

**REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 4, 2011**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Monday, April 4, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield.

Present: Councilors Drake, Hurley, Kotkin, Manousos, McAlister, Montinieri, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Console, and Chairperson Hemmann.

Also present: Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, RaeAnn Palmer, Assistant Town Manager, Peter Gillespie, Town Planner, Mike Turner, Director of Physical Services, Kathy Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

Councilor Manousos led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Chairperson Hemmann reported that there will not be an Executive Session after the Regular Meeting tonight.

**PROCLAMATIONS**

Connecticut 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Travel Basketball League  
Connecticut 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Travel Basketball League  
Wethersfield 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Travel Basketball  
National Public Health Week

EDIC Report – Reported by Peter Gillespie

**TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD  
Planning and Economic Development Department  
MONTHLY REPORT  
April 2011**

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A Monthly Report From The Planning and Economic Development Department

Prepared By Peter D. Gillespie, Town Planner and Economic Development Manager  
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**RECENT PROJECTS**

- The Planning and Zoning Commission has approved plans for a Chinese take out restaurant at 685 Silas Deane Highway – **Great Wall**. The space is next door to Verizon Wireless.
- New Alliance Bank at 709 Silas Deane Highway is in the process of changing over it's branding to **First Niagara Bank**.
- **Lapila's Home Gallery** has opened at 1057 Silas Deane Highway in the Wethersfield Shopping Center.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission has approved plans for **Rugged Fitness** to open at 1862 Berlin Turnpike (Atlas Tile Plaza).

- **Keville Enterprises** has relocated an office to 912 Silas Deane Highway. Keville is a Construction Management firm.
- The former Chamber of Commerce office at 860B has reopened as the **CT Headquarters for the Neighbor To Neighbor Energy Challenge**.
- A Temporary Certificate of Occupancy has been issued for the first phase of the **Wethersfield Academy For The Arts** at their site at 411 Hartford Avenue.

#### OTHER NEWS AND INITIATIVES

##### Developer/Tenant Contacts

- Met with an architect looking at a site on the Berlin Turnpike for a small residential condominium project.
- Met with developer planning apartment building project on Berlin Turnpike to discuss permit details.
- Provided available property information to site selection consultant looking for restaurant.
- Worked with tenant looking at available space in Putnam Park office building.
- Discussed plans with site engineer looking at pad site for restaurant.
- Met with business owners looking to relocate to site on Berlin Turnpike.
- Met with site selection consultant looking at property on Berlin Turnpike.
- Met with property owner to discuss permit requirements for tenant change to restaurant use.

##### Redevelopment Agency

- **1000 Silas Deane Highway** – Bartram and Cochran has prepared some preliminary concept plans for the redevelopment of this property and a draft redevelopment plan for staff review. The preliminary plans call for the demolition of the existing building and the replacement with a mixed use commercial development with some residential units on the upper levels. Plans are still being refined based upon feedback from staff and Agency members.

##### Economic Development and Improvement Commission

- **Shops Local** – On Wednesday morning March 9, 2011 the **First Annual Shops Local Membership Meeting** was held to review the progress of the program and to discuss the future of this initiative. A number of ideas were generated at this meeting that are designed to improve the program. The Committee is presently evaluating the various ideas and will be reporting back at a future meeting.

##### Historical Society

- 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Taste of Wethersfield Benefit Saturday April 9, 2011 Keeney Memorial Cultural Center.

##### Chamber of Commerce

- May 12, 2011 Wethersfield Country Club 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Chamber Awards Dinner and Annual Meeting.

##### Tourism

- Received notice of grant award (\$11,864) from the CT Commission on Culture and Tourism for 2011 **magazine insert advertisement** in Spring and Summer editions of CT Vacation Guide.
- Received notice of grant award (\$11,725) from the CT Commission on Culture and Tourism for a **marketing grant**. The grant will allow the Commission to redesign their website and produce some new marketing pieces such as a promotional mailer and a rack card.

- Representatives from Comstock Ferre and Co. have announced plans for a June 5 celebration to celebrate the **200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of Comstock Ferre**. The event will include entertainment, educational displays, some food and some crafts.
- Eleven (11) responses/bids were received for the **Wayfinding Signage** project. A recommendation has been forwarded to Town Council for consideration for their April 4, 2011 meeting. The bid responses were higher than our present budget will accommodate. It is envisioned that installation will occur over several phases.

