

**REGULAR MEETING
JULY 18, 2011**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Monday, July 18, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield.

Present: Councilors Drake, Kotkin, Manousos, McAlister, Montinieri (arrived at 7:30 p.m.), Roberts, Deputy Mayor Console, and Chairperson Hemmann. Councilor Hurley was unable to attend.

Also present: Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, RaeAnn Palmer, Assistant Town Manager, Kathy Bagley, Director of Parks & Recreation and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

Councilor Drake led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gus Colantonio, 16 Morrison Avenue, spoke on the stop sign at the intersection of Hillcrest Avenue and Orchard Street and asked for some feedback from the Town. Morrison Avenue has twice the traffic and does not have a traffic sign.

Leigh Standish, 278 Hartford Avenue, spoke on the condition of the Cove and the request by the Parks & Recreation to have the Cove dredged. He noted that he does not feel the Town is in the position to afford this type of project at this time; the project can wait until funds are available through the Army Corp of Engineers.

John Herold, 227 Griswold Road, noted that it was his understanding that any functions held at the Bed & Breakfast on Broad Street, parking is not allowed on the Broad Street Green. If cars are not allowed to park on the Broad Street Green, he asked where cars would park for the Corn Fest held at the Broad Street Green in September. He also commented on the ordinance regarding parking on the snow shelf. He noted that the Historical Society holds their annual Craft Show at Cove Park and people do park on the snow shelf for that function, and he asked where they will park now.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Manousos reported that he attended the EDIC meeting last week and reported that Howard Greenblatt has stepped down as Chairman and Chris Lyons will be the new Chairman and Joan Hughes will be the Vice Chair. It was also reported that there was a balance of \$252,000 available for facade improvement loans and notices will be sent out to eleven or twelve properties that have been identified to make the owners aware of the program. EDIC would also like to meet with all land planning committees in Town and Councilor Manousos asked if the Town Manager could set that up.

Councilor Drake reported that he spoke with someone from the Energy Committee regarding the Energy Plan and he asked the Town Manager if an Infrastructure meeting could be scheduled to see if it can be decided whether the program will move forward or put to the side.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Console reported that he had a meeting today, July 18, with the MDC Commission regarding the Cove. He reported back to the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager regarding dredging of the Cove and the cost of the project. He asked MDC if they would consider assisting in the cost in the writing the grant and contributing money to the project. MDC was open to that suggestion and Deputy Mayor Console noted that he is going to set up a meeting with MDC and invited Chairman Hemmann to join him. There are still a lot of questions to be answered as the first meeting was only a preliminary meeting. Deputy Mayor Console also noted that he has received numerous calls from residents on Desmond Drive and efforts are being made to fix the situation. A temporary water main has been put in place for the time being while work is being done on the new water main. In regard to Meadowgate Street, he noted that it was his understanding that MDC was doing work in the Fall and repaving is taking place, but residents weren't aware that repaving was being done and asked if the Town Manager could speak with the Town Engineer.

Jeff Bridges responded that he spoke with the Town Engineer today about this situation. MDC will be repaving the street when their work is completed, curb to curb.

Deputy Mayor Console thanked the Town Manager. He also spoke on Morrison Avenue and noted that work is going to be started shortly. He commented about Direct Energy along with other electric carriers regarding electric rates and noted that Wethersfield residents are receiving a rate of 7.99%. He noted that people in Rocky Hill were receiving this same rate back in February and asked why people have to call to get the rate. He also wanted to know why Rocky Hill is getting the same rate as Wethersfield when it was supposed to be something special for Wethersfield. Deputy Mayor Console also thanked the Town Manager for the Roads List that he had previously requested and asked if there is a way in which the data can be reworked to see the schedule of when roads are going to be repaved.

Jeff Bridges responded that the Five Year Plan and the Capital Budget has a list and the list is currently being redone and should be completed by the end of summer.

Deputy Mayor Console noted that there was a segment on the news this evening concerning break-ins on Hewitt Street and noted that the police department has been doing a good job in Town and is confident this matter will be resolved. He also commented that he had spoken with

the Town Manager about fixing the air conditioner at Company 1 and wanted to make sure that the work has been reviewed by the Historical Society.

