

JANUARY 16, 2007 REGULAR MEETING

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on January 17, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Silas Deane Middle School.

Present: Councilors Cascio, Drake, Forrest, Kirsche, Kotkin, Montinieri, Walsh, Deputy Mayor Fortunato and Chairperson Adil.

Also present: Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager; Physical Services Director and Town Engineer Mike Turner; and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

All stood for the pledge of allegiance to the flag which was led by Deputy Mayor Fortunato.

Report from VHB - Town Road Conditions

Town Engineer Mike Turner introduced Mr. Gordon Daring from Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB), the Town's on-call engineer for road data maintenance for the past ten years. Mr. Daring stated that the project that has been worked on over the past few months is the latest step in the process that the Town has been involved in since 1995. He said that this is a very worthwhile and valuable process for the Town. Mr. Daring provided the following PowerPoint presentation regarding the Pavement Management System, as well as a sample video of Wethersfield roads:



[Town of Wethersfield Pavement Management System](#) [1.1 MB PDF*]

Mr. Daring complimented the Town on the funding it has laid out for pavement management to maintain the program at sufficient levels. He commented that he often uses Wethersfield as an example of what can be done regarding pavement management.

Councilor Drake commented that most of the roads in Wethersfield fall into the "preventive maintenance" category and asked if these roads move up into the "do nothing" category once repaired. Mr. Daring answered that this depends on the type of maintenance required; whether it be crack sealing, distortion repair or pothole repair, for example, and the extent of the repairs performed. Councilor Drake verified then that once repairs are performed, a road will not move onto the "do nothing" list, since there will continue to be something on that road that will need maintenance. Mr. Daring said that this is true and that merely crack sealing as a preventive measure cannot take place forever.

Councilor Kotkin asked if there is a guideline over the past few years for the cost of road maintenance, and how much buying power the Town loses annually by not increasing the funding for repairs. Mr. Daring said that for a number of years, the inflation rate has been hovering at 3.5% to 4% and last year many municipalities throughout Connecticut realized a 50% increase in the cost of a ton of asphalt. Councilor Kotkin asked if the cost is expected to come back down and Mr. Turner answered that Wethersfield works off of the State bid which will not be opened until sometime in the Spring. Councilor Kotkin asked how much the cost of the asphalt contributes to the overall cost of road repairs. Mr. Turner stated that it is a significant percentage of the cost at approximately 60%-65%. He said that at previous prices, the cost to repair a mile of road was approximately \$150,000-\$180,000, and now with the increase in the price of asphalt, that same mile of road will cost approximately \$250,000.

Councilor Walsh asked Mr. Daring for an explanation of the term A/C with reference to base rehabilitation. Mr. Daring responded that A/C is a technical term which refers to an arterial collective road and that the term "reclaiming" is basically the same process as base rehabilitation, which consists of the grinding of 8-12 inches in depth of pavement to repair the base layer and then repavement of the top layer. Mr. Daring stated that this process is the most costly repair per square yard.

Councilor Cascio thanked Mr. Daring for his presentation which provides the Council with a better understanding of Wethersfield's roads. He commented that in looking through the backlog of roadwork, much of the lower PCI rated areas are parking lots and he asked if they are part of the equation. Mr. Turner answered that these areas are evaluated in the same manner; however, they are separated out from the roads. Mr. Turner stated that all of the Town parking lots, including those on school properties, equate to an approximate total of twenty-seven acres or ten miles of pavement. He said that this is approximately 10% of the pavement in Town for which the Town is responsible and the Capital Improvement Committee several years ago suggested that the parking lots be broken out separately from the roads in terms of funding.

Councilor Montinieri asked if there is a formula of some loose nature that identifies the percentage of funds spent on the various levels of road repair. Mr. Turner explained that over the past five years, the Town's road funding has come from three sources; those being LoCIP, Town Aid and General Fund contributions. He said that the LoCIP funding has historically been set aside for the worst roads in need of reconstruction at a cost of approximately \$200,000 per year. Mr. Turner explained that Town aid and General Fund monies are generally lumped together and, in the past, approximately \$50,000 of this has been set aside for crack sealing. He said that the \$50,000 has now been reduced to \$25,000 which seems to currently be enough for the road repair program.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien commented that many residents assume that if their road is low rated that it will be on the top of the repair list; therefore, she asked Mr. Daring to explain how the priority of repairs is determined.