### Census 2010

- Some early census data for Wethersfield has been released. Some of the highlights:
  - Population increased by 1.5% to 26,668 persons.
  - The number of housing units has increased by 1.95% to 11,677.
  - Hispanic residents increased by 1,084 persons.
  - Black/African American residents increased by 291 persons.
  - Asian residents increased by 349 persons.
  - White residents declined by 605 persons.

### Meeting/Event Schedule April

April 5	PZC 7 pm
April 6	Shops Local 8:30 am
April 7	Chamber of Commerce 8:30 am
April 14	EDIC 12 noon
April 19	PZC 7 pm
April 26	Tourism Commission 5:30 pm

Councilor Kotkin asked Peter Gillespie if he would explain the grants that were received and the match.

Peter Gillespie reported that two grants were received in the last month from the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, one of which was in the amount of \$11,864 which will allow them to continue with the magazine insert in the Spring and Summer editions of the Connecticut Vacation Guide, and a marketing grant in the amount of \$11,725, which allow the Commission to redesign the website and produce some new marketing pieces, mailings. The intent under this grant is to utilize the remaining budget amounts that have been set aside this year for tourism and then tap into the budget that is being considered for next year. He noted that this particular grant stretches over two budget years.

HEARINGS: None

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Miller, 45 Highland Street, reported on the fish kill at the Wethersfield Reservoir this past winter and noted that to date, the dead fish have not been cleaned up. It was explained to him that fish kill is a natural event. He has spoken with Mike Turner and was told that the Town has checked with the DEP and the Board of Health and he has concluded that it seems like nothing is going to be done. He reported that most of the dead fish are in the water that is 4-6 inches deep and the biggest problem is going to be the odor. He noted that there are a lot of weeds in the

reservoir and this may have hindered the fish. He urged the Council to include something in the budget to treat the reservoir for the weeds. John Miller also noted that he was impressed with the youth groups that were present at the meeting tonight.

Adriana Buccheri, 43 Harvest Hill, commented on behalf of the High School Drama Club on the Board of Education's budget and noted that if there is a zero percent increase, non-athletic activities at the high school will be cut.

Stephanie McKenna, 66 Harding Street, congratulated the students who received the proclamations earlier in the evening. She commented that parents represent the children as the Town Council represents the residents. She noted that if the Town Council votes on a budget for the Board of Education that is too low, it may be possible that her children's entire education will be negatively impacted. It will take many years to reintroduce programs and rehire teachers should the budget be too low.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Road, commented that he attended Governor Malloy's Town Hall Meeting at Manchester Community and he spoke about the fact that \$647 million was needed in order to close the budget this year and \$1.5 billion was borrowed at the beginning of the year to help get through the crisis for a total of \$2.2 billion borrowed money. He commented that the Council should be looking at expenditures that can be cut, eliminating overtime, eliminate stipends, eliminate or reduce out of town conferences and meetings and stay local, cut back on purchases, be serious about looking at ways to cut costs to help with the financial crisis. He suggested closing one of the elementary schools and bus the children to the other four remaining schools. He suggested working with the state delegation to rescind the many of the state mandates. He suggested finding a way in which the Town does not have to pay for the empty seats on the school buses, rescind the disparity of the ESC money and rescind the state minimum budget requirements.

Gus Colantonio, 16 Morrison Avenue, commented that the Town Council is not asking for anyone to make cuts, but to maintain a budget. He commented that the Board of Education is always saying that the children are number one, but he wonders. He noted that if that's the case, why is the Board stating that 65 positions will be lost without an increase in their budget.

### COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Hurley reported for the Shared Services which recently met to discuss the traffic congestion at drop off/pick up times at the schools and noted that there is not a lot of money in the budget to make any major infrastructure changes at this time but the Committee is going to get someone from the police department and the schools to meet to see if something can be solved in the short term.

Councilor Drake reported for the Infrastructure Committee which met with the residents of Morrison Avenue to review the design. He noted generally most people were happy with the results. The project will be starting sometime in April.

Councilor Manousos reported for the Historical Society, which is in the process of hiring a consultant for strategic planning process. The Budget and Finance Committee has met with the Board of Education to review their budget. He noted that there are alternatives to laying off teachers and stated the Town Council can set the appropriation but cannot direct the Board of Education as to how the money is spent.

Councilor Kotkin reported for the Wethersfield Tourism Commission meeting and noted Comstock Ferre is celebrating their 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on June 5. It is also the same day as the Keane Foundation 5K run.

### COUNCIL COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Console spoke and gave the townspeople an assignment to look at Section 704 of the Town Charter, specifically what the Town Council is assigned to do and what the Board of Education is assigned to do. He believes that the Board of Education has been in violation of the Town Charter and this should be addressed. He noted that the Board of Education can cut or add wherever they wish with their budget and the Town Council has no control over their decisions. He also commented that there are four words that come into play with this year's budget: accountability, credibility, due diligence and propaganda.