Jeff Bridges responded that the Town's Physical Services is doing the work on the air conditioning for Company 1.

Deputy Mayor Console spoke on the Board of Education and noted that he has spoke with Juan Harris from the State Board of Education concerning the Interim Superintendent, who was hired in September, 2010, at a rate of \$17,000/month, with his contract ending on June, 2010, and subsequently renewed. There was a vote to rehire him for another year, but under certain rules from the State Department of Education, the Town may be in violation of that and there may be an issue where the Interim Superintendent can serve another year. Deputy Mayor Console noted that he is waiting to hear back from Mr. Cares and will forward this response to the Town Manager. He commented on articles in the Wethersfield Post concerning the ethics issue entitled "It's over, let's move on" and the writer noted that it was a political issue. Deputy Mayor Console commented that he did not agree with this and commented that it was a breach of ethics and a breach of trust, which cost the Town a lot of money. He also noted an article on the \$634,000 spent on the ethics issue and an article on the changes in Wethersfield's population and demographics. He commended the Town tree cutters, Phil Nichols, John Lonergan and Phil Smithwick and the excellent work that they did and wanted to thank them for their work. He also reported on National Night Out, hosted by the Wethersfield Police Department and will be held on Tuesday, August 2.

Chairperson Hemmann commented that she received a letter from Mr. Warren which she did pass around to the other Council members. She also reminded everyone of the Farmers' Market on Thursdays from 3:00-6:00 at 300 Main Street, and the Chamber of Commerce's Business After Hours is being hosted by the Rare Reminder on July 20 from 5:00 – 7:00 in Rocky Hill.

Councilor Drake commented on an article in the Wethersfield Post from a resident in the Timber Trail area concerning the quality of life issues and ordinances passed six months ago, and asked if the issue with cars parking on the snow shelf had been resolved. He suggested that the Town Manger contact the police department to do what needs to be done to get people to follow the ordinances which the Town Council feels is a priority.

Councilor Kotkin noted that there was a report regarding the money that has been distributed from the façade program and asked if money can be collected if a business closes, and he brought up the Narcissus Café which received money and is now closed.

Jeff Bridges responded that a lien has been placed on that particular property.

Councilor Roberts commented that the report received from Peter Gillespie is very confusing in that it lists the businesses and lists a number and asked if that was the number that was outstanding.

Jeff Bridges responded that he can have Peter Gillespie review the report at the next Council meeting.

Chairperson Hemmann commented that Councilor McAlister had suggested sending a letter to Wethersfield's Sister City in Japan congratulating the Japanese Girls' Soccer Team for their win, and she reported that she has drafted a letter in this regard.

Councilor Roberts suggested finding out if any of the players were from the area that was hit by the earthquake.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Jeff Bridges reported on the redistricting issue, and noted that there will be a Public Hearing on Wednesday afternoon and Wednesday evening and he will be attending the afternoon meeting at 2:00 p.m. to go over the Town's desire for the redistricting. With his conversations with Pam Rapacz, from the Registrar of Voter District 3 is a small district that can be eliminated or combined with another district, the Town can go from four ballots to three ballots and decrease the polling places from ten to six. He also reported that the Town is working on the paperwork and disclosure for the sale of the Wilkus Farm and Barn site. At the next meeting, he will propose a 8-24 referral to the Planning Commission from the Town Council. There was also an issue with Cottwell Drive which has been referred to Physical Services to be resolved.

OTHER BUSINESS

Deputy Mayor Console moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO APPLY FOR, AND ACCEPT IF AWARDED, A BOATING INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FOR DREDGING OF THE WETHERSFIELD COVE CHANNEL AND FOR PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF A NEW DOCK SYSTEM AND TO AUTHORIZE THE UTILIZATION OF FUNDS FROM THE COVE PRESERVATION FUND FOR GRANT WRITING FEES AND FOR THE GRANT MATCH"** seconded by Councilor Manousos.

Kathy Bagley reported that the proposal is to apply for a federal grant to assist Wethersfield in replacing the dock system at Cove Park and have funding to dredge of the Cove entrance channel. The federal grant funds become available once every year and the grant deadline is August 15. Because there might not be funds available next year, they would like to apply for the grant this year. The grant itself would be 75% of the cost of the project and the Town would need a match of 25% for the project. For the Town's portion, she reported that they have been saving their boat fees over the past ten years.