Mr. Daring described the priority process by comparing it to car maintenance that could require payment for an oil change now or putting it off and paying for an entire engine overhaul later. He said that decision makers in Town need to consider that if all dollars are spent on major overhauls of roadways, there is not much funding left for roads that require lower maintenance and these roads will fall into further disrepair. Mr. Daring stated that residents need to keep in mind that they all use all of the roads in Town, not just the road in front of their house.

Chairperson Adil thanked Mr. Daring for coming before the Council with his informative presentation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HEARING

RESOLUTION CONCERNING AN APPLICATION TO THE CAPITAL REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TO OBTAIN STP-URBAN PROGRAM FUNDS, TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR TRADITIONAL ROADWAY PROJECTS AND NON-TRADITIONAL ROADWAY PROJECTS IN THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the resolution has been amended to remove the Church Street at Main Street intersection roundabout from the application's list until the Town's Preserve America consultant has a chance to look at the proposal and there should be public input into this concept, which hasn't happened as of yet. She said that another amendment to the resolution is that rather than apply for just pavement rehabilitation for Highland Street, the Town should put in a full application because the pavement rehab has an application limit of \$600,000 and we can apply for up to \$2 million for a full application.

No one wished to speak and the Chairperson declared the Public Hearing segment closed.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Ken Sokolowski, 79 Main Street, spoke on behalf of the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce. He said that the Chamber thanks Executive Secretary to the Town Manager Gale Diluzio for her contribution to the production of the Wethersfield 2007 Town Guide, Calendar and Chamber of Commerce Directory in revising and enhancing it to make it even more user-friendly than last year's edition. Mr. Sokolowski stated that 15,000 copies were printed, with 11,000 copies distributed to every household in Wethersfield through the January 2007 edition of "Wethersfield Life". He said that the Chamber feels that Wethersfield residents and business will benefit from the use of the Guide and encourages all to refer to it frequently. Mr. Sokolowski stated that anyone can obtain a copy of the Guide at the Town Hall while supplies last. Mr. Sokolowski reported that the Chamber is nearing its completion of a Chamber-endorsed map of Wethersfield and these free-to-the-public maps, supported solely by Wethersfield businesses through paid advertisements, will be available at advertising businesses, Chamber of Commerce offices, and at several municipal locations including the Town Hall and the Library, while supplies last. Mr. Sokolowski stated that the Chamber of Commerce looks forward to continuing to work with its members, residents and with the Town in such positive, collaborative efforts to enhance the quality of life for all in Wethersfield.

No one else wished to speak and the Chairperson declared the General Comments segment closed.

COUNCIL REPORTS & COMMENTS

Councilor Walsh reported that he attended the January 10 meeting of the Redevelopment Agency and announced that the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee will be holding an upcoming meeting at which Mr. Turner will discuss the roads and sidewalks throughout Town. Councilor Walsh reported that he attended the recent meeting of the Preserve America steering committee which included discussion with architects from Milner & Associates.

Councilor Cascio, as Council liaison to the Chamber of Commerce, announced that the Business After Hours event will be held on January 25 at the Nature Center and that the Chamber meets every first Thursday of every month in their office on the Silas Deane Highway. Councilor Cascio stated that he will be attending the upcoming meeting of Channel 14 as well as the upcoming Parade Committee meeting.

Councilor Drake reported that he attended the kickoff meeting of the Community Center Building Committee and Keane Foundation. He said that the group appears to have a good balance of knowledge and experience, with the Chairperson being Architect Jeff Gott and the Vice-Chair being Charlie Viani.

Councilor Drake reported that the Committee has already developed both a budget and a scope of work, and are now preparing to go out for an architect for the project.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato reported that she attended the last meeting of the Infrastructure Committee. She said that Councilor Walsh will be taking over for her as the Chair of that Committee. Deputy Mayor Fortunato reported that one of the topics discussed was the leases with the historical society buildings, and she anticipates that something will be brought forward to the Council regarding this in the near future. She said that various drainage projects and the Cloverdale pond project were also discussed.