Chairperson Hemmann announced that a flag is being flown in front of the Town Garage as part of a nationwide initiative to show the Town's support for tissue donation called "Flags Across America." She noted that the Wethersfield Historical Society will be hosting the Taste of Wethersfield on Saturday, April 9 at the Kenney Center from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. She also received an email from a town resident which she will have placed in the minutes.

### TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Jeff Bridges presented the Town Manager's budget which will be presented at the Public Hearing on April 18.

Councilor Manousos asked the Town Manager to explain the two major increases: health insurance and MDC's additional costs, and what the mill rate increase would be if these two items are backed out of the budget.

Jeff Bridges reported that when the Town works with the Board of Education to budget, they receive an estimate from Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield of what the company expects the entire Town to be committed for with the self-insurance program for health insurance. The Town pays

the first \$100,000 worth of claims in cash and the re-insurance picks up after the \$100,000 per claim. The estimate for next year is \$11,800,000, with an increase of 5.6%. When the money was allocated between the Town and the Board of Education and the Health District, the numbers were pulled apart and a different methodology was used, resulting in a shift of expenses from the Board of Education's side to the Town's side. The Town saw a shift for retirees and the Board's budget for health insurance is flat. Approximately \$623,000 of the \$1 million is on the Town's side. There is another \$223,000 for the MDC, and if those two numbers are taken off the \$1,021,000 from the Town, the Town is up less than 1%.

Councilor Montinieri inquired about the undesignated fund balance that is referenced in the Town Manager's budget, and asked if Jeff Bridges could include scenarios of getting it back to where it needs to be.

Jeff Bridges commented that they believe they can get it back to the 8% as there are still numbers that are unresolved.

#### COUNCIL ACTION

Deputy Mayor Console moved **"TO APPOINT CHRIS SKOWRONEK, P.O. BOX 290267, WETHERSFIELD, AS CLERGY TO THE SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE TERM 04-04-2011 TO 06-30-2012,"** seconded by Councilor Roberts.

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

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Deputy Mayor Console moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO ACCEPT A VEHICLE REFUND OFFER FROM FORD MOTOR COMPANY FOR A 1999 FORD WINDSTAR,"** seconded by Councilor Drake.

Jeff Bridges reported the Town's vehicle fleet includes a 1999 Ford Windstar that was utilized by the Social and Youth Services Department. This vehicle is currently under recall from Ford Motor Company for a sub-frame safety issue. After inspection, the Ford dealer has determined that the car cannot be repaired. Ford therefore has offered to buy the vehicle back from the Town for \$3,720. Staff is requesting your authorization to accept this refund offer. The funds will go back to the CNEF Reserve to be used toward the future purchase of vehicles. Attached is the offer, recall notice and the Kelley Blue Book value on the car. Jeff Bridges noted that they are not looking to replace the vehicle at this time, considering the amount of use of the vehicle.

Councilor Roberts noted that the papers reference the offer is good for five days which has since passed.

Jeff Bridges responded that there was a conversation with Ford this past Friday, and they realized that the five day window is difficult for municipalities, so the Town has until Thursday to get back to the dealership.

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

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Drake moved **“TO AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR THE STUDY OF HYDROPOWER FEASIBILITY AT MURPHY AND BELL POND DAMS TO PURCELL ASSOCAITES FOR A NOT TO EXCEED PRICE OF \$12,250,”** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

Jeff Bridges reported that the Energy Committee would like to study the possibility of hydropower at the Murphy and Bell Pond Dams. The Committee produced a scope of work and staff solicited proposals from our on call engineering firms. The two responses are in the packet. The lowest cost proposal is from Purcell Associates with a proposed cost not to exceed cost of \$12,250. The funds to pay for the study are available in an energy account. The balance of those funds is \$45,811.30 (including the money just received from Direct Energy). He noted that John Morris of the Energy Committee was present to answer any questions.

Councilor Kotkin asked if money is available from the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund for this work.

Jeff Bridges responded that there may be money available for construction but may not be for aesthetics.

Councilor Kotkin suggested looking into whether money is available because money is being collected every month from residents' bills to go into this fund.

Chairperson Hemmann asked if John Morris had heard anything about this subject matter.

John Morris reported that as part of the process, available funding is looked at, but he hasn't heard anything for the study of Bell Pond at this point.

