Cheshire rink. It (the project) was coming together nicely and there was no question in his mind that there was a rink that was going to be built, however, upon taking the discussion back to the board, their feeling was that they wanted to stay in Wallingford. That was it in a nutshell. Yes, there was a dollar factor that played a part because the Hawks decided that they did not want to take on the responsibility that would not take care of itself. They looked at the percentages and felt that they would be throwing away money. He sent a letter back to Cheshire telling them at this particular point that we were going to walk away and return to Wallingford and see if we could continue to do business there. Mr. Myers mentioned that the user is the person who should be responsible for the debt. He reminded Mr. Myers that the ice is contracted. The Hawks asked Choate to open a month earlier this year and as a result their (Hawks) budget skyrocketed \$40,000. in that short period of time. He hears everyone talking about the "hockey rink". This is not a hockey rink but a facility for Wallingford. Whether you are young, old or what ever the case may be, you can use a building like this for almost anything. Yes, skating is fun for there is figure skating, hockey, there are all sorts of opportunity there. Every hour that the building will be used will be paid for by someone. We are contracted for ice time in Cromwell at a cost of \$240 per hour. The Hawks will continue to come to the Town for and/or direction. We are not asking for the Town to pay for anything, just support the team. Half the children here will be attending graduating ceremonies for the D.A.R.E. program within the next few nights. We do all these great things for the youth in town to keep them from getting involved in drugs, drink, etc. The greatest opportunity to keep children busy is through athletics, no matter

what type. With the problems our society faces today there is not enough we can do for the youth. If it means spending a few dollars and the Hawks continuing their fight to convince the Town that this is the way to go, we will be there. We are here for the youth and we are asking you (Town officials) to give us a hand.

(applause)

Wayne McDermott, 22 Cooper Avenue - He is in favor of having a rink built. For the past two years his son has had to play hockey out of town due to the fact that the Wallingford Hawks have lacked ice time. We have lost the fielding of two midget teams and a bantam team due to the lack of ice time. He is of the opinion that the rink will not cost the Town anything.

(applause)

Bob Holmes, Ice Rink Committee Member - This committee began from a proposal by a private citizen to build an ice rink and recreation center three years ago. We know the demand is there, we know the revenue will be there...what we don't have is, what is it going to cost? We need to come up with a basic plan for a basic rink. We don't need a Taj Mahal. We need a rink, couple of locker rooms, little office, little box office and that should be it. Once we have that we can determine what it will cost to build it? We need a go ahead from the Council tonight to keep this committee alive, maybe appointing some additional members who want to become active. Allow the committee to go out and see what a rink will cost then we can come back to package the entire deal up for the Council to review and decide upon.

(applause)

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville - He would like to see the rink built. There are more pros than cons to this proposal, there is a strong interest on the part of the community, the rink should be built. He urged the Council to strongly consider building the rink on Town-owned property. He is opposed to a joint venture with any other town because there will be too many people wanting to control the operation. The people of Wallingford have been subsidizing big industry for years, let them subsidize this project for us....the groups should be out actively seeking funding from big businesses.

Mr. Wall asked that the Council not make these children (involved in the youth hockey league) second-class citizens, give them a place to play.

Mr. Renda stated, what we give youth today, we get back tomorrow.

(applause)

Mr. Renda went on to say, he has seen dollars in this Town spent foolishly for years. He is not blaming the Mayor....the Route 5 study cost us \$43,000. and that money was spent foolishly. At different times when certain projects come up the dollars are not available, other projects come up and the dollars are suddenly there. He will look around, check with the Mayor and Comptroller to see what can be done to make sure that we have dollars put aside so that when these types of issues come up we have the dollars for it. Bring the information back before the Council to review and if the Town can afford it, you'll have it.

(applause)

Mr. Parisi thanked everyone for attending the meeting tonight to offer their opinion. He has marked March 26th as the date when he hopes to have an answer to this question, be it yes or no or at the very least a reasonable explanation of what the Town's course of action should be. He acknowledged Jay Quigley, Joe DiNatale and Doug McKay, Ice Rink Committee Members, who have worked long and hard on this project and any/all other members who have contributed to this point and have gone unrecognized.

(applause)

Motion was made by Mr. Knight to Table This Item, seconded by Mr. Renda.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

Mr. Wall thanked the Council for their time and avowed to provide them with the additional information they requested.

Mr. Parisi asked Mr. Wall to file the names, addresses and phone numbers of the Ice Rink Committee with the Town Council Secretary as quickly as possible so that the Council may contact them should they have any questions that need addressing.

The Chair declared a five minute recess at this point in time.

ITEM #8 Consider and Approve an Appropriation of Funds in the Amount of \$34,912 to Recovery Damage Town Property Acct. #1065-060-6370 and to Self-Insurance Claims Acct. #001-8030-800-8280 - Department of Law

Motion was made by Mr. Rys, seconded by Mr. Knight.

Mr. Rys read correspondence from Corporation Counselor Adam Mantzaris into the record regarding the case of Joseph Wilton, Jr., et al v. Town of Wallingford.

The lawsuit involved a complaint that the Town had caused storm water to be diverted into a particular stream which overloaded the

stream resulting in damage to the Plaintiff's property. The alleged diversion and damage occurred over some ten or twelve years. The Town Attorney's Office determined the several liability insurance carriers which covered the Town during the years involved and attorneys selected by said insurance carriers represented the interests of the Town in said litigation. The Court's pretrial sessions resulted in the Plaintiff and the carriers agreeing to resolve the litigation by piping the water through the Plaintiff's property, performing certain landscaping improvements and paying his attorney's fees. The three insurance carriers, acting through Reliance, obtained price quotations from certain contractors and with the Plaintiff's agreement hired Bee Mac Construction to perform at an agreed price of \$34,911.81. Each carrier has remitted a check in the amount of \$11,637.27 to the Law Department and the Town Council must approve the appropriation of funds in order to pass the payment along for the contracted services and attorney's fees of the Plaintiff.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

ITEM #10 Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-18a(e)(2) of the CT. General Statutes Regarding Pending Litigation Involving Tax Appeals

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Enter Into Executive Session, seconded by Ms. Papale.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

Present in Executive Session were all Councilors with the exception of Mr. Doherty who left the meeting during the executive session, Mayor Dickinson and Attorney Gerald Farrell, Sr.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Exit the Executive Session, seconded by Ms. Papale.

VOTE: Doherty was absent; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Authorize the Town Attorney to Negotiate and Settle Tax Appeals as Discussed in Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Zappala.

VOTE: Doherty was absent; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

ITEM #11 Withdrawn

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Adjourn the Meeting, seconded by Ms. Papale.

VOTE: Doherty was absent; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:39 P.M.

Town Council Meeting

17

February 27, 1996

Meeting recorded and transcribed by:

*Kathryn F. Milano*

Kathryn F. Milano  
Town Council Secretary

Approved by:

*Robert F. Parisi*

Robert F. Parisi, Chairman

*March 12, 1996*  
Date

*Rosemary A. Rascati*  
Rosemary A. Rascati, Town Clerk

*March 12, 1996*  
Date