Councilor Drake asked if the first person to be contacted is the consultant.

Kathy Bagley responded that it is. The current engineering firm that has been working with the Town on the permit process, also has done this type of grant application in the past. She noted that the cost is approximately \$10,000 to put together the information that is necessary for the

grant application.

Councilor Drake wanted to make sure that whatever contract is signed, that the Town owns the contract and the drawings that have been done.

Kathy Bagley responded that she would take care of this.

Deputy Mayor Console commented that he would like to amend this issue to include getting help from MDC in the grant writing process.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that the first estimate she had received was \$20,000 but the company has come back with an estimate of \$10,000 based on their hourly rate and estimate of man hours.

Councilor Kotkin asked Kathy Bagley to explain the current status of the docking system and if the number of work hours for town employees that is needed to install the dock and then take the dock out at the end of the season will change.

Kathy Bagley responded that the current docks are made out of wood that don't rise and fall with the tide as they are not anchored in and constant maintenance service is needed because it is made out of wood. The maintenance for the new docks will be designed out of material that is weatherproofed and be more durable than what is being used now and they will be able to stay in the water and be able to rise with the tide, so the docks will be more accessible.

Councilor Kotkin asked if Kathy Bagley had an estimate of the number of hours the Town spends now installing and removing the docks every year.

Kathy Bagley responded that depending on the water and the level of water at the beginning of the season; it is probably 2-4 days to put the docks in. At the end of the season, it takes less time to remove the docks from the water. She explained that the man hours during the week on average were 3-4 hours to check on things and respond to and reported issues.

Councilor Kotkin asked that along with the \$900,000, is there an estimate for the cost of the dredging and the cost of the docks.

Kathy Bagley responded that she has a very ballpark estimate of \$450,000 for the dredging and \$400,000 for the dock system. There will also be costs for supplies, design and permitting costs for the dredging.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the dredging will be needed regardless, even if new docks are not installed.

Kathy Bagley responded that this was correct. She noted that both the Department of Environmental Protection and the Army Corp of Engineers has also recommended combining the projects.

Councilor Drake asked if the new docks would come out in the winter.

Kathy Bagley responded that the new docks would stay in the water during the winter.

Councilor Drake noted that it was earlier reported that the Army Corp of Engineers should be dredging the Cove and perhaps the Town can wait until it is done by them.

Kathy Bagley responded that the Army Corp of Engineers have told her that they do not have money to do the dredging and they are concentrating on bigger harbors around the country and their budget on the federal level is being reduced, so they are trying to work with the Town by giving us advice and consultation.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the State has this money available.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that the funding is coming from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife. The project is taken to the State first and if the project is approved by the State, it goes to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Trust Fund that they have.

Councilor Manousos asked Kathy Bagley if this was a three year project that needs to be funded at \$25,000 a year.

Kathy Bagley responded that this was part of the suggestion to get to part of the match that the Town would have to come up with.

Councilor Manousos asked if nothing would preclude the Town from applying for other grants in the meantime.

Kathy Bagley responded that this was correct.

Councilor Manousos asked if the co-preservation funds are user fees and not tax dollars and dedicated to the improvement of the Cove.

Kathy Bagley responded that this was correct.

Councilor McAlister asked if the license fees that the Town charges, controlled by the State or can the Town raise the fees.

Kathy Bagley responded that the Town operates the boat launch ramp, docks and mooring system and the way in which the Town does its fees is that the Parks & Recreation staff will make recommendations to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee, it is reviewed by them and they will let Parks & Recreation know whether the rates are reasonable or not and then it goes to the Town Council for their review and action.

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

Councilor Manousos moved **“TO REFER THE REQUEST FROM THE PROPERTY OWNER OF 32 JAY STREET FOR USE OF TOWN PROPERTY TO THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION FOR A SECTION 8-24 REVIEW IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONNECTICUT STATUTES AND TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR THEIR REVIEW AND APPROVAL”** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

Jeff Bridges reported that there are two property owners that have been using town property for over twenty years on property near the high school for gardening. In the past Town Council has granted license agreements to property owners for use of property. If Council is interested, the first thing that would need to be done is to send the request to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Councilor Kotkin asked if any other property is being used on the high school grounds.

