

ADJOURNED BUDGET MEETING MAY 14, 2007

An adjourned meeting of the Wethersfield Town Council was held on Monday, May 14, 2007 at 5:30 p.m. in Conference Room #1 Lower Level of Town Hall.

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

Also present: Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, RaeAnn Palmer, Assistant to the Manager, Lisa Hancock, Finance Director and Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk

Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk took the roll call.

ROAD PAVING

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the State was extremely late with its bid for road paving. The Town usually works off of the State bid. On May 8th the State bid was opened. The State bids went up \$10 a ton this year which has an impact on the roads. This price increase will probably reduce road work by about 1/2 of a mile. She recommends that the Town Council make a motion to award the bid with the State contract. She said that this would be the last of the bond money.

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO AWARD THE ROAD FUNDING BID TO GENERAL PAVING AND CONSTRUCTION IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$400,000; TO AWARD THE ROAD PAVING WORK TO BOTH TILCON-CT INC AND CT PAVING AS PER THE STATE BID, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$850,000; AND TO AWARD MILLING WORK TO COSTELLO INDUSTRIES, AS PER THE STATE BID, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$150,000"** seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Councilor Drake asked if going with the State bid is the right way to go this year.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that most Towns work off of the State bid. The Town did not prepare its own bid. She said that she feels it is the right way to go. All of these contractors are from the State bid.

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

SALE OF A TAX LIEN

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that Hartford Medical is planning an expansion. There are some wetlands issue and a certain piece or parcel of land would help make this project a reality. There are back taxes owed on the parcel. Wethersfield has never been involved in the sale of tax liens but other Towns have done it for economic development purposes. By State Statutes the Town can do this. Normally, a tax lien being sold for economic development is sold for a very minimal amount because the taxes the Town will receive in the future far outweigh giving up the one time amount of taxes. The EDIC has voted to recommend approval of this request.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO ALLOW FOR THE SALE OF THE TAX LIEN ON PARCEL #237-013 FOR \$1.00 ONLY IF ALL PERMITS ARE GRANTED FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE HARTFORD MEDICAL GROUP AT 1260 SILAS DEANE HIGHWAY"** seconded by Councilor Kirsche.

Chairperson Adil said that he was at the EDIC meeting and said that the expansion project is exciting. They are looking for parking in the rear of the building. It needs to be approved by Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Committee on Wednesday. He supports this project.

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

USE OF TOWN PROPERTY - RIVERFRONT RECAPTURE - BASS TOURNAMNET

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that last year, Riverfront Recapture used the Wethersfield Cove for several weeks for a Bass Tournament. It not only is a way for Wethersfield to be used for a large number of people around the area but also many of those people stopped in Wethersfield and ate and shopped. The first day would be Wednesday, so she needs to tell them as soon as possible whether they have permission to use the Cove.

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO GRANT PERMISSION TO RIVERFRONT RECAPTURE TO USE THE WETHERSFIELD COVE BOAT LAUNCH RAMP FOR THEIR BIG BASS TOURNAMENT AND ALLOW THE PARTICIPANTS TO PAY THE WETHERSFIELD RESIDENT RATE FOR THIS ACTIVITY"** seconded by Councilor Walsh.

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

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that she sent out on Friday a memorandum listing possible budget changes. Nothing has changed since the memo was sent.

Chairperson Adil suggested starting with the smaller amendments and working up to the larger changes.

Councilor Forrest moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$1,500 TO THE TAX COLLECTOR ACCOUNT T1063-5412 FOR THE PURCHASE OF ACCURATE SOFTWARE"** seconded by Councilor Walsh.

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

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$2,000 TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT ACCOUNT T1420-5225 FOR 'BUY MONEY'"** seconded by Councilor Montinieri.