Deputy Mayor Console asked if this goes forward, does it feed back to the grid and the Town gets money back.

John Morris responded that what is to be done with it has not been determined yet. There is a dam that needs to be fixed first. At the moment it is not known whether it is going to be economically feasible.

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

## BIDS

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO AWARD THE BID FOR THE FABRICATION AND INSTALLATION OF WAYFINDING SIGNS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$226,150, WITH PURCHASE ORDERS ISSUED AS FUNDS BECOME AVAILABLE, SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY TOWN ATTORNEY”** seconded by Councilor Hurley.

Jeff Bridges asked that Council add to the end, “after review of all documentation from the Town Attorney.

Peter Gillespie reported staff has secured the necessary approvals to move forward with fabrication and installation of the new wayfinding signage program. Design Clark, the Town’s sign consultant, prepared bid specifications for the approved signs and staff solicited sealed bids for the work. Eleven bids were received, ranging in cost from \$226,150 to \$447,225. Staff from the Town Manager’s Office, Engineering and Planning and Design Clark reviewed the bids and is recommending award to the lowest bidder, Sign Lite of North Haven, CT in an amount not to exceed \$226,150. Although staff is requesting award for the full amount, the available funds will not allow for implementation of the entire sign program. Currently there is \$92,760 available from the *Preserve America* grant, and \$2,000 from the Marsh Street Gateway project. The Capital Improvement Budget for FY 2011-12 includes a \$50,000 appropriation and if approved, will bring the available funds to \$144,760. Purchase orders will only be issued for available funds. Staff will continue to seek grants and other funding for the remaining \$81,390 to complete the project and as such, will request that the vendor hold the prices of the bid.

The *Preserve America* installation will focus on signs in the *Preserve America* area which is the historic district, and the funds from the capital budget will add signs at the north and south gateways of the Town and wayfinding signage along the main north/south arteries. Your packet includes illustrations of the signs and maps indicating the proposed sign locations for the entire program. Staff will be at the meeting to answer your questions.

Councilor Drake asked if there was more to it than the map that was made available.

Peter Gillespie responded that there are two maps. There are a series of signs at the entrances to the Historic District and a series of signs at the Town line. The total number of signs is approximately 60, with 40 of those signs funded by this amount. They have not met with the low bidder to work out the priorities, but based on the estimates, it is felt that they can go far with the \$144,000.

Jeff Bridges noted that one of the vendors questioned the paperwork submitted by a recommended vendor. Legally the Town is o.k., but he would like the Town Attorney to sign off on the project before they issue a notice of award.

Councilor Hurley asked how long the company will hold the rate if the Town is unable to secure the additional money needed.

Peter Gillespie responded that he spoke with the company and he believes the prices will be held for six months.

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

Councilor Hurley moved **“TO AWARD THE BID FOR A SPORTS LIGHTING SYSTEM AT COTTONE FIELD TO SHOCK ELECTRIC IN THE AMOUNT OF \$155,901,”** seconded by Councilor Manousos.

Jeff Bridges reported that staff solicited and received four bids to provide a sports lighting system for Cottone field. All bids were reviewed by Town staff, the project engineer and the Cottone Lights Fundraising committee. Staff is recommending award of the base bid to the low bidder, Shock Electric, Danbury, CT with their base bid of \$155,991. The construction budget for the project is \$156,602. The attached memorandum from Parks and Recreation Director Kathleen Bagley provides more information. Also attached is a bid summary form and bid submission form.

Councilor Manousos asked who the supplier of lights is.

Kathy Bagley responded that it was Muscan Lighting.

Councilor Manousos asked if there was any track record with this company.

Kathy Bagley responded that they had done the lighting at the Little League field.

Councilor Drake asked what would have happened if the bid was \$160,000.

Kathy Bagley responded that there were also alternates in the bids.

Councilor Drake asked if that would have been a viable option.

Kathy Bagley responded that the 70 foot candles were recommended but they looked into alternate ideas in order to cover all the bases.

Councilor Manousos asked if Kathy Bagley would explain the status of the revenue to support the project and how much has come in to date.

Kathy Bagley responded that not all the money is being used at this time. The Council authorized using up to \$20,000. At this time, they are looking at using \$16,257 of the \$20,000. The State grant is \$100,000 and donations have been received in the amount of \$58,759. There is money left in the fund in case a contingency is needed.

Councilor McAliser asked if she foresees any problems with the vendor if they are unable to route the cables the way that was originally planned.

Kathy Bagley noted that everything is above ground and doesn't anticipate any problems.

Mike Turner reported that the majority of the work is above ground and the contractor that is working now has supplied the foundation and brought the power to each pole location. The only underground trenching required under this contract would be shallow two foot deep holes for conduits for emergency lighting.

Councilor Manousos commented that he appreciated the work that everyone has done and thanked the committee and the public who have supported the project.

Councilor Montinieri asked if the vendor doing the work under ground was one of the vendors that had bid.

Mike Turner responded that the vendor did submit a bid but was not the lowest bidder.

Deputy Mayor Console asked if the previous issue with the concrete bases has been addressed and corrected.

Mike Turner responded that it has been corrected and there are no issues.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. Deputy Mayor Console voted ABSTAINED. The motion passed 8-0-1.

Councilor Manousos moved **“TO AWARD THE BID FOR BITUMINOUS CONCRETE PAVEMENT TO TILCON-CT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$400,000 AND THE BID FOR MILLING TO COSTELLO INDUSTRIES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$150,000 AND TO AUTHORIZE A CHANGE ORDER TO THE PAVEMENT PREPARATION CONTRACT WITH GENERAL PAVING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$120,000,”** seconded by Councilor Hurley.

Jeff Bridges reported that each year as part of the CIP paving program, staff utilizes the State bid for selection of vendors for paving and for milling. The bids are awarded by district by the State of Connecticut Department of Administrative Services and the lowest bidders for the Town's district are TILCON-CT Inc for bituminous concrete pavement and Costello Industries for pavement milling. On April 5, 2010, Town Council authorized an extension of the bid award for pavement preparation to General Paving through the spring 2011 paving season. The extension included a five percent reduction in pricing from the original bid. Pavement preparation work includes items such as catch basin top replacement and driveway ramps. Pavement preparation will be rebid for the fall paving season.

Public Works Director Michael Turner is requesting that bid award be made to Tilcon in the amount of \$400,000, \$150,000 to Costello Industries and that a change order in the amount of \$120,000 be authorized for General Paving. The attached memo from Public Works Director Michael Turner provides more information.

Deputy Mayor Console asked about the Road Manager program which tracks the streets and recommends what streets need to be paved and he suggested that it be looked at because there are streets in Town that need repair that are not on the list, such as Pine Lane, and asked what can be done to better the issue.

Mike Turner responded that the roads could be inspected sooner, as the last time the streets were inspected was in 2006 and this is the data that had been inputted into the computer. In 2011, the computer makes a projection as to how long the road is going to last based on typical conditions, average daily traffic and the defects originally noted. Mike Turner noted that he has looked at Pine Lane and it is in poor condition in certain areas.

Deputy Mayor Console asked how the condition of Pine Lane now relates to the condition it was in during 2006.

Mike Turner responded that Pine Lanes deteriorated further and perhaps faster than the computer projection. Alternatively, physical inspections of roads can be done on a more frequent basis instead of relying on the computer that models the deterioration, more money can be put into the paving budget or physical inspections can be done to confirm conditions of the road before they put forth next year's program.

Deputy Mayor Console asked it was possible to see a list of all the roads and where each stands to date.

Mike Turner responded that he will supply a list to Council.

Deputy Mayor Console asked if the current list will be updated for next year.

Mike Turner responded that the list would be updated.

Councilor Drake commented that the Road Manager also rates the roads as to how much travel is done and noted that some streets, like, cul-de-sacs, do not have a lot of travel and therefore are not rated.

Mike Turner responded that the average daily traffic plays a large component of the benefit value. The program performs a cost benefit analysis looking at each segment of road, the cost of repair and what the cost benefit would be, but it leans more towards the deterioration level.

Chairperson Hemmann noted that the Town is on a five year cycle with inspections and asked if the Physical Services Department and/or the Police Department could do road inspections as they are out every day on the roads and make a report and perhaps this can get the data into the computers sooner.

Mike Turner noted that the view of a truck driver is going to be different from a trained pavement engineer, who categorizes the type of defects.

Chairperson Hemmann suggested that Physical Services can be used for data identification.

Mike Turner noted that they don't strictly rely on the program itself. The roads are also walked through with the Engineering Department.

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

#### ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

None.

#### MINUTES

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO APPROVE THE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 5, 2011 WITH CORRECTIONS TO PAGE TWO”** seconded by Councilor Manousos.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilor McAlister abstained. The motion passed 8-0-1.

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 21, 2011”** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:25 p.m., Deputy Mayor Console moved "**TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**" seconded by Councilor McAlister.

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

Dolores G. Sassano  
Town Clerk  
*Approved by vote of Council  
May 2, 2011*