Councilor Kirsche reported that he recently attended his first meeting as Council liaison to the Advisory Committee on Information and Technology, which is in the process of gathering recommendations for the upcoming budget season. He said that he is glad to be part of such a knowledgeable group of people. Councilor Kirsche reported that Data Services Coordinator Paul Dudley is currently working on three proposals for spam software.

Councilor Montinieri reported that he attended the recent EDIC meeting and announced that there will be a tour and luncheon hosted at the Keeney Center by the EDIC and several tourism and other groups to meet with representatives from the Hartford Convention Center on January 18 in an effort to spark increased interest in utilizing Wethersfield as a tourism destination.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato commented that she recently attended a luncheon at which the Assistant to the State's Health and Human Services Secretary spoke about health care prevention in terms of consumer education and making

medical services more efficient. She said that the primary focus was on the business community with little mentioned about the public sector.

Councilor Kirsche stated for the record that although he was unable to attend the last meeting, Councilor Montinieri would have received his vote for appointment to the Town Council. He said that he is aware of Councilor Montinieri's strong track record in Town and that he is happy to serve with him on the Council.

COUNCIL ACTION

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved "**TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF PAUL F. MONTINIERI FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION AND THE TOURISM COMMISSION, AND PHIL SANTOPIETRO FROM THE TOURISM COMMISSION**", seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved "**TO APPOINT KENNETH E. SOKOLOWSKI TO THE TOURISM COMMISSION FOR THE TERM 1-16-07 TO 6-30-09**", seconded by Councilor Montinieri. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Kotkin moved "**TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION CONCERNING AN APPLICATION TO THE CAPITAL REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TO OBTAIN STP URBAN PROGRAM FUNDS, TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR TRADITIONAL ROADWAY PROJECTS AND NON-TRADITIONAL ROADWAY PROJECTS IN THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD, CONNECTICUT**", seconded by Councilor Montinieri.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that this resolution is to authorize the application for STP-Urban funds.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato commented that this resolution was reviewed by the Infrastructure Committee last week and that they endorse the recommendation.

Chairperson Adil verified that the Prospect Street project was applied for once before, and the Town Manager stated that this is correct.

Councilor Cascio asked the Town Manager if she could make available a rendering of what the Prospect Street Intersection with Wolcott Hill Road and Millwood's Park Drive will look like, and the Town Manager said that she will make this available in the Council packets.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Advertisements for Playing Field Fences

Councilor Kotkin moved "**TO APPROVE THE BALL FIELD SIGN PROPOSAL AND TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SEND IT TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FOR NECESSARY ACTION**", seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that this has been discussed by the Council for some time and that a number of surrounding communities are already doing this. She said that the proposal is endorsed by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board who are ready to move forward with it. She said that some of the funding received will be

used for field improvements for Wethersfield Little League. The Town Manager said that the proposal needs to go before the Planning and Zoning Commission to develop the criteria for the signs prior to implementation. She said that Parks & Recreation Director Kathy Bagley and Wethersfield Little League representative Craig MacGovern are both present to answer any questions from the Council.

Councilor Kirsche stated that he thinks this is a great idea; however, he has a safety concern regarding possible sharp edges of the signs. Ms. Bagley said that safety is something that is always considered and will be looked at carefully with regard to the signs.

Councilor Drake asked if only one sign per field will be allowed or will be it as many as can be sold. Ms. Bagley said that the goal is to sell as many signs as will fit along the fence. Councilor Drake asked Ms. Bagley what kind of input she's received from the public as to the look of the signs, since he stated that he would not be happy with all kinds of signage near his home if he lived near a ball field. Ms. Bagley answered that her Department has been discussing this topic for quite a while and has yet to hold a public hearing for input.

Councilor Cascio asked if a plan has been set in place for the maintenance of the signs themselves since in time they can get "tired" looking. Mr. MacGovern answered that the person in charge of researching sign prices and vendors is stipulating a two to three year warranty. He said that the current plan is to have the sign space rented out for a three-month period.