Jeff Bridges responded he would look into that.

Councilor McAlister noted that he does not have a philosophical problem with this, but because someone actually made a complaint about it, he wanted to know if Council’s response is to permanently allow the homeowner to continue using the property. Because the complaint came in anonymously, there is no way to follow up with the complainant as to what the nature of the complaint was.

Councilor Roberts commented that it was odd that after twenty years of the land being used as gardens, it is now an issue with someone.

Councilor Drake commented that perhaps people should be asked if they are being denied use of the property because someone else is using the property as a garden.

Councilor McAlister noted that if this was a significant complaint, perhaps it should not have been done anonymously.

Chairperson Hemmann noted that this matter still needs to go to the Board of Education for their review. If the land is needed back, it should be able to be taken back.

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

BIDS

Councilor Drake moved **“TO APPROVE AN AMENDMENT TO THE APPLICATION SERVICE PROVIDER AGREEMENT WITH TYLER TECHNOLOGIES FOR THREE YEARS COMMENCING JULY 1, 2011 AND EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2014, SUBJECT TO ANNUAL FUNDING APPROPRIATION”** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

Jeff Bridges reported that this is a renewal of the ongoing MUNIS software financial

management package.

RaeAnn Palmer reported that this is a three year contract and the cost is split with the Board of Education. She explained that the tax package was removed and only the financial package and human resources' program are going forward.

Councilor Kotkin asked how the cost compares to the existing lease.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that the tax package itself cost between \$6,800-\$7,000.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the lease cost increased.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that she believes it is comparable but will get the specific information for Council.

Councilor Roberts asked if the Town was happy with the program.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that they have been.

Councilor Montinieri asked if the cost includes the cost for maintenance of the modules and the upgrades.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that it does include the cost for maintenance and upgrades. The cost also includes paying to host the software because the Town doesn't have the data here.

Councilor Montinieri asked how long the Town had the MUNIS program.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that MUNIS was implemented in the 90's and then went to the ASP service in 2003.

Councilor Montinieri asked how often the software modules are upgraded.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that the software modules are upgraded once a year.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the cost is consistent with what has been budgeted.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that \$60,000 has been budgeted to pay for this, but only \$55,000 is what is needed on the Town's side.

Councilor Drake asked if the upgrades are included in the costs.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that the upgrades are included in the costs.

Councilor Drake asked who was Tyler Technologies.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that Tyler Technologies is the company and MUNIS is the product.

Councilor McAlister asked if there is a standard agreement and penalties if the software is not up and running 90% of the time.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that this is included in the contract.

Councilor Manousos noted that he supports this and asked if the Town decides to change to another company, is the Town able to take the data with them.

RaeAnn Palmer responded that the Town is able to take the data.

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

Councilor Manousos moved **“TO AWARD A CONTRACT TO A&A OFFICE SYSTEMS FOR THE PROVISION OF COPIERS AND TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN ALL RELATED AGREEMENTS, CONTINGENT UPON APPROVAL BY THE TOWN ATTORNEY, INCLUDING A SIXTY MONTH LEASE AGREEMENT WITH LEAF FINANCING EFFECTING SEPTEMBER 1, 2011”** seconded by Councilor McAlister.

Jeff Bridges reported that the Town’s current 5 year lease expires September, 2011. The new lease will provide seven additional copiers for only \$138.88 more than our current monthly lease amount of \$922.35 for seven copiers.

Councilor Drake asked why fourteen copiers are needed.

Jeff Bridges responded that additional capabilities are being added to offices that presently have stand alone features.

Councilor Drake asked if the new copy machines will be able to do all the copying, printing and that supplies, toner, etc. will not need to be purchased.

Jeff Bridges responded that there are still some copiers that are not included under this contract in which supplies will need to be purchased.

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

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO AWARD THE PURCHASE OF FOUR (4) 2011 FORD CROWN VICTORIA POLICE VEHICLES TO CROWLEY FORD IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$91,512”** seconded by Councilor Roberts.

Jeff Bridges reported that these four Crown Victoria cruisers have been included in this year’s budget and will probably be the last year that Crown Victoria’s can be purchased.