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

Councilor Walsh moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$20,000 TO COMPENSATED ABSENCES ACCOUNT T1960901-5298"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

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

Councilor Kotkin moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$45,697 TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT ACCOUNT T1420-5001; \$7,445 TO ACCOUNT T1420-5100; AND \$13,374 TO ACCOUNT T1420-5101 FOR SALARY AND BENEFITS FOR A POLICE OFFICER TO BE HIRED ON OCTOBER 1, 2007 AND A POLICE SERGEANT TO BE PROMOTED ON MARCH 1, 2008"**

No one seconded the motion.

A discussion ensued concerning the promotion date of a Police Sergeant.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that if a Police Officer is hired from the certified list, the promotion could be earlier than March 2008. If a Police Officer is hired and has to go through training, the promotion would be in 2008.

Chairperson Adil said that it was his understanding that the creation of another Sergeant position was to fulfill the Town's obligation to staff the Drug Task Force.

Councilor Kotkin withdrew his motion while Town staff looked into the issue.

Councilor Cascio moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$60,000 TO TRANSFER TO OTHER FUNDS ACCOUNT T1955-5801 FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWO PICKUP TRUCKS FOR PHYSICAL SERVICES"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Councilor Drake said that the budget has money for a dump truck and other equipment, and so he thinks the Town Council should allocate \$30,000 for one pickup truck.

Councilor Kirsche said that he understands Councilor Drake's point of view but the presentation was convincing that the trucks need to be replaced. He said that these trucks are old and need to be replaced. There will be savings in the reduction of maintenance costs.

Councilor Drake said that the budget has a lot of money in it for equipment, so the other pickup truck could be purchased in the following year.

Councilor Cascio said that it is also a public safety issue since these old pickup trucks are being used to plow small parking lots and sidewalks, too.

Councilor Kotkin said that in the Town Manager's budget, there is funding for one pickup truck that is not operable. He asked what was the condition of the other two trucks?

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that they have 120,000 to 150,000 miles on them. One of the trucks is still out on the road. The other truck is in the garage.

Councilor Kotkin said that one has to be replaced because it is not operable. The other one is used but spends half the time in the garage. He asked what was the condition of the third truck?

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the third truck is on the road.

Councilor Montinieri asked if there were any economies in purchasing the two trucks at the same time.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Town uses the State bids. The price won't change. She said that the Town tries to purchase the same type of trucks.

Councilor Cascio said that a lot of the equipment in the truck area is on a wing and a prayer. It is one of those issues where the Town Council can fund it now or can have it come to the Town Council for funding during the year. There are concerns with the repairs on some of the trucks, too.

Chairperson Adil said that if only one truck is funded, the money can be used elsewhere.

Councilor Drake asked what expenses there would be next year.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the dump trucks will be in good shape next year. A pickup truck could be purchased then.

Councilor Cascio said that he would amend his motion to add \$30,000 instead of \$60,000.

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

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

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$10,000 TO THE TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNT T1010110-5439 FOR CLEAN ENERGY PURPOSES"** seconded by Councilor Walsh.

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

Councilor Walsh moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$30,000 TO TRANSFER TO OTHER FUNDS ACCOUNT T1955-5803 FOR THE KEANE COMMUNITY CENTER PROJECT"** seconded by Councilor Cascio.

Councilor Drake said that he thought that money was coming from the Energy Grant, or windows grant. He said that he supports the project but thought the funding was coming from somewhere else.

Chairperson Adil said that he spoke to Representative Morin and he said that the Town has to use the grant for the replacement of existing windows only.

Councilor Cascio said that he would like a clarification of the funding.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Committee felt it was going to be short funding to do everything. The Committee wanted a commitment from the Town Council that it would fill the gap. If the money is not needed, it will roll back into the General Fund.

Councilor Cascio said that on Thursday he brought to the table the figure of \$50,000. He said he spoke to Committee members about this. If the Committee doesn't need it, it will be a safety net. Since the Town Council did not authorize the two pickup trucks, he would like to see the additional \$20,000 for this project.

Councilor Forrest asked if the additional money includes the movement of the generator. If it does, he would support this motion.

Councilor Cascio said that the money from the State cannot be used for anything but windows replacement.

Chairperson Adil said that the Town Council is in essence giving them \$30,000 in cash and \$25,000 or \$30,000 in State money for the replacement windows. So the Committee is receiving at least \$55,000.

Councilor Cascio said that it was his understanding that the replacement windows will be very costly.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the estimate from Charlie Viani, Chairperson of the Keane Foundation Building Committee is \$25,000.

Councilor Drake said that the \$25,000 Energy Grant can only be used for the window replacement. The Town is then giving them \$30,000 to do whatever they want to do with the money. He wants to make sure that is what will happen.

Councilor Cascio said that the question still stands that if CL&P does not come forward with the funds to move the generator, the \$30,000 can be used. The Town was given the number of \$50,000 to move the generator.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said if that is the case, then the Keane Foundation will have to come back to the Town Council for additional funds. If the Town wants to have those funds available for the Foundation now, it will have to fund \$50,000 from the General Fund and \$25,000 from the Energy Grant.

Chairperson Adil said that the Town Council is now saying that it will give the Keane Foundation \$30,000 in cash and a promise to replace any of the windows from the Grant. They were asking for \$50,000 and the Town is giving them \$55,000. The Foundation is now able to reallocate the money they had budgeted for windows to use elsewhere.

Councilor Cascio wants to make it clear that it is still \$20,000 short.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that only very preliminary figures were given to the Town on the cost of moving the generator.

Councilor Walsh said that this sounds like a good way to move forward. The \$30,000 is a good faith addition because the Town Council knows that there may be some shortfall. The Town Council doesn't know if CL&P will come forward with money for the generator. If CL&P doesn't fund it, the Keane Foundation can always come back to Council at another time.

Councilor Drake said that he supports that. The Keane Foundation may be better off than they thought, too.

Councilor Montinieri said that when this issue came up last week, the \$50,000 was discussed in response to the generator but the window money was not discussed then. The Town Council moved the window money over and the Keane Foundation was not aware of it. He said the Keane Foundation has a potential shortfall of \$50,000 without the window money. He said that if the Town Council allocates the \$30,000 and window money it will be well funded. The generator could in fact be covered by a grant.

Councilor Kotkin said that unlike the windows, the generator project doesn't necessarily have to be done during the renovation period.

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

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$2,500 TO THE TOWN MANAGER'S ACCOUNT T1020-5212 AND \$2,500 TO T1020-5585 FOR A RECYCLING EDUCATION CAMPAIGN"** seconded by Councilor Montinieri.

Chairperson Adil said that CRRA (CT Resource Recovery Authority) is going to begin to pay the Town for recycling. This allocation is an investment that could easily pay for itself. He supports this amendment.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato said that there was an interesting letter to the editor this weekend about recycling and litter clean up. Litter is also an expense as the Town hired an additional Maintainer last year.

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

Councilor Walsh moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$20,000 TO THE TOWN ATTORNEY ACCOUNT T1030125-5220"** seconded by Councilor Montinieri.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the claim from Nutmeg will definitely carry over to next year. There are either five or six Historic District Commission cases that are on-going.

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

Councilor Montinieri moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$26,000 TO ENGINEERING/SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR ACCOUNT T-1510513-5275 FOR THE REPAIR OF SIDEWALKS AT STANDISH PARK"** seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that this money is not meant for new sidewalks but the repair of existing sidewalks.

Councilor Drake said that he had in his notes that money was being taken from the ADA Ramp Account for sidewalk repairs.

Chairperson Adil said that was discussed as an idea for Two Rod Highway.

Chairperson Adil said that this issue came up with the Preserve America meeting. The Committee asked for \$52,000 and the Town Council is authorizing half.

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

Councilor Cascio moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$35,927 TO BUILDING SERVICES ACCOUNT T1542-5001 AND \$6,254 TO ACCOUNT T1542-5100 AND \$5,404 TO ACCOUNT T1542-5101 FOR SALARY AND BENEFITS FOR A NEW MAINTAINER I POSITION"** seconded by

No one would second the motion. The motion failed

Councilor Walsh moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$13,160 TO PHYSICAL SERVICES ACCOUNT T1552-5002 FOR OVERTIME FOR COTTONE FIELD WEEKEND EVENTS"** seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that at the last Town Council meeting, the Town Council approved putting Physical Services staff on at the regular games on Cottone Field.

Councilor Kotkin asked if this was for high school events only.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that it would be for all events. If it is a paid event, the Town will get the money back.

Chairperson Adil said that when he was at a game, the Maintainer was busy the entire time picking up.

Councilor Kotkin said that he supports this motion but wants to make sure that the Parks and Recreation Department keeps track of the hours of the Maintainer so that the Town isn't paying for 10 hours of overtime if a league is only playing 5 hours of games. The Leagues should schedule games so that there are not large amounts of time between the games when a Maintainer would be not working. The Park and Recreation Department needs to monitor that.

Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilor Drake voted NAY. The motion passed 8-1-0.

Councilor Cascio moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$17,448 TO THE TOWN MANAGER'S ACCOUNT T1020-5001 AND \$479 TO ACCOUNT T1020-5100 FOR SALARY AND BENEFITS (WORKERS COMPENSATION AND MEDICARE) FOR A PART-TIME SECRETARY I POSITION AS A 'FLOATER' FOR DEPARTMENTS AS NEEDED"** seconded by Councilor Drake.

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

Councilor Cascio moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$10,000 TO PARKS FACILITIES MAINTENANCE ACCOUNT T1825822-5436 FOR FENCE AND DRAINAGE WORK AT COTTONE FIELD"** seconded by Councilor Kirsche.

Councilor Drake said that he supports this motion but wants to know where the expense is, beyond buying paint, since Town employees will be doing the work.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the gate and columns need to be replaced. Some of the work is also drainage work that needs to be done.

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

Councilor Kotkin moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$16,680 TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT ACCOUNT T1420-5420 FOR VIDEO CAMERAS FOR MARKED POLICE VEHICLES"** seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Chairperson Adil said that the Police Union is offering to purchase one camera.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Chief will purchase one, too. This money is for an additional camera, software, and maintenance contracts for the second year.

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

Councilor Kotkin moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$2,500 TO THE FIRE FACILITIES ACCOUNT T1433-5275 FOR GARAGE DOOR WEATHER-STRIPPING"** seconded by Councilor Kirsche.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that this will take care of all of the weather-stripping for the Fire Department.

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

Councilor Forrest moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO REDUCE THE TRANSFERS IN FROM PARKS REVENUE ACCOUNT 001001-6F04 BY \$3,000"** seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that this was an error that needs to be changed.

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

Councilor Kotkin moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO REDUCE THE PARKS REVENUE ACCOUNT 001001-6808 BY \$5,000"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Park and Recreation Director said that she could make up the revenue if the Town Council gave her a secretary for an additional 5 hours of work a week. She feels strongly that the floater will not give her all of those hours and that the floater will not have the knowledge that the Secretary has.

Lisa Hancock, Finance Director, said that the Secretary could generate some program revenue and substantiate the hours. The hours were not approved but the revenue portion is still in the budget. The Director of Parks and Recreation was going to cover the additional salary costs with fees instead of tax dollars.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that a floater will not be consistent. During program time, that person should be down there as much as possible.

Councilor Kotkin said that it appears that the Director of Parks and Recreation is saying that if you give her someone it won't help at all. He asked why would the Town Manager give that Department the floater for any hours if it isn't going to help.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the first year the floater is going to have a lot to learn. The person probably won't be familiar with Town Hall.

Councilor Kotkin moved **"AMENDED HIS MOTION TO READ BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS**

SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO REDUCE THE PARKS REVENUE ACCOUNT 001001-6808 BY \$3,000" seconded by Councilor Forrest.

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

Councilor Montinieri moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$250,000 TO THE INVESTMENT INCOME REVENUE ACCOUNT 001001-6401"** seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Councilor Drake said that he had \$180,000 in his notes.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that it goes back to adding a cushion. She said that she is still not comfortable with the Fund Balance.

Lisa Hancock, Finance Director, said that the Fund Balance is currently \$1,100,000.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that there will be some interest income if the Town Council issues bonds.

Councilor Kotkin said that \$80,000 is in the budget to issue bonds. If the bonds are not issued, it saves the Town the \$80,000.

Lisa Hancock, Finance Director, said that bonds will have to be issued next year.

Councilor Kotkin asked how it would be if the Town Council left the \$750,000 in the Fund Balance.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that her biggest fear is using the Fund Balance to offset taxes because next year's revaluation will be when the Town really needs to subsidize the big tax increase.

Councilor Kotkin said that the third part of this discussion centers around the money from the State. What if the Town receives less than what is in the Governor's budget?

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that between the conveyance tax and Fund Balance and a freeze of Capital projects and new hires, the Town will be okay. The Conveyance Tax Account has \$500,000.

Lisa Hancock, Finance Director, said that if the Town is short in revenue, it automatically runs through the Fund Balance as a profit or loss. The Town Attorney can clarify if that can happen. Of course the Town doesn't want to exceed its revenues.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that at one time the Town wiped out all of the Fund Balance. The Bond Companies still remember that and will look at the Fund Balance.

Councilor Cascio says that he supports this. It is good conservative budgeting.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved to **"TO AMEND THE MOTION TO READ BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD AN ADDITIONAL \$50,000 TO INCREASE IT TO \$300,000 TO THE INVESTMENT INCOME REVENUE ACCOUNT 001001-6401"** seconded by Councilor Cascio.

Chairperson Adil said that this is an effort to alleviate some of the Town Manager's worries.

Councilor Cascio said that it is a very good safety net.

Chairperson Adil said that there have been surpluses the last few years and where the Town Council can help the taxpayers it should. He supports the amendment.

Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilor Forrest voted NAY. The motion passed 8-1-0.

The Town Council took a short break.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, asked Councilors to look at sheet two. She said that if the Sergeant started on October 1, 2007, she would need an additional \$3,759.92. Council would also need on sheet 6 instead of reducing by ten reduce by five unless someone is hired off of the certified list.

Councilor Kotkin moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$47,717 TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT ACCOUNT T1420-5001; \$7,765 TO ACCOUNT T1420-5100; AND \$13,374 TO ACCOUNT T1420-5101 FOR SALARY AND BENEFITS FOR A POLICE OFFICER TO BE HIRED ON OCTOBER 1, 2007 AND A POLICE SERGEANT TO BE PROMOTED ON OCTOBER 1, 2007"** seconded by Councilor Kirsche.

Chairperson Adil said that the Town hasn't hired a Police Officer since 1993. It is important to be proactive.

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

Councilor Forrest moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO REDUCE POLICE OVERTIME ACCOUNT T1420-5002 BY \$5,000"** seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Councilor Drake said that he thought the reduction was \$10,000.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that it was \$5,000.

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

Councilor Drake moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO REDUCE THE LIBRARY BUDGET BY \$100,000"** seconded by Councilor Kirsche.

Councilor Drake said that over the last three years, the Library has had a significantly higher budget increase than other Departments. If the Library was behind three years ago, it has caught up with these increases. Since the Library will be closed for a portion of the year, he thinks the reduction should be significantly more. The \$100,000 reduction is because the budget is too high.

Councilor Cascio said that the majority of the increases has to do with the salaries in the new unions. The operational portion of the budget was not as substantial.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that it is a projected increase since the Town Council did not vote on the Library union contracts, yet.

Councilor Cascio said that the increases are not for additional services, but a projected contractual obligation.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato said that she agrees with Councilor Cascio as the increases will be seen in the contractual accounts. While the Library is under renovation, there may be some realization of savings. The Librarian has provided the Town Council with a list of reductions. The Town Council should also be willing to fully fund the Library when it is ready to open.

Councilor Drake said that he looked at the Library union contract this weekend and didn't see anything that showed dollar amounts for employee raises. If the Town Council gave them a 6 percent raise over last year's budget, versus 12 it is still significant.

Councilor Kotkin asked what is the base that the Library uses.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the number comes from the Town budget.

Lisa Hancock, Finance Director, said that the budget is \$1,701,517 for 2007/2008, for 2006/2007 the budget is \$1,513,095.

Councilor Kotkin said that if Councilor Drake reduced the budget by \$100,000, what does that bring the budget to?

Lisa Hancock, Finance Director, said that it would go from \$1,701,517 to \$1,601,517. Those are the numbers in the system; they differ from what is in the proposed budget.

Councilor Kotkin said that if the \$100,000 reduction is taken, the budget will be an increase of 5 percent. This would put everyone at the same level of increase.

Councilor Cascio said that he would like a clarification. The motion is for a \$100,000 reduction and Council is saying that the Library will not be open because Town employees will be using the basement or upstairs of the Library.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Town employees will be using the main floor and mezzanine.

Councilor Cascio said that the question brought to the Town Council is does the Council have a projection of when the work will be completed.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Town has not seen a schedule from the new contractor. Preliminary discussions show that the project should take fifteen months.

The question is, if the project is completed in fifteen months, how long will it take for the Library to open.

Chairperson Adil said that the project will take fifteen months, but the Library may open earlier. It may not be fully functional but portions can open up.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the roof work has to be done before anybody can move into the renovated Library space. If everything goes smoothly, the roof should be completed in August. The tentative schedule suggested that offices can be moved to the mezzanine level and some Library services can be brought back into the main Library. There will be a phase in and phase out of Town offices. As each office phases out, more Library space will open up. There is should be no consecutive fifteen months that the Library will be closed. At some point, the Town will be able to give the Library more and more staggered space.

Laurel Goodgion, Library Director, said that at the Building Committee meeting, Greg Curtin, Library Board President, said that the Children's Library could be opened up in the Fall and also increase services to adults as well. She said that she doesn't see opening the Library on a staggered basis because the collection has to be brought back. The space on the main floor and mezzanine need to be open so that the Library can go out to bid on shelving and have it installed before the collection is returned. More services can be added this fall as soon as some staff is moved upstairs. Staff can be moved back gradually. When looking at the Salaries Budget, Councilors need to know no salary increases were put in the current budget.

Councilor Cascio said that the motion to reduce the budget by \$100,000 will not reduce services.

Chairperson Adil said that by not fully opening the Library it will give us enough cost savings.

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

Chairperson Adil said that this budget has already been cut by \$108,000 per the cuts made by the Board of Education. There is an additional cost of \$300,000 or 12 percent due to recent health claims, too. The April claims are still high.

Councilor Kotkin said that the April numbers are high, about \$930,000. He said that hopefully some of the illnesses will not recur. The increase does make the Town budget more for the claims.

Chairperson Adil said that the Town increase is at 12.6 percent, instead of the CIRMA figure of 16 percent. That number is shaved as close as possible. The Board of Education is also shaving their number.

Councilor Walsh moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO REDUCE THE WETHERSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACCOUNT BY \$50,000"** seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Chairperson Adil said that this reduction would make the overall reduction to the School Budget \$158,000 of the Superintendent's Budget.

Councilor Cascio said that the \$108,000 reduction was off the Superintendent's Budget. It does not affect the total amount of reduction. It is only a \$50,000 reduction from the Town. He said that the Town received information on an energy savings not budgeted of \$146,000 and additional differences. There is a note from Dr. Proctor that says the Town Council can go up to \$150,000.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the energy savings will counteract the health increases.

Councilor Kotkin said that when the Board of Education went through the natural gas account they came up with \$109,610, electricity account with \$30,688, there was subsequently a \$25,000 estimate by putting in a new HVAC system at the pool. When it is all added together, the savings are about \$166,000 versus a \$333,000 health increase. The reason he supports the \$50,000 is that hopefully the Board of Education can make up for that differential. There are a couple of other reasons that he would recommend that the Town Council go another \$50,000. The two items are when the Board of Education came up with the \$140,000 reduction in the energy account, they kept 5 percent contingency on the energy budget. He said that he doesn't think contingencies should be kept on line items. The other was that CIRMA has said that the worker's compensation premium for the Board has gone down. If this health care issue didn't come along, he would have been up around \$300,000 for a reduction. The health care cost is a big concern for him.

Councilor Forrest asked if the overall Board of Education budget has a contingency account.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Town Contingency Account is for the Board of Education, too.

Councilor Montinieri said that he is still unclear about this year's shortfall in the health care account. He is concerned with any reduction knowing that they had such a shortfall this year and are going to have one next year, too, in the healthcare accounts.

Councilor Drake said he looked at last year's budget and added 4 percent to it like everyone else does. Since the 4 percent increase doesn't work, he added 4 percent plus the full energy increase and subtracted savings. It brought the budget down significantly lower than what they are asking for. Another way to look at it is to take the budget and deduct \$108,000 and \$161,000 for energy savings. He is not positive about adding additional teachers and the residency officer. A lot of bodies have been put on these last few years. He feels the Board of Education is getting built up. These changes bring it down to \$44,431,000 but he will concede that there is a \$300,000 healthcare increase so it brings it to \$44,700,000. There is about \$250,000 to give without too much pain.

Councilor Walsh said that a lot of what the Board of Education put into this budget is contractual obligations. About some of the requested positions, the additional Residency Officer will be a little money spent to get big results. It will help to reduce people from other areas coming in to the Wethersfield School System. The Reading Specialist is to help with getting the scores up to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act. He appreciates the points of Councilors Kotkin and Drake but said he doesn't like to cut that much because of the health insurance increases.

Councilor Kotkin said that if the Town Council reduces it by \$50,000, the Board of Education budget would be \$44,799,332. He said that he is supportive of that number.

Councilor Walsh said that he tends to agree with the \$50,000 cut. He said that he has no glaring objection to anything put in the budget. He said that he is not comfortable going down line items in the Board of Education budget.

Chairperson Adil said that his feeling is that the money from the State is going to be for education and it would seem to be disingenuous of the Town Council to cut too much in the Board of Education budget. Had the healthcare crisis not occurred, a larger reduction could have been made.

Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. Councilors Drake and Montinieri voted NAY. The motion passed 7-2-0.

Councilor Drake said that there was a \$340,000 number left over from last year on the Town-side. He asked if this is anywhere in the budget?

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that anything left over goes into the Fund Balance at the end of the year.

Councilor Drake said that the Town Manager said that she estimated a \$340,000 surplus this year.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that if there is any money left this year, it would go into the Fund Balance. She said that she could come up with Capital Projects to fund now with the Contingency Account instead.

Councilor Montinieri asked if the Town Manager had any news from the Legislators on the Governor's budget.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that she is still hearing that the Legislators are going into a summer session.

Councilor Montinieri said that the Town may need that \$340,000 surplus from this year if all of the State funding doesn't come through.

Councilor Drake said that if the Town Manager is comfortable with the level of funding in the Fund Balance, why is she putting this additional \$340,000 there? Why not put it in the pickup trucks or Capital Account.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the money could be put in the Capital Reserve Account.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, suggested that it be moved to that account after the Legislators vote on the Governor's budget on June 6th. She said that the fiscal year doesn't end until June 30th, so the Council has time to move the money.

Chairperson Adil left the meeting.

Councilor Kotkin moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO REDUCE THE SAND ACCOUNT T1550559-5340 BY \$10,000"** seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Councilor Forrest said that since the sand shed is full because of the good winter the Town had, he agrees that the sand account can be reduced by \$10,000.

Councilors present voted AYE. Councilor Cascio voted NAY. Chairperson Adil was not present for the vote. The motion passed 7-1-0.

Councilor Forrest moved **"BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO ADD \$260 TO THE TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNT T1010110-5272 FOR RIVERFRONT RECAPTURE"** seconded by Councilor Drake.

Councilor Forrest said that Riverfront Recapture is an organization that puts on a lot of Greater Hartford events. Many Wethersfield residents enjoy the fireworks show, fishing tournaments in the Cove, operas in the park, as well as public services to the Town's riverfront. There are other Towns that participate financially in their programs and he is asking for a small amount of money as a good faith effort to fund a regional organization that benefits Wethersfield. He said that \$260 represents their 26th year in operation as a token good will gesture.

Councilor Drake asked how much other Towns gave to Riverfront Recapture.

Councilor Forrest said that he believes that Hartford and East Hartford give hundreds of thousands of dollars. Windsor gives between \$30,000 and \$40,000.

Chairperson Adil returned to the meeting.

Councilor Drake asked if it was appropriate for Wethersfield to make such a small donation.

Councilor Forrest said that the Town would be listed on all the brochures as a donor in the \$200 to \$500 bracket.

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

Councilor Forrest moved "**BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO INCREASE THE FUNDING FOR THE MEMORIAL DAY PARADE COMMITTEE ACCOUNT T1810816-5272 BY \$500**" seconded by Deputy Mayor Fortunato.

Chairperson Adil asked if that Committee has requested additional funding.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Committee has not asked for anything additional.

Councilor Cascio said that this account was reduced last year when the Committee received in-kind contributions. He said that he thinks it is a good gesture to increase it because of the costs for rentals increase.

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

Councilor Forrest moved "**BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 2, 2007 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: TO INCREASE THE FUNDING FOR AN ADDITIONAL VIDEO CAMERA FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT ACCOUNT T 1420-5420 BY \$1,050**" seconded by Councilor Drake.

Councilor Forrest said that this money would be for one camera that would work against vandalism. The Chief of Police provided information at a budget meeting about a vandalism camera. It can take pictures and video and it is mobile. It can be used to protect the Town's investment in its properties. The skate park graffiti is an example of where the camera could be used. The Police Department has budgeted for one camera. This is an effort to move it to two cameras. Also, the Conservation Commission is increasing the Heritage Trail into the Meadows. It has not moved forward in part because of the damage to the signage.

Councilor Kotkin asked if there was money in the budget for a camera.

Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, said that the Police Chief just got one camera and is testing it now.

Councilor Kotkin said that he would like to hear more about this program at a Public Safety meeting before he supports this motion. He said that he is worried that the surveillance camera may be damaged. He said that if it is truly needed, the money could be taken out of the Contingency Account. He would like to get more information first.

Councilor Forrest said that the money could be taken out of the Contingency Account later but this is the budget session where expenses should be planned.

Councilor Forrest voted AYE. All other Councilors, including the Chairperson voted NAY. The motion Failed 1-8-0.

Lisa Hancock, Finance Director, said that with all of the amendments, the Town is at an increase in the mill rate of .51 or a 1.57 percent. The mill rate would be 32.94.

Chairperson Adil said that he is very happy with that news.

Councilor Drake asked what the total budget would be.

Lisa Hancock, Finance Director, said that the total budget would be \$78,798,250.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:05 p.m., Councilor Kirsche moved "**THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS UNION NEGOTIATIONS**" seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Council members and the Chairman voted aye. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Besides Councilors Cascio, Drake, Forrest, Kirsche, Kotkin, Montinieri, Walsh, Deputy Mayor Fortunato and Chairperson Adil, Laurel Goodgion, Library Director, Greg Curtin, Chairperson of the Library Board, Liz Kirkpatrick, Assistant Director of the Library, and Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager.

At 8:50 p.m. Councilor Cascio moved "**TO LEAVE EXECUTIVE SESSION**" seconded by Councilor Montinieri. All Council members present and the Chairman voted aye. The motion passed 9-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:50 p.m., Councilor Drake moved "**TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**" seconded by Kotkin. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores Sassano
Town Clerk

Approved by vote of Council on June 18, 2007