Councilor Kotkin verified that all of the signs will be inward facing and Ms. Bagley stated that this is correct. Councilor Kotkin asked if the vendors requesting signage will be reviewed for their appropriateness. Ms. Bagley answered that this will be deliberated and a policy will be developed. Mr. MacGovern commented that the Little League organization has its own set of guidelines as well already in place. Councilor Kotkin commented that this whole proposal is a fantastic idea

Councilor Forrest asked for an explanation of the accounting trail of the fees for the signs once they are received. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the fee will be paid to the Wethersfield Little League who will then cut a check to the Town from the fees paid for field maintenance and improvements.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato asked who will be responsible for the putting up and taking down of the signs when required. Mr. MacGovern answered that this will be the responsibility of volunteer members of the Wethersfield Little League who will store the signs in the press box at Mill Woods Park. Deputy Mayor Fortunato asked if the public will be invited to the Public Hearing. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that normally when a P&Z Hearing is held, notice is sent to residents within a specific distance; however, she will issue a press release to announce the hearing to all residents. Deputy Mayor Fortunato asked if there will be a contract signed between the Town and the Wethersfield Little League spelling out the responsibilities associated with the signs. The Town Manager said that she will look into whether one is required, since this is really a Little League program. She said that a brief document can be drawn up indicating that the Town is not responsible for maintenance and other such stipulations. Deputy Mayor Fortunato commented that this would be a good idea. She said that she supports the sign concept for the fields proposed; however, feels that it needs to proceed slowly since this is new and there is a cost to those responsible for the maintenance of the program.

Chairperson Adil asked the Deputy Mayor if her support of the concept includes the Mill Woods Softball Field #1 listed in the proposal. She said that it does; however, she wants to make sure that the public has the opportunity to voice their concerns and opinions on the concept.

Councilor Cascio clarified that the discussion of the proposal currently includes the three Little League fields at the Mill Woods, Highcrest and Greenfield locations since these are the only fields with fencing around the entire park. He said that he doesn't want residents getting the idea that signs will start to be posted on the backstop at the Hanmer School or at the Broad Street Green.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato stated that this is part of the reason she would like to see an LLA drawn up to address and clarify these types of issues.

Chairperson Adil thanked Ms. Bagley and Mr. MacGovern for being present to answer Councilor questions and also for their work in carrying forward this proposal. He mentioned that at one point it was discussed that a portion of the fees collected would go toward the Master Plan, and he asked Ms. Bagley if this is still being considered. Ms. Bagley said that the Little League representatives have been gracious enough to offer to help fund the lighting if the Town addresses the Little League field.

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

Elderly Tax Relief Program

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO INCREASE THE PROPERTY TAX PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED FROM THE PRESENT INCOME AND TAX CREDIT LIMITS TO THE FOLLOWING: INCOME LEVELS OF \$0 - \$35,300 AT 15% OF TAX TO A MAXIMUM CREDIT OF \$500 AND INCOME LEVELS OF \$35,301 - \$40,000 AT 15% OF TAX TO A MAXIMUM CREDIT OF \$400"**, seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that a proposal concerning an elderly tax freeze was introduced by Councilor Drake in 2006 and that the Budget Committee has held numerous meetings on the topic and voted to move forward with raising the income limits and tax credits for the elderly. She said that approval of increases could result in a possible estimated loss of revenue in the amount of \$12,000 - \$20,000. The Town Manager stated that State Statutes require that income limits be included in the property tax relief program. She said that the Budget Committee was amazed that the limits have not been raised since the mid 1980's.

Councilor Kotkin thanked the Town Manager, Finance Director Lisa Hancock, and Assessor Jan Neumuth for the information provided. He commented that he supports the proposal stating that when the Town first adopted the tax credit of \$350 in 1989 that amount represented a much larger percentage of the typical tax bill than it does today; therefore the increase has been long overdue. Councilor Kotkin addressed the concern of those whose income level is just above the limit and that the Budget Committee had thought to possibly extend the limit to \$45,000; however, they decided instead to see how many will qualify up to the \$40,000 limit first. Councilor Kotkin said that he is very comfortable with the proposal as it stands, since he was not in favor of blanket relief. He pointed out that, by State Statute, the tax relief could not contain residency length stipulations.