Deputy Mayor Console asked if it is possible for the Town to purchase four additional Crown Victoria cruisers and hold them until they are needed.

Jeff Bridges responded that this option was looked at, but storage would be a problem, insurance would also be needed. If cash and storage were available, this would be a good idea but neither is available.

Councilor Montinieri asked if this amount was under what was set during the budget.

Jeff Bridges responded that it is almost exact.

Councilor Montinieri asked if there will be a separate amount for the retro fit of the vehicle.

Jeff Bridges responded that this is included in the Physical Services' budget.

RaeAnn Palmer noted that \$7,000 and \$10,000 is budgeted for retro fitting and that some of the lights and light bars will be swapped out.

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

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

FOR INTRODUCTION ONLY:

Harbor Management Commission: An ordinance establishing Chapter 10, Article 24 Public Regulations of the Town of Wethersfield, Connecticut creating a Harbor Management Commission and designating the Advisory Parks and Recreation Board as the Commission.

Youth Services Grant: Authorization to accept and sign a contract for the annual grant from the State Department of Education to support the Youth Service Bureau.

Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Memorandum of Understanding: Resolution authorizing the /Town Manager to execute any and all documents for the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the State and the Capital Region Council of Governments.

MINUTES

Deputy Mayor Console moved **“TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS CORRECTED OF JUNE 20, 2011”** seconded by Councilor Manousos.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilor McAlister ABSTAINED. The motion passed 7-0-1.

Councilor Manousos moved **“TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 5, 2011 AS CORRECTED”** seconded by Deputy Mayor Console.

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jim Clynch, 903 Ridge Road, commented on the safety issue with the fence on his Marsh Street property. He realized that the fence the Town removed was on his property and was in fact his fence, and no one requested permission from him to remove it. He commented that he hopes he is not responsible for any accidents in that area. He also commented that in April, 2010 he had asked the Police Department to look into putting a sign up along Marsh Street, which would notify drivers of a hidden driveway. He waited two months and went back to the Police Department to find out the status of the sign and he was told that it had been approved and it was sent to the Town Manager. He then went to the Town Manager who called Peter Gillespie on his speaker phone to ask about the sign and was told by Peter Gillespie. Peter Gillespie responded that Mr. Clynch had not spent a lot of money on the property. Mr. Clynch asked what that had to do with the sign. The reason he is bringing this to the Council’s attention is because last month Council approved a hanging banner near his property and there is also a new sign that has been installed notifying people of “Historic America” and he wondered why a sign cannot be installed cautioning drivers of a hidden driveway. He was also told that his driveway was one way, but he notes that it has never been classified as one way before with the buildings other uses.

Jeff Bridges responded that he had both sent Mr. Clynch a letter and called him to request a meeting and he had not heard back from Mr. Clynch.

Mr. Clynch responded that it was recommended by his attorney not to call back the Town Manager. He stated that the letter noted that Jeff Bridges wanted Mike Turner and Peter Gillespie to be present at the meeting.

Jeff Bridges responded that he wanted to discuss the issue with Mr. Clynch.

Mr. Clynch responded that he did not have a problem with meeting with Jeff Bridges but felt it wasn’t necessary to have Mike Turner and Peter Gillespie there also.

Jeff Bridges responded that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the driveway.

Mr. Clynch commented that the purpose of the meeting was to designate his driveway as one way.

Jeff Bridges responded that he does not have that authority to make that change and he never told Mr. Clynch that it needed to be a one way driveway.

Jim Clynch responded that maybe Mr. Gillespie had made that statement.

Deputy Mayor Console asked if that Town had taken down a fence that was the property of Mr. Clynch will it be replaced.

Jeff Bridges responded that if the Town took down a private fence on private property, we would replace it.

Stephen Randall, 35 Beverly Road, commented that he is happy with where the Town is with the recreation facilities but he noted that that the \$7.00 fee charged for canoes and kayaks is ridiculous. He asked if the Town would consider installing a dock for fishermen to fish from as they are not able to fish from the present docks. He also inquired about the impact of the dredging on flooding, the flow, tide and erosion. He also noted that he felt the docks were in good shape. He also felt there should be a public safety aspect of the ordinance. Posted signs, limited time

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:40 p.m., Councilor Manousos moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Councilor McAlister

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

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk