

MAY 15, 2006 REGULAR MEETING

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Monday, May 15, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Silas Deane Middle School.

Present: Councilors Adil, Cascio, Kotkin, Walsh, Deputy Mayor Fortunato and Chairperson Morin.

Absent: Councilors Drake, Forrest, and Kirsche.

Also present: Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

Chairperson Morin announced that there will be an Executive Session following the regular meeting to discuss union negotiations.

Proclamation - 8th Grade Boys Travel Basketball Team

Chairperson Morin presented a Proclamation to the team congratulating them on their season record of 25-2 and captured the Central Connecticut Travel League championship and 8th Grade Boys championship, finishing their three-year travel basketball careers with a record of 95-3; the best record in the league's history. Coach Greg Bedula thanked the Council for their recognition of the efforts of the team. He also thanked the parents and coaches for their support, but mostly thanked the boys who gave so much as players on the 8th Grade Boys Travel Basketball Team.

All stood for the pledge of allegiance to the flag which was led by the 8th Grade Boys Travel Basketball Team.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HEARING

None.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Dick Lasher, 100 Griswold Road, spoke in favor of the south parking lot of Firehouse 2 being named Newt Griswold Way in honor of Newt Griswold and all he gave to the volunteer fire department.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Road, commented that the budget suggestions provided to the Council obviously weren't good enough since the Council passed a budget of \$74.7 million. Mr. Young stated that the taxation is horrendous and will drive many people out of Town. He commented that there is no leadership in Town and no Manager who manages. He said that the budget is not balanced for all residents, and it is the Council's responsibility to do this.

Rick Garrey, 35 Harding Street, spoke on behalf of the Wethersfield Community Television Board of Directors, stating the WCTV plans to move to their new location the first weekend of June with a grand opening on Wednesday, June 14 at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Garrey commented on the poor signal quality being reported on Channels 14 and 16, stating that this has been dealt with for the last couple years without much luck. He said that Cox Communications has promised WCTV that the signal will improve in the new facility; however, he doesn't have much faith in this. He said that if the signal is not better, WCTV will be asking the Council and residents of Wethersfield to put pressure on Cox Communications to do what they have to do to make it better, since public access is required by Federal law.

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

COUNCIL REPORTS & COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Fortunato reported on the recent Shared Services meeting where collaboration opportunities between the Town and Board were discussed. She said that the first read of Cottone Field lights has come before the Board of Education and adoption is anticipated on May 23 after which this will come before the Council. She said that the Facilities Plan was discussed and that a report will be coming from the appropriate Town staff at a future meeting. Deputy Mayor Fortunato reported on the recent Information & Technology Committee meeting where the newly approved Technology position was discussed. She said that the Information & Technology Committee has recommended that the position be referred to as a Lead Technology Specialist rather than a CIO, since for the first year this is an interim position.

Councilor Adil reported on the Town Hall/ Library Building Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. He said that the ongoing work is proceeding slowly and there was discussion that the documents for the Phase II work are currently being worked on. Councilor Adil discussed the proposed window replacements and provided information on the projects to be completed during Phase II including boiler replacement, the roof, the council chambers, and the façade. Councilor Adil reported on the recent meeting of the EDIC stating that the Tourism Bus is hoped to be in place for the Memorial Day parade. He said that the Silas Deane façade grant program for the Silas Deane Highway has been laid out and will be coming before the Council for approval. Councilor Adil stated that the Town Manager is working on developing a joint workshop of the Council and the EDIC to discuss the redevelopment agency.

Councilor Cascio announced the upcoming Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner to be held on May 17 at the Wethersfield Country Club. Councilor Cascio announced this year's Award recipients as follows: Business