

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

April 8, 2008

The following is a record of the Minutes of the Wallingford Town Council at its regular meeting held on Tuesday, April 8, 2008 in the Robert Earley Auditorium of the Wallingford Town Hall. Town Council Chairman Mike Brodinsky Called the Meeting to Order at 6:38 P.M. Responding present to the Roll Call given by Town Clerk Barbara Kapi were Councilors Michael Brodinsky, Vincenzo M. DiNatale, Nick Economopoulos, Gerald E. Farrell, Jr., John LeTourneau, Robert F. Parisi, Rosemary Rascati, Michael Spiteri and Vincent F. Testa, Jr. William W. Dickinson, Jr., Comptroller James Bowes were also present. Town Attorney Janis Small arrived at 6:45 P.M.

A Moment of Silence began the meeting. The Pledge of Allegiance was said and the Roll Call taken.

2. Report from the Town Council Chairman

(T2)

Chairman Brodinsky announced that the Council would recess during the meeting. During the budget process, he called for ideas in saving the town money and asked for feedback on the structure of the budget meetings this year.

3. Consent Agenda

3a. Consider and Approve Tax Refunds (#488- #504) totaling \$4,101.80
Acct. #001-1000-010-1170 - Tax Collector

3b. Merit Review Anniversary Increases – Mayor

3c. Consider and Approve an Appropriation in the Amount of \$4,000 to
Donations Acct #213-1042-070-7010 and to Expenditures Acct # 213-3070-600-
6000 – Youth and Social Services

3d. Consider and Approve the re-appointment of the following members of the
Vocational Agricultural Building Committee for a term concurrent with the Town
Council's 2008-10 term:

Jim Vitale
Tom Wall
Marianne Lacy
David Golebiewski
Tom Vitali
Vernon Cleaves

Frank Raucci
Valerie Ford

- 3e. Consider and approve the re-appointment of Jeffrey Knickerbocker to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a five-year term ending January 8, 2013 – Chairman Mike Brodinsky
- 3f. Consider and Approve the appointment of Thomas Wolfer to the Zoning Board of Appeals as an Alternate for a three-year term ending January 8, 2011– Chairman Mike Brodinsky
- 3g. Consider and Approve the re-appointment of Marci Baxter to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a five-year term ending January 8, 2013 – Chairman Mike Brodinsky
- 3h. Consider and Approve the appointment of Stacey Voss to the Planning and Zoning Commission as an Alternate for a three-year term ending January 8, 2011— Chairman Mike Brodinsky
- 3i. Consider and Approve the re-appointment of James Heilman to the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission as an Alternate for a three-year term ending January 8, 2011 – Chairman Mike Brodinsky
- 3j. Consider and Approve the appointment of Kathy Avery as Justice of the Peace to term expiring January 5, 2009 – Chairman Mike Brodinsky
- 3k. Consider and Approve the following as Constables for the Town of Wallingford for a Two-year Term Expiring January 25, 2010 - Chairman Mike Brodinsky
 - Joseph Dacunto
 - Timothy Wall
 - Mario DiNatale
 - William Nolan

Mr. Testa moved to accept the Consent Agenda Items 3a to 3k, seconded by Mr. Farrell. All councilors present (9) voted Aye and the motion carried.

WAIVE RULE V

Mr. Testa made a motion to Waive Rule V for the Council to consider a Bid Waiver requested by Public Works. Mr. Farrell seconded the motion.

Mr. Testa explained Rule V and its timing in accordance with the published agenda for the current meeting. All councilors present (9) voted Aye, and the motion carried to Waive Rule V to add an item to the agenda.

Mr. Testa made a motion to Approve a Bid Waiver for the Purchase of processed stone and asphalt for the maximum aggregate price of \$15,000 during the period of time of April 9 to April 23 as requested by Public Works. Mr. Farrell seconded the motion

Henry McCully, Director of Public Works, explained that this is the interim period when the State of Connecticut's annual bid for the previous year is closed but before the new bid has been made public. Having the bid waiver, allows Public Works to continue with road projects during this period.

All councilors present (9) voted Aye and the motion carried.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

The following people participated in the Public Question and Answer Period

Jason Zandri, Lincoln Avenue, talked about the importance of having the Town Council Meetings available, not only on DVD at the library, but also on the web. Chairman Brodinsky said that the process is still being tested. Mayor Dickinson said that there are no plans to add additional meetings to the web.

Geno Zandri, 9 Balsam Ridge Circle, said that he opposed the appointments in the Consent Agenda of Marci Baxter to the Planning and Zoning Commission and Jeffrey Knickerbocker to the Zoning Board of Appeals. He said that the system for appointments is flawed and one of the reasons that the town needs an Charter Revision.

Bob Gross, 114 Long Hill Road, asked about the Contingency Fund in relation to available funds to hire a consultant to perform the study of the Police Station growth as it relates to the Wooding Caplan property. There are about \$220,000 in Contingency. Mr. Gross added his approval to see the Town Council meetings on the internet. Mayor Dickinson said that with the Town's own website that it is an increasing demand on the staff of the Program Planning Office. He continued looking to have a better software package will allow changes to be made by the personnel in the office. He said that these things take time and it comes to what is essential and what is nice to have as in every budget.

5. Budget Workshops (T3 6:07:06)

Discussion and Possible Action concerning the 2008-09 Budget, including but not limited to Consideration of the Budget issues listed on the attached for April 8, 2008.

(Note: Councilors are to advise the Chairman as soon as possible as to which department heads they want to appear at the Workshop. This is a Council Workshop format; we will no have Public Questions or Comments at the Budget Workshops.)

- Chairman Mike Brodinsky

The following departments participated in the Budget Workshop for the Fiscal Year 2008-09

Board of Education

Dale Wilson, Superintendent of Schools
Linda Winters, Business Manager
Michael Votto, Board of Education Member
Roxanne McKay, Board of Education Member

Mr. Wilson began by presenting where they are at this point is regard to the Mayor's 3.9%, which is about half of what was requested. At the Operations Committee meeting in March, it was reported that the BOE has just below \$900,000 in surplus at that time and that they have frozen spending at this point and that this amount of surplus will grow by the end of the fiscal year. He said that the medical insurance increase is 5.9% and they had budgeted 10% increase in the budget for next year so there is a savings of \$330,000 and this will be cut from next year's budget. He said that there in the process of bidding as many items and projects that they can do and are in the budget for next year and they are hoping to receive favorable bid prices that will allow us savings in those accounts as well for next year. He said that he is in the process of reviewing all of their staffing needs in K-12, teachers and papa-professionals. He stated that they hope that this will be favorable as well for the BOE. He continued that after this if there is a shortfall, then they will make the appropriate cuts in next year's budget in June. He said that all in all he said does not feel there are any major concerns with this budget increase of 3.9% and that they believe that they will be able to work it out.

Mr. Spiteri asked about building improvements that have been increased by about \$300,000 and what plans the BOE had for those funds. Ms. Winters said that they had a pre-purchase of \$291,000 and some of the projects that are budgeted for next year are a boiler room, drainage code update at Stevens, Pond Hill and Lyman Hall, which is required by DEP. She said that they are installing stage drapes at Sheehan, and lighting retrofits, which will reduce their electricity account as a result of the kilowatt-hour usage reduction. She said that the lighting retrofits are being staged over several years. She said that next year they would do Rock Hill, Lyman Hall and Highland. She said that the pay back for that project is 2.4 years. Mr. Wilson said that the overall increase for next year without the pre-buy is \$851,000 in Plant and Maintenance, and that with the pre-buy it's \$421,000. He said over the last few years he has increased this line and will continue to do so in future years, and the actual increase for next year is \$500,000 in Plant and Maintenance.

Ms. Rascati asked if the about the drainage updates and whether this is done every year. Mr. Wilson said that last year they had a spill at Pond Hill School and when the DEP came they followed up and inspected all of our schools and they have informed the BOE that there are a number of things that have to be done at each school in the boiler rooms. He said that this DEP mandate is being phased in over the next 4 years. She asked if this was not known in the bonding that did all of the

schools at once. Mr. Wilson said no and that the incident was only one year and a half ago.

Ms. Rascati asked next about the lighting retrofit and why it couldn't have been done when we did all the schools. Mr. Wilson said that they are getting rebates back through the Electric Division, and that this was a recent decision to start a three-year project in retrofitting the lighting for energy savings and efficient lighting and the budget reflects the reduced amount. He said that all of this was not known at the beginning of the building project nine years ago.

Ms. Rascati next asked about duct cleaning. Mr. Wilson said that this has never been done and that this is year three. Mr. Votto added that this project did not accomplish everything that they wanted, so there are still things that need to be done and to remember value engineering caused some things to be cut. He said that the budget includes things that could not be accomplished with the big project and that they want to maintain the schools and to continue to make them better.

Mr. Testa asked for an overview of the additional staffing that is in their budget. Mr. Wilson said that they have 4 certified positions – 2 language arts, reading and writing at the elementary level; a transition counselor at the high school to work with special needs students to transition them from school into the workplace; and a Grade 7 special education teacher at Moran to meet NCLB mandates. He said that for non-certified they are increasing a clerk from 11 to 12 months in the PPS office and full-time security guards at the high school; a full-time nursing assistant at Lyman Hall High School.

Mr. Testa asked where in the budget are the expenses for Education Television at Sheehan High School. Mr. Wilson said that is an in-kind service. He said that Dave Burghart prepares tapes for access TV. He said that they don't purchase any equipment and that it's really labor and under the Tech Department. There are no additional costs. He said that for board meeting or for different activities at the schools that tapes are sent to him and then are put on local access. He said there is no line item for that. Mr. Testa asked if he had other responsibilities as an employee of the IT Department, and Mr. Wilson said that he did. Mr. Wilson confirmed for Mr. Testa that they don't have technicians or people that work specifically on the Education TV and that sometimes the secretary.

Mr. Testa asked what the policy is on gasoline for vehicles, cars and who drives company cars and if anyone has personal use of vehicles. Mr. Wilson said that no one drives home with a car. He said that they supply for maintenance, food service, for the courier, IT has vans all during work hours only. Mr. Testa said that he understood that anyone doing Board of Education business as part of their job and using a Board of Ed vehicle that the vehicle uses BOE gas and that if people drive their own vehicles, they get reimbursed for gas. Mr. Wilson said that is contractual either reimbursement or a stipend. Mr. Testa confirmed with Mr. Wilson that no one is filling their own, personal gas tank with BOE gas.

Mr. Testa next asked for an overview of Special Education transportation budget. He said that he doesn't think that people appreciate the extent of that expense and where it comes from and how hard it is to budget. Ms. Winters said that Special Ed transportation is based on the actual number of vehicles that we have for the current year. She said that the contractual increase for next year is 2% for Special Ed. Ms. Winters said Special Ed transportation for next year is \$1.9 million and that includes transporting students, who attend our Wallingford schools and also any outplacements based on special needs. Mr. Testa asked if it is broken out -internal and external. Ms. Winters said that she could get the information to Mr. Testa. Mr. Testa said that he wanted an understanding and appreciation of what we pay to transport special education students to outplacements and also to include in the information the outplacement tuitions as a separate line item.

Mr. LeTourneau asked about the expenses to the schools that have gone through the renovations and that not everything could be put into the school renovation project according to Mr. Votto's statement. He said that he has gone through the budget school by school. He said that at Moses Y. Beach School that some of the items are not a lot of money. He talked about ceilings at \$5,700 in Rooms 2, 3 and 4, and drinking fountains, which is a \$20,000 5-year project. He wanted to know why they weren't part of the School Renovation project and asked that if they were put into that project, wouldn't the town be eligible for some of that money to come back. Mr. Wilson said that this was capped at a certain expense and that it goes back 9 years and before that when they were developing the project. He said that \$11 million was cut from the project. He said that the Council decided what number to support and fund and made it clear that was the amount. He said that with the administration and the principals they had to cut that back to stay under the cap that was given to the Board of Education by the Council. As a result there were a number of things that were eliminated from the renovation project. Mr. LeTourneau said that now we have come down to pay me now or pay me later, and now it's later, and in essence it going to cost us more because taking out of the project that we will not get reimbursed for some of this.

Mayor Dickinson said that the renovation project was never a re-building of all of our schools. He said that there were specific areas of 11 of the 12 schools that were in need renovation improvement. He said that in no way were all classrooms or all aspects of most of the schools the subject of funding. He said that anything that is a maintenance issue would not be reimbursable by the State of Connecticut. He said the media centers and external areas, for example, Lyman Hall had more internal work done than others did. Mr. LeTourneau recognized that there will always be ongoing maintenance but there are items that are in the budget that should have been in the project. Mr. Votto said that in last 10 years since the renovation plan was established that many things are not broken or appear a need to be fixed that were not in the renovation project. He said that ceiling tiles can develop leaks within ten years. He pointed to things that had to be cut out, that steel and labor costs went up and that new things have developed since the project was put together. He said that their money was well spent in that three schools now have an entry-way, that there are media centers and that air-quality is improved.

Chairman Brodinsky asked for an update on the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program. Mr. Wilson acknowledged the tragedy in the loss of a police officer last fall. He said that in his talks with Chief Dortenzio they have tried to get assistance from the State of Connecticut to get an officer in and that is exhausted. It didn't work out. In meeting with the elementary principals, they put a plan together so the teachers will complete all of the DARE curriculum. Letters will go to the parents informing them of what their plan and will commence very shortly. He continued by saying that next year is to get some training which is not easy to get in the State of Connecticut. He said that he and Chief Dortenzio hope that in August or the fall that they have an officer trained so that they can take over for DARE. Mr. Votto asked that if an officer came forward that the Board would help train and get this person started.

Chairman Brodinsky asked about future trends with respect to class size and teacher-student ratios, understanding that it is different on grade levels. He asked also if in the future they see any expense or revenue trends that are alarming that cause a red flag to go up. Mr. Wilson said that they are always concerned with ECS and not getting as much next year and that is money that goes directly to the town and not to BOE but decisions with regard to the BOE budget are made. He said they try to keep class counts for K, 1, 2 at 20 for teacher and Grade 3, 4, 5 at 25. He said that he tries to stay right at that. He said that if it goes over 1 or 2, he tries to add a teacher to maintain the student-teacher ratio. At the middle school level the count is 25 and at the high school it's 10 or 12 to 28 or 29 depending on the course and the grade. He said that the Master Plan included looking at Grades 3, 4 and 5 to start reducing those to 20 if it can be done in the budget one year at a time. He addressed space in some school where they don't have very much space. He said that enrollment is going down, and the trend is about 100 students per year. He pointed out that when you consider a decrease of 100 students across the school system, and 12 grades, and 613 teachers, it has very little impact. He said that they will be looking at this trend over the next 5 to 10 years. A report from the State of Connecticut shows over ten years it will be 1,000 students less.

Chairman Brodinsky asked if the BOE was currently renting space. Mr. Wilson said that they are renting for PPS Services, Administration Services. He referred to the Sheehan renovation process saying that they have very tight quarters. He said that Food Services employees were in the basement and not a good climate. He said that PPS Services had no room to meet with parents. He said that he recommended to the Board they rent for PPS administrative staff and teachers and it was approved by the Board. He said that Food Service office was relocated to the old PPS office. He said that they rent for alternative school and the Harvest Park special program.

Chairman Brodinsky asked how much it costs and how much space is rented. Mr. Wilson said he would get that information for him.

Mr. Testa in response to Mr. Votto's question said that he wants an understanding of how much outplacement costs us, specifically for the transportation and tuition

since he does not think that the public understands what a large chunk of the budget that is.

Ms. Winters said that outplacements for private is budgeted at \$2,944,796 million and Public \$1,109,686, which is offset by a grant that they get from the State of Connecticut, the State Agency Placement and the Access Cost Grant budgeted at \$1,965,617. She said that those are the total costs for outplacements for special education. Mr. Testa asked of transportation is included in those numbers. Ms. Winters said that transportation is a separate line item and the figure that she gave represents all special education. She said that she would send Mr. Testa outplacement transportation separately.

Mr. Spiteri asked it could also include the services that we provide for other towns that we get reimbursement for.

Mr. Testa, referring to the high school Master Plan, said that in 2009-10 they have assessed the need to expand the high school athletic program or additional male and female sports and in 2010-11, three years from now, is to act on the recommendation. He said that he knows that Master Plan items can move around. He pointed to high school lacrosse, he understands that the athletic department will study it in two years and possibly implement it in three years and that is the soonest. Mr. Wilson said that they look at it every year and that it is subject to change. Mr. Testa expressed his excitement at this program and that he would like to see it as soon as is possible.

Health (T 3 6:44:16)

Eloise Hudd, Director of Health Department

Mr. Spiteri said that one of the areas that has impact the budget is the part-time public health education and asked the duties are going to be. Ms. Hudd explained that the responsibility would be in develop and coordinate and implement an environmental and public health wellness and education activities for the town and employees of the town. She said that currently she does it and that she can't do as much as she would like to do. She has had several opportunities to attend meeting, including asthma and lead poisoning and prevention, that she cannot attend so that having an health educator would allow her to attend these meetings and to participate them fully. The position would be from a community health aspect and from a town employee aspect. She said that she has a lot of ideas and programs that she thinks can be implemented with another staff person

Chairman Brodinsky asked about septic inspections and approvals. He wanted to know how that is going. She said that when housing is down that repairs are up. She said with older septic systems with expansions and failures which required that to do site investigations. She said that their response time for a failing system, they try to accommodate the home-owner and the installer within a day or two. She said that for new property, they coordinate with the engineer. Chairman Brodinsky asked about lead testing. Ms. Hudd said that if they have a child who is lead poisoned by law they do an environmental investigation and case management.

She said she is certified to do it. She said that they contract to have the inspection done, and they do the report for the Town of Wallingford.

Veteran Affairs

Robert Hoover

Mr. Parisi asked how many hours Mr. Hoover work per week, and the response was 20 hours per week. Mr. Paris asked how that is working out. Mr. Hoover said that for now it is working fine after the four months that he has been in the Veterans' Office. Mr. Parisi asked about people from Meriden. Mr. Hoover said about 65 % are from Meriden and 35% are from Wallingford.