Councilor Kirsche, having served on the Budget Committee, thanked both Ms. Neumuth and Ms. Hancock for their hard work. Councilor Kirsche commented that although he dissented to the original vote to deny the formulation of a citizens committee to further pursue the tax freeze, he will vote in favor of this proposal since it is overdue. He stated that the one-year residency restriction was a big hurdle, but he will support the motion only after opposing the vote to decline the formulation of the previously stated committee.

Councilor Cascio thanked Ms. Neumuth and Ms. Hancock for their work on this topic, and wished Ms. Neumuth luck in her upcoming retirement. He thanked the Budget Committee for their work and also Councilor Drake for bringing this issue to the attention of the Council, since it hasn't been reviewed since the 1980's.

Councilor Drake thanked everyone for the work they put into this proposal, although he is somewhat disappointed with what is being proposed, since it misses what he was trying to accomplish. He said that the credit is nice; however, he was looking to address more of those in Town who don't have a pension and are saving for their retirement. Councilor Drake stated that in the fifteen years between now and his retirement age, his taxes in Wethersfield will most likely increase at least three or four times to an amount that he anticipates will be his largest expense during his retirement. He said that what he had desired for the proposal was that once a resident reaches age sixty-five, his/her taxes would be limited to an increase by only a designated percentage such as 2%, 3%, 4%. Councilor Drake stated that possibly in another year, the property tax issue can be discussed again through the formation of a citizens' committee. He, once again, thanked all who worked on the proposal and stated that he will support the proposal since it provides some relief, although, as he stated, it does not accomplish what he had set out to do.

Councilor Forrest stated that he supports the proposal since it helps those who really need the tax relief. He commented

that he did not support the residency requirements since those who have lived in Wethersfield for a longer period should not be granted an advantage.

Councilor Walsh thanked the Budget & Finance Committee members as well as the Town staff for their work on this proposal. He stated that it is his belief that tax relief should be based on need, stating that whether you're in a job that offers a pension or not, there's no guarantee of what one will do when they retire. He said that what the Committee has done is to try to help those people with the most need. Councilor Walsh said that he is very pleased to see the bipartisanship displayed by both the Budget & Finance Committee and the Council on this issue.

Chairperson Adil commented that this proposal was a very laudable goal on Councilor Drake's part, and that the issue needs to be even further addressed, especially with regard to the residency requirements. He stated that the actual outcome of the Committee is excellent and appreciates the compromises that were made during the many months of deliberation. Chairperson Adil stated that there have been property tax exemption increases extended to seniors and disabled veterans in the past couple of years and that he appreciates Councilor Drake's efforts in bringing forward this proposal for those in Town who need it most.

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

Financial Policies

Councilor Kotkin moved "**TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED FINANCIAL POLICIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**", seconded by Deputy Mayor Fortunato.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that as part of the Townwide Strategic Plan, she has recommended that the Town's current Financial Policies be reviewed. She said that the Policies were referred to the Budget & Finance Committee in July, 2006 and after several meetings and revisions of the Town of Wethersfield Financial Policies as put together by Finance Director Lisa Hancock, the Committee has approved the copy currently forwarded to the Town Council for action. The Town Manager said that the only policy that had been previously adopted by the Council was the Debt Management Policy and that the adoption of the proposed Town of Wethersfield Financial Policies is all encompassing.

Councilor Kirsche stated that he was on the Budget & Finance Committee and he supports the motion to approve the Policies. He recognized Councilor Kotkin's efforts in allowing the Committee to pick his brain since he has particular expertise in this area.

Councilor Kotkin thanked Councilor Kirsche for his comment and Ms. Hancock for her efforts in working back and forth with the Budget & Finance Committee. He said that Ms. Hancock listened to the suggestions of the Committee and explained to them why certain policies were included in the set of Financial Policies. Councilor Kotkin stated that the Wethersfield Financial Policies are a statement to financial agencies and the Wethersfield citizenry that the Town is going to be responsible in how money is managed.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien commented that these Policies will be a big boost to bond agencies when the Town goes to sell bonds.

Councilor Montinieri commented that the Town of Wethersfield Financial Policies is a terrific piece of work, and that it is obvious that Finance Director Lisa Hancock put a lot of work into it.