Mr. Parisi asked the Mayor asked about the balance payment. Mayor Dickinson said that Meriden is billed for 50% and that the town receives about 30%. He said that has been a long standing thing, and he doesn't expect that it's going to change and that nothing has been done about the balance, which keeps growing from year to year.

To Mr. Hoover, Mr. Parisi asked if he was covering all of the daily business in running the office by himself. Mr. Hoover said that he was. He reviewed the hours of the office and said that the office is very accessible.

Mr. Farrell talked about a bus that the state sends out, attempting to get services that are very similar to what our office is providing, to communities on a mobile basis, and he asked if that is something that Mr. Hoover has looked at to supplement the work he is doing. Mr. Hoover said that is something that they might do once per year and that it is not accessible to people in Meriden and Wallingford. Mr. Farrell asked if perhaps he could inquire if it could be available at, for example, Celebrate Wallingford where lots of people come and who might not be able to come to Town Hall during business hours. Mr. Hoover agreed that it would make sense and that he would look into that.

Mr. LeTourneau inquired of the Mayor how we could bring this to resolve with Meriden in the short payment. Mayor Dickinson said that he doesn't think that there is anything that can be done and that it comes down to whether we want to continue to provide services to Meriden. He does not think that we should cut off services to the Meriden residents recognizing that Meriden has its own issues and problems like Wallingford. He doesn't think that we should cut off the service. Mr. LeTourneau asked how much is owed to Wallingford. Mr. Bowes said that it started 4 or 5 years ago when the town would submit an invoice to Meriden for half of the costs. There were small incremental differences over the last 4 or 5 years. He said that the reduced payment was due to budget cuts and that this service is considered a social service contribution. He said that he thinks that the total balance is around \$40,000 to \$50,000. He said that in the future we might gather some of that back. Mr. LeTourneau asked that this be monitored. Mayor Dickinson also noted that the office staff no longer travels to Meriden as in the past.

Government Access Television

Don Roe, Director of Program Planning
Scott Hanley, GATV Manager

Mr. Spiteri, asked about the schedule about automating the cameras in the Council Chambers. Mr. Roe said that they have been looking at cameras that are automated camera that can be controlled from the studio production area and that a definitive decision has not been made on the piece of equipment. He said that one of the considerations is the mounting and the appearance that would give the Council Chambers. He said it is less obtrusive that what we have now. He said that want everyone to know what it will entail. Mr. Spiteri asked about a schedule in this budget.

Mr. Hanley said that he is waiting for the release of a new Sony camera that is a better investment and that is driving the process. They are now looking at how to best wire the cameras with video cables normally used to network computers. He said that the aesthetics of the room are a concern.

Mr. Row added that going the route that they don't need to be so concerned about access to power. Mr. Hanley said that using the Category 5 cables that you can run power on the cable, and that we would not need to install outlets at each camera which would have impact on the look of the room and the expense of the system.

Chairman Brodinsky asked about the status of Appropriations In Force from the 2006 budget for things like Distribution Equipment for \$2,600, etc.

Mr. Hanley said that they are items that we've had to re-budget because manufacturers discontinue items so they have to find replacement items and most of this is for monitors and that they are looking at LCD monitors. He said that they had expectations that the market would bring certain items forward but that has not happened, and now the products that are available are three times the price that they anticipated, so they are trying to address that. He said that is why the money has not been spent.

Chairman Brodinsky asked what the advantages and disadvantages of milling out these Appropriations In Force and then put them in as a new budget request for a new appropriation.

Mr. Bowes said that he sends a memo to department heads in May for an update on their Appropriations In Force, and which ones need to be carried forward and why. He said that the memo addresses past budget and current budget years. He said that if a department has acquired what the money was budgeted for and there are funds left in the account, and then he advises that they close it out. For Government TV expenditures, it is a case he said that is an ongoing capital replacement of their production and distribution equipment, and they are constantly in the need to keep up with it. Chairman Brodinsky expressed his interest in Appropriations In Force with other departments too.

Mr. Testa asked if Government TV currently records digitally. Mr. Hanley said in some way that they do and that they record directly to DVDs and telecast those and they do a tape backup that is not digital. He said that there are plans this year to install a video server that is in the budget in order to play back files, computer files. He said that they plan to record computer files here as well and to not have the DVD in the process and this will streamline the process. Mr. Testa asked if the new cameras are digital. Mr. Hanley said that they are. He said that going all digital is a little involved and expensive to create an entire digital path for video equipment and that it has to be done incrementally, which is one of the reasons he is waiting to buy the cameras. He said the cameras are higher quality cameras and they intend to build back from the cameras toward the control room. He said that they hope that they can become entirely digital but that it is not critical at this point. He said that as the equipment costs for new equipment come down, we hope to move in that direction. Mr. Testa asked about streaming over the internet. Mr. Hanley said that the test that he has done is to take the files from the DVDs but that in the future they could take files that are recorded directly to a computer and compress them for internet, use which is simple process. He said that now it's more involved in that he has to take the material from the DVD which is a step that can be eliminated in the future and make it even more efficient

Mr. Roe said that he thought that there was a three-year window in capital accounts and in particular camera acquisition that they budget over a period of years to amass the pot that is necessary. Consequently, this way of budgeting might distort the concerns about capital accounts. Mr. Bowes said that if there is a large capital expenditure that we know, and gave an example of revaluation and that finance puts away each year for five years to avoid spiking in the year that they money is used.

Chairman Brodinsky asked in what situations would a large capital purchase be in the Capital and Non-Recurring, staged over three years, and at what point would that be an Appropriations In Force account. Mr. Bowes said that would never come into an Appropriations In Force because they are items that were budgeted in the General Fund. He said that Capital and Non-Recurring is a different bookkeeping. Chairman Brodinsky posed a scenario of a \$200,000 purchase, a large item that will last over time, and the department wants to budget that in three phases and asked if the money appropriated in the first and second year would end up in Appropriations In Force. Mr. Bowes said that is correct. Chairman Brodinsky asked if they look at a number that it doesn't have to be that phased in purchase but that it could be something that was fully funded and there is money left over so we don't know unless we ask. Mr. Bowes said that some departments will budget to replace based upon a schedule, for instance, a PC replacement cycle. He said that you could plan the purchase of three computers in the third year and appropriate one of them in each year of three.

Economic Development

Don Roe, Director of Program Planning
Joseph Mirra, Vice Chairman,
Economic Development Commission

Mr. Roe introduced the panel saying that Mr. Mirra is in attendance in place of the Chairman, Richard Nunn, who is recovering from illness.

Ms. Rascati asked about the line for Meetings, Seminars and Dues, saying that the Mayor has approved a small amount unlike the past approvals. Mr. Mirra said that the Commission voted not to approve the RGP for this year. Mr. Roe said that after nine years of membership that the decrease represents not continuing to pay dues to the Regional Growth Partnership. He continued saying that a year ago RGP began a re-organization. He said that the Board was reconstituted and the Executive Director moved to another job. He said that while the EDC continued their membership that they monitored what has been going on. He said that what they want to say to the Council is that they are taking a "time-out." He said that EDC believes that regional economic development is a thing to be involved with but with the reorganization they aren't sure about it. They still cannot justify membership since there aren't enough concrete specifics to defend the membership.

Chairman Brodinsky asked about advertising and results of the advertising. Mr. Mirra said that:

2005-06

136 inquiries/35 went to the next level and brought in 13 firms

2006-07

133 inquiries/37 went to the next level and brought in 12 firms

Chairman Brodinsky asked how do they know that it is the advertising that brought the inquiries. Mr. Mirra said it's in tracking the leads as they moved on. Mr. Mirra gave a general example of the process, saying that contact is made and EDC replies with the information that the contact has asked; the next level is they either come to town or hire a real estate firm to get more information. He said that it is in the discussion that they know about the advertising. Mr. Roe said that they have prepared a yearly report and he thought that it was coming directly to the Council during the summer. Chairman Brodinsky said that he is not sure that it addressed this question. Mr. Roe said that it catalogues the number of firms that request assistance and how that request originated – national advertising, brokers, direct contacts, etc. They report results around that and most firms who come to Wallingford come through direct contact, broker contact or Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) contact.

Chairman Brodinsky asked if the first contact with Wallingford inquires about a tax incentive program. Mr. Roe said that it is asked but not necessarily the initial question and that he could not generalize or that they track it that closely. He said that it comes up more frequently than not and it is one of the standard questions. He said that to record the message of the basic information of the call for Ms. Sarro

that he uses the contact sheet knowing that she will follow up and pursue more specific information.

Mayor Dickinson said the answer to the question is "yes" we do have a tax incentive program.

Mr. DiNatale left the meeting

Youth and Social Services

Craig Turner, Director of Youth and Social Services

Chairman Brodinsky said it looks like various small community (Line 9021) grants have been lumped together in the aggregate of \$17,000. Mr. Turner referred to page 42 and pointed to Professional Services that are contracted through grants making process administered by our Advisory Board, which is the Wallingford Board for Youth and \$17,000 is allotted for the next fiscal year for those contracted professional services. He said that a decision of the amount that each professional service is awarded is not determined by the time the budget is printed. He said the lump sum that total figure. He said that the Community Grants line would not have \$17,000 in the final document. He said that what would be reflected would be a total of \$17,000 that is paired out to the awarded contract for providing that service, for instance, Big Brothers/Sisters, Boys and Girls Club, the Wallingford VNA, Boy/Girl Scouts and others listed. He said that determination has been made by the Finance Committee of the Wallingford Board for Youth. He said that it still needs to be approved by the entire board at their next meeting and will be ready before the Public Hearing. Chairman Brodinsky asked about their criteria. Mr. Turner said that the criteria is to provide a meaningful contribution to the community in terms of working with youth or family and meeting a gap in services that they or another agency do not necessarily provide. He gave an example of funding a young mothers' program that works with teenagers that includes Wallingford and there is no other program in this area that offers such a program. The Board reviews application and makes a determination. Chairman Brodinsky asked why the VNA since the town already has another line for them. Mr. Turner said the Wallingford VA provides a program to the Spanish community for mothers and parenting and is seen by the Board for Youth as a viable program contributing a service that is not otherwise provided. Returning to the hospital program held at Mid-State, Mr. Turner said that the Board for Youth funds do not fund the whole program and he said that Hartford Hospital, the parent hospital, also funds this program for young mothers.

Mr. Parisi asked how groups know to make an application for funds. Mr. Turner said that the common way would be connection through the Board for Youth. He said that most Social Servants community based agencies in the community have a representative on the board. He said other agencies call them for applications. Mr. Parisi referred to other community service organization that is not an agency and how would this type of group learn of the opportunity to request a grant. Mr. Turner said by accessing a member of the board. He said that they do not advertise or an announcement. He said that he would look at how it is promoted to see if

they can do something different to make it a broader sweep. Mr. Paris said perhaps to expand some of the categories that are presently participating. Mr. Turner said that the categories that are listed reflect those that were funded last year, so that it changes every year. One of the issues that is inherent in the process is that the Board does due diligence to make sure that the program that is running and being funded is still a substantive program and that there is not a redundancy.

Wallingford Center, Inc.

Rick Myers, Executive Director

Steve Lazarus, President, Wallingford Center, Inc.

T. J. Pagor, Treasurer, Wallingford Center, Inc.

Chairman Brodinsky pointed out the budget reduction as proposed by the Mayor and asked what are they going to do in view of the cut. Mr. Myers said that the budget would cover office expenses and salaries with little left over for programs unless they go into their reserves, which may be necessary. He said that they have set aside a six-month cash reserve included in the financial report that was submitted to the Council. Chairman Brodinsky said that Wallingford Center Inc has gotten an infusion of new cash and is a big boost. He asked what programs will the community see that hasn't been done before. Mr. Myers said that they would be continuing the successful streetscape program, would continue Celebrate Wallingford, the two-day street festival, and they will try to infuse other programs if funds become available through grants and corporate sponsorships. He said that in this economy it is difficult to raise money for existing or new programs. Chairman Brodinsky asked what will not be possible to do with the cut of \$70,000 in the budget. Mr. Myers said that Celebrate Wallingford will continue and the streetscape program. He said that since the rear parking lot would be rehabbed that the Simpson Court Traffic Island Project at a cost of \$40,000 will not go forward. He said that it has been cut. Mr. Myers said that they received an line item for the façade improvement program of \$10,000 which will enable WCI to provide downtown property and business owners with the opportunity to apply for a \$2,000 grant, the maximum, to rehab the façade of their buildings. He said to apply you need to be in the downtown district, WCI has a design team who evaluates and draws up plans and color schemes for the building. He said that they sent it out for a cost estimate and if, for example, the project cost is \$2,000, then the business owner and WCI each pay \$1,000, so it's a matching grant up to \$2,000 cap. Chairman Brodinsky asked why the Simpson Court Island wouldn't be a Public Works project. The Mayor agreed that it really is and that it was discussed. He said that the primary reason that it isn't in here is because he doesn't think that all of the parking can be torn up at the same time. He said that input from WCI as to what should be done and how it should look would certainly be valuable for Engineering and Public Works. Mr. Lazarus said that part of that project that they are best at they have already done and the most helpful at is to provide design drawings to give a direction as to how the Simpson Court Island would be re-done. He said that at the appropriate time it would be of great use to the town as the project proceeds. He agrees that would not be in this next year with the amount of work in this area and create too much disruption. Chairman Brodinsky asked Mr.

Lazarus if he did the designs. Mr. Lazarus said that the designs were provided gratis by Lazarus and Sargent.

Mr. LeTourneau asked about Celebrate Wallingford considering the loss of revenue from a sponsor. Mr. Myers said that Cytek was the corporate sponsor for 15 years, which is highly unusual for a corporation to stay with an organization and making a large contribution. Celebrate Wallingford will be phased out by Cytek. Celebrate Wallingford was a separate line item in the budget from the town, and it didn't appear this year. He said that last year it was \$8,000 and that this year they requested \$15,900. He said that it would be scaled back if they don't receive additional contributions in their fundraising projects.

Mr. Testa asked about saving the bricks when Simpson Court Island is done. Mr. Lazarus said that there would be more bricks and more focused planting areas. Mr. Testa wanted to know about their reserves. Mr. Myers said that they have \$30,000.

Mr. Spiteri wanted to know about the rear of Simpson Court but it is not a WCI project.

Mr. Parisi asked about Cytek's contribution. Mr. Myers said that in the past it was \$10,000 and that this year it will be \$6,000, then \$3,000, and finally in the third year \$1,000. He said that they still need \$10,000 for tents for Taste of Wallingford for the promotional materials and general operating expenses for the event. He said that it isn't a moneymaker. Mr. Parisi asked about their profit. Mr. Myers said that they lost \$15,000 and that it isn't viewed as a fundraiser. Mr. Parisi said that he didn't realize that they lost money.

Mr. Testa said in light of the budget if they still planned on the ambassador position. The answer was no.

A recess that was called at 8:32 P.M. was reconvened at 9:00 P.M.

The Workshop continued with the following departments.

Law - Janis Small, Town Attorney (T4; 8:10:30)

Chairman Brodinsky asked about the status about the Labor Relations Attorney, which he understands just went out to bid

Attorney Small said that the bids are due next week, and Purchasing and Law review the qualification section first to see how many meet the specs and depending on how many there are, they will make a decision whether to do interviewing, which she expects they would. She said that at the conclusion when everyone is scored, the envelopes will be opened. Chairman Brodinsky asked if it is a flat fee bid. Attorney Small said that for labor she did it both ways, the bidders can provide hourly or lump sum. She said that last time that she did this, she recalls that is difficult for some to provide a lump sum to a maximum. It's capped and that there will be variations as some will say that they will provide a certain number of

hours per month, per year. She said that for Worker's Compensation, she went straight hourly. Chairman Brodinsky asked if most are flat fee type of bids, every lawyer knows what we are paying now because it's in the budget. He asked if the lowest, responsible bidder been awarded the contract in the last 5 or 6 years in terms of price. He said that if they are bidding at a flat fee, and it looks like we are at \$90,000 year after year, did anyone ever come in lower than \$90,000. Attorney Small said that she doesn't believe so, and if so, that it would stand out in her mind but that she would check. She said if the bid ended up being awarded to someone who didn't come in on the cost factor that she would remember. Referring to copies of bills, Chairman Brodinsky said he hoped it was obvious in that how do we know how much work they are doing when we hire at \$90,000. She said that we are billed on a monthly basis for the same amount with an itemization of the hours provided. She said that the backup is available at any time. She said that she has collected them, and they are free to review them. she said that it can be as low as \$30,000 and as high as \$167,000, so she thinks that we have definitely gotten out money's worth.. She has no qualms in doing it in this manner. Chairman Brodinsky asked how much is out in subrogation that town now trying to recover in a dollar amount. Attorney Small does not have the answer to that and it is now carried in the report. Chairman Brodinsky said that he asked in looking for a savings and wanted to know if any is farmed out. She proudly said that they farm out very little work from the Law Office and that they do as much in house as they possible can.

Finance - Debt Service, Revenues in General, Reserves-Appropriations in Force
James Bowes, Comptroller

Debt Service

Chairman Brodinsky said that Debt Service is the cost to bond various projects.

Mr. Testa wanted an explanation of new debt financing. Mr. Bowes said that the new line item - debt financing - is utilized for bonds that we are anticipating to issues but we haven't and are going to start re-paying in the fiscal year 2008-09. Secondly, he said is to cash fund certain projects that are authorized for bonding by the Town Council that we do not bond or a piece of that. He said most of it is anticipated repayment of debt that is in the hopper not yet issued. Mr. Testa asked if he said there were identified projects that funds are earmarked for. Mr. Bowes said yes and said there are two projects, one for \$4.5 million for the library Renovation Project and \$4.5 million for the 11-School Building Renovation Project, which is ongoing for a total of \$9 million at an interest rate of 4.25% and that he used 4.5% as a safety net. He said that if we take the principal repayment for next fiscal year plus the interest it totals \$1,005,000. He said then it would not appear in the 2009-10 budget in the new debt financing budget line but will be incorporated into the two lines, principal and interest. Mr. Testa summarized the conversation saying that they are known expenses that expected to be spent for bonds that we know are doing. Mr. Bowes confirmed.

Mr. Farrell said that he knows that other municipalities are having a great deal of difficulty with their bonding, not necessarily in Connecticut, but nation-wide

because of what is going on in the financial markets. He said that there is difficulty getting bonds sold when they are issued and also certain states like Florida the municipalities put money into funds that were collateralizations of sub-prime mortgages. Mr. Bowes said that they are backed by CMO – Collateralized Mortgage Obligations. Mr. Farrell wanted to know if that is an issue in Connecticut or for Wallingford in our bonding. Mr. Bowes said no that by Connecticut State Statutes, Connecticut municipalities cannot tie it into any other derivative type of product and that he tries to keep bond issues very straight forward, plain vanilla and boring because he thinks that is what the folks on Wall Street like to see. He said you can get really fancy and he thinks that Mr. Farrell is talking about various interest rate swaps, which are very sophisticated and almost as much a legal transaction as a financial one.

Chairman Brodinsky referred to the \$1,005,000 new debt financing in the budget and wanted to know how much bonding that represents. He roughly figures \$20 million. Mr. Bowes said that he is projecting to do a 15-year issue, for a level life would come down to \$600,000 in principal in the first year's interest 4.5% would be \$405,000. Chairman Brodinsky said at 15 years, what would be the face value of the bonds that we could float for \$1,005,000. How many millions of dollars could we bond out at 4.25%.

Mr. Bowes said \$9 million at an interest rate of 4.5%. Chairman Brodinsky asked about the interest rate payable on those kinds of bonds – 10-years, 15-years and 20-years. Mr. Bowes said the 10-year bonds are trading in the area of 4.10%, the 15-year in the area of 4.25% to 4.30% and then toward 20-years maturity, it's 4.35% to 4.40%. Mr. Bowes said that our bonds have been 10, 12, 15, and 20 years and that by Connecticut State Statute, general obligation debt is a maximum life of 20 years. He said that the bond issue in March of 2007 was a mix. It was a \$15 million total bond issue and the land purchase portions of it were at 15-years and the portions of the School Renovation were much larger and they went out at 20-years. He said that within the bond sale you could do a variable maturity schedule. When they work with a Financial Advisor, an underwriting advisor, they run several scenarios with them when it comes to bonding.

Chairman Brodinsky asked if the April 2008 bond schedule does not contemplate this new debt financing. Mr. Bowes confirmed that it does not.

Chairman Brodinsky asked if we added that in – you bonded the \$9 million and that chewed up the entire \$1,005,000- how much would that add to the bonding schedule in P & I. in a yearly P & I payment. He added if we used up the \$1,005,000 that is in the budget for bonds not cash, we didn't pay for anything is cash, just issued bonds, how much would that add to our yearly principal & interest payment. Mr. Bowes said that it would add \$600,000 for the next 15 years to our principal and in the year one \$405,000 to our interest and then the interest would go down significantly each year for the next 15 years, which is \$1,000,000 in year one and then decreases unlike a mortgage.

Mr. Testa talked about the repayment schedule is not the same as a fixed rate

15-year amortization of a mortgage

Revenues in General

Ms. Rascati asked about salary & wages on Page 21 showing that wages went down and that overtime went up. She asked if there was an unfilled position or a part-time position. Mr. Bowes said that the overtime stayed the same and that there was an elimination of a position that was discussed at the last Town Council meeting. He said that it will be a savings of \$60,000 or more plus benefits.

Mr. LeTourneau asked about mail and copy center expenses of \$125,000. Mr. Bowes said the Comptroller's Office was charged with running the mail and copy center, which was established a long time ago. He said that the copy center does large copy jobs and postage for Town Hall so that charges go to the user department and not just the Finance Department. He said that it is also facilitates the purchase of large machines.

Mr. Spiteri asked about Line Item 9910, Information Systems, and what is the status of that. Mr. Bowes said that they completed their review with Information Technology (IT) people, and it will go out as early as Friday to install the new system. Mr. Bowes said that the Bid Waiver that they received from the Council to do an RFP was to replace the system that they now have but they will be able to build upon them in the future.

Mayor Dickinson added that the bid price for the utility billing came in well above what was anticipated and that he is concerned about what might happen. He said that utility came in at \$500,000, and they thought that would also include the finance system but does not. He said that the issue of any extras would certainly be impacted by issues of cost. He said that the final price for utility is being negotiated with the preferred vendor. He said the timetable is to be on the new system by the end of this year because the existing maintenance (*contract*) will end although they may extend another 3 to 6 months. Mr. Spiteri wanted to know what Utilities included. Mr. Bowes said it includes billing for all three utilities. Mayor Dickinson added that utilities put out that bid on their own and is not under finance and won't be paid for by finance. He said that utility will pay for utility billing portion and the finance portion will be paid for out of general government.

Mr. Testa asked about budgeting for revaluation. Mr. Bowes said that the schedule is for the period, the grand list revaluation date, of October 1, 2010 that goes into effect for FY 2011-12. He said it would go out to bid this fall. He said there are enough funds in the budget. He said that we won't know the exact price until we go through the bidding process.

Chairman Brodinsky asked who gets the overtime. Mr. Bowes said that is for four departments that finance oversees - tax collection, assessments, purchasing and accounting- and that most of the overtime goes to the tax department so that office can be ready for the residents at 9:00 A.M. The tax office opens before 9:00A.M. to set up for the day. He said that about 20% is for assessments. The accounting

department has a portion during year-end. Mr. Bowes said that they reduced the budget for a collection agency because they haven't selected one yet, and he explained the plans for agency selection.

Mr. Economopoulos asked about Direct Deposit. Mr. Bowes said that the new system has specifications for that function but it will only be "turned on" with authorization to do so. Mayor Dickinson said that the hurdle included that fact that the town has multiple pay weeks in addition to weekly paychecks, and he thinks that everyone would have to be on the same pay week. Most banks will not handle two or three different pay weeks, every week. He said that we pay everyone weekly and the frequency with which you are issuing everything does not save any money which is part of it in addition to the fact that we are on 3 different pay weeks every week. Mr. Bowes went into more detail and did not like the \$8,000 quote to update the present system when that system will be replaced in two years.

Mr. Parisi asked if they were saying that it wouldn't ever happen. Mr. Bowes said no. He said that if certain of the obstacles are overcome, then it would be pursued further and that we can do it. Mr. Parisi said it is relatively simple thing to implement. Mayor Dickinson did not agree saying that it is all contractual we have to negotiate, for instance, going from every two weeks to every three weeks, then it has to be negotiated with 15 separate unions. Mr. Parisi asked if retirees fit into any of the now three pay weeks. Mr. Bowes said that if we do it, it would be available to anyone who chooses to sign up for it. Mayor Dickinson said that direct deposit doesn't save any money since the pay stub still has to be printed and distributed as well as when people change their bank. Mr. Parisi said that he is not interested in whether we save money or not but rather that it is a common courtesy for people who have worked for this town for 20 or 30 years and that we create a hardship for them by not offering direct deposit. Mayor Dickinson said he thinks the taxpayer should be protected and if it costs more to do then that has to be weighed. Mr. Parisi said he would like to see some documentation on the cost of the current system, and what it would be for a direct deposit system.

Mr. Economopoulos asked the Mayor to understand the impact on peoples lives and that it would be a service to the town as it enhances efficiency of the worker on pay day.

Revenue

Mr. Testa asked how the Ashlar Village Pilot is determined. Mr. Bowes said that the grand list of their taxable property is subject to what is computed as the General Government's mill rate and is after the budget is adopted and set and when we go out and calculate what the General Government mill rate is versus the school system's mill rate would be which is what the agreement calls for. They spoke of the new building projects, building permits, the real estate conveyance tax, and asked how they were calculated. Mr. Bowes addressed the questions and pointed out changes due to BJs and Loews, which inflated the figures and he included part of a year due to MLN. Mr. Testa asked why is there no revenue for the first six months for recreation permits and licenses compared to \$155,000 last year. Mr.

Bowes said that is the transfer at the end of the year from the Parks and Recreation Special Programs account.

Mr. Parisi clarified the Property Tax line with Mr. Bowes.

Chairman Brodinsky talked about the agreement with Ashlars on the Pilot Program. He asked if the payment if lieu of taxes is a payment made by Ashlars. Mr. Bowes said that is correct. Chairman Brodinsky said that it is a payment pursuant to an agreement that the town signed with Ashlars. Mr. Bowes said that he has not seen the agreement but believes that is correct. Don Roe coordinates the program. Mayor Dickinson referred to a lawsuit, which was settled where Ashlar pays everything except education.

Special Revenues

Mr. Bowes said that in the local capital improvement grant that three grant years are still alive in our budget documents. Mr. Bowes said that the town has to apply for reimbursement with this grant

Town Aid Road Grant that the town receives funds twice a year and that it is not on a reimbursement schedule. It never sees the general fund.

Chairman Brodinsky asked about the taxability of Choate. Mr. Bowes said that most of Choate is tax-exempt as an institute of learning. Choate owns 6 or 7 properties where derive income from rentals, which are taxable. Chairman Brodinsky asked if Choate's property is assessed and then exempted and what is the total that is exempted. Mr. Bowes said that he would provide that information since he does not have that in front of him. Chairman Brodinsky asked about the taxing of the power lines and what are the revenues and what is the growth. Mr. Bowes said that the power line project is on our grand list as of 2/1/2007, and the revenues are reflected in the current tax projection. He talked about the many methods of assessing, and the revenue it would be generating. He said that they went from \$1,000,000 of taxable property prior to 10/01/2007 up to approximately \$25,000,000 in taxable property for the 10/01/2007 grand list, and they should be going up \$10 to \$15 million more for the 10/01/2008 grand list. He said that they did not appeal their assessment. He said that if they get into the \$40 million range that their tax dollars would generate approximately \$920,000.

Mr. Testa wanted to know why we spend the money to assess property that we are not going to tax. Mr. Bowes said he thinks statutes but will let Mr. Testa know after speaking with the Assessor.

Ms. Rascati asked about the Contingency in regard to the increase. Mr. Bowes said that there are some accrued expenses in that account that Mr. Sullivan can address. Mayor Dickinson said that it is for future negotiations.

Chairman Brodinsky asked how property tax revenues are estimated and said that it seems that there is never an over estimation so there is something in the method

that causes the underestimation. Mr. Bowes said that it is in relation to changes in the grand list, errors, tax appeal cases and within what has been collected over the last three years.

Mr. Bowes responded to a question from Mr. Parisi that there is approximately \$2.7 million of taxes in arrears. Mr. Parisi asked if Mr. Bowes could get for the Council the amount in arrears for the three utilities.

6. Executive Session pursuant to §1-200 (6) (D) of the Connecticut General Statutes with respect to the purchase, sale and/or leasing of property – Mayor

Withdrawn

Mr. Farrell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Parisi.

All councilors present (9) voted Aye and the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 P.M.

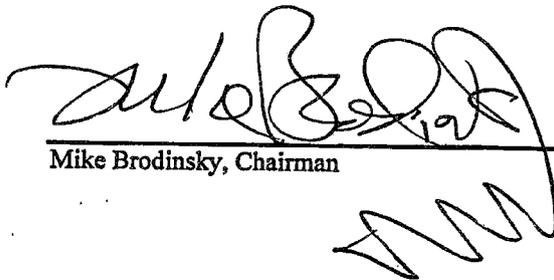
Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Weekes
Town Council Secretary

Meeting recorded by Sandra Weekes

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 4/30/08
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Barbara Kapi TOWN CLERK



Mike Brodinsky, Chairman

5/15/08
Date



Barbara Kapi, Town Clerk

5/15/08
Date