Chairperson Adil thanked the Town Manager and Ms. Hancock and commented that the Budget & Finance Committee took the Strategic Plan into account when reviewing the document and setting goals. He said that he thinks that bond agencies will be impressed that the Town has the foresight to deal with financial issues in such a collaborative manner.

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

Library Grant - Historic Preservation

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO ACCEPT A GRANT OF \$4,152 FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES FOR THE WETHERSFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY TO BE USED FOR A PRESERVATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT"**, seconded by Councilor Cascio.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the Wethersfield Library has been notified by the National Endowment for the Humanities that they have received a grant in the amount of \$4,152 for a preservation needs assessment. She said that the funding will be used to hire a consultant to survey local history collections, assess possible risks to the collections, and make recommendations for improving storage and handling of local history material, among other things. The Town Manager stated that there is no match required for this grant and the award period is January, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

Councilor Forrest asked if the funds will be used to perform any cataloging or indexing. The Town Manager said that the funding is for preservation, and the survey will take into consideration recommendations made for action to be taken to deal with preservation.

Councilor Walsh extended his thanks to Library Director Laurel Goodgion for applying for this grant for such a necessary and timely project.

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

Budget Transfer - Streetlighting Refund to Capital Reserve

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO TRANSFER \$47,051.13 OF STREET LIGHTING REFUND REVENUE TO THE CAPITAL RESERVE FUND AND \$9,818.70 TO THE ENERGY SAVINGS PROGRAMS FOR KEENEY CENTER AND THE OLD ACADEMY FUND"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Fortunato.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that due to overcharges on street lighting, the Town has received a refund of \$56,869.83 from CL&P and the Infrastructure Committee is recommending that \$9,818.70 be utilized for energy savings programs at the Keeney Center and the Old Academy, with the remaining balance of \$47,051.13 placed in the Capital Reserve Fund. The Town Manager stated that the Clean Energy Committee has requested that the balance of funds be reserved for yet to be determined energy savings programs, and once they compile a list, the Council can then transfer funds from Capital Reserve to any project they wish to approve under the recommendation of the Clean Energy Commission.

Councilor Forrest commented that at a recent meeting of the Infrastructure Committee, it was stated that the energy savings programs at the Keeney Center could provide for significant improvements to the energy efficiency and energy conservation in that building.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato stated that full support of this recommendation was received from the Infrastructure Committee, including Historical Society members as well. She said that they were all enthusiastic to have these assessments done and since the leases are being discussed it was stated that the Town should always have the responsibility to pay for the expenses required to realize energy savings.

Councilor Drake commented that this is money well spent although more will need to be done to the buildings. He said that this won't stabilize, but will decrease the budget item so that it is more feasible. He said that he supports the motion, stating that it is a no-brainer.

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

Removal from Blight List - 2090 Berlin Turnpike

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO REMOVE 2090 BERLIN TURNPIKE FROM THE BLIGHTED PROPERTY LIST"**, seconded by Councilor Cascio.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien stated that she is always pleased to bring before the Council a motion to remove a property from the Town's blighted property list. She said that enforcement action along with the blighted property listing has resulted in the successful cleanup of the property with the building being torn down; therefore she is requesting that the Council remove the property from the list.

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

BIDS

Repair of HVAC System - High School Pool - Budget Transfer

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO TRANSFER \$61,000 FROM THE CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT TO THE HIGH SCHOOL SWIMMING POOL HVAC REPLACEMENT PROJECT ACCOUNT AND TO AUTHORIZE THE BID AWARD TO TITAN MECHANICAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$283,350"**, seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that last year's CIP budget included \$140,000 in funding for HVAC replacement at the High School swimming pool. She said that the consulting engineering firm (LMG) has recommended that the Town replace the air conditioning units with a system that also provides dehumidification to the pool areas to add to the life expectancy of equipment as well as resulting in energy savings. The Town Manager said that the Council approved the transfer of \$100,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund for a total project budget of \$240,000 in January, 2006 and when the Town went out to bid for the project in April, 2006 only one bid, which was in excess of \$300,000, was received. She explained that the Council rejected the bid and staff re-bid the project in May, 2006 and received two bids, both of which exceeded the project budget. The Town Manager said that she then asked Public Works Director Mike Turner take another look at the bid to see if other bidders could be obtained and have another engineering firm take a look at whether or not the recommendations on the project is the way the Town should actually proceed. She said that the second engineering firm agreed with the first engineering firm's recommendations which are in the long-term best interests of the Town. The Town Manager stated that the most responsible bidder is still Titan Mechanical in the amount of \$283,350 and that the Council's approval of \$61,000 from Capital Reserve, and the just approved transfer of \$47,000 into the Capital Reserve will leave a balance of approximately \$130,000 in that account.

Councilor Drake recalled previous discussion of this project included that one of the units would be removed, and he asked if this will have to be replaced at a later date or if the proposal is to go with one larger or a set two units. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien stated that she believes it will be two units; however, Councilor Drake stated that the specs state that one of the units will be eliminated. While the Town Manager reviewed the bid specs, Councilor Drake commented that the area of clean energy is, by far, where the Town should be spending money. He stated that he doesn't want to see the second unit removed and the issue revisited in the future since it will be difficult to provide a duplicate unit at a later date. The Town Manager stated that the bid specs appear to indicate that the work includes just the one unit. Councilor Drake said that he supports the motion; however, he would like to table the motion until the Council's next meeting so that more information on the second unit can be obtained. He said that he wants the work to be done in the proper manner now.

Councilor Kotkin commented on how humid and uncomfortable it is to sit through a swim meet at the High School pool. He said that heat is being wasted and the approval of this motion and the replacement project will address these issues. Councilor Kotkin asked if there is any type of rebate funding available through the State Conservation Fund since this is a school project. The Town Manager answered that she has not heard of any available funding of that sort.

Councilor Walsh stated that this project is a real way for the Town to start conserving energy by recycling the waste

heat in the pool area. Councilor Walsh said that he interprets the bid specs to indicate that the existing units will be replaced, although he's not sure of the intent of the sentence.

Chairperson Adil commented that the most important thing is to get going on this project due to the corrosion that continues to occur. He said that he agrees with Councilor Drake that if another unit is required, this should be acted upon sooner than later; therefore rather than act on this motion tonight, it may be best to direct the Town Manager to obtain first the cost of a second unit and its possible impact on the upcoming budget.

Councilor Montinieri stated that approving the motion will authorize the bid and potentially create an issue for the Town in the future since it will then be locked into this bid and the specs provided. He suggested that the Council table the motion until more information can be obtained regarding the replacement of the units with either one or two new units.

Councilor Drake suggested that the Council go ahead with the current motion and when the Town Manager obtains the information, a special meeting of the Council can be called.

Chairperson Adil suggested that the Council take a short recess for the Town Manager to try to call and obtain this information and allow the Council to move forward with the motion.

Councilor Montinieri moved **"TO TABLE THE MOTION TO TRANSFER \$61,000 FROM THE CAPITAL RESERVE ACCOUNT TO THE HIGH SCHOOL SWIMMING POOL HVAC REPLACEMENT PROJECT ACCOUNT AND TO AUTHORIZE THE BID AWARD TO TITAN MECHANICAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$283,350 UNTIL FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE NUMBER OF AIR CONDITIONING UNITS CAN BE OBTAINED BY THE TOWN MANAGER"**, seconded by Councilor Cascio. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

None.

MINUTES

Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 2, 2007"**, seconded by Councilor Cascio.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato amended the minutes to reflect on page 13815 that her comment was that "a resident expressed concerns" rather than "a number of residents".

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. Councilor Forrest and Councilor Kirsche ABSTAINED. The motion to approve the minutes as amended passed 7-0-2.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:54 p.m., Councilor Walsh moved **"TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION"** seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

At 9:13 p.m., Councilor Cascio moved **"TO ENTER BACK INTO THE REGULAR MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Montinieri. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

At 9:14 p.m., Councilor Cascio moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Deputy Mayor Fortunato. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk

Approved by vote of Council 2/5/2007

*This linked file is in Adobe's Portable Document Format. To view it you will need Adobe Reader installed on your computer. It is available for free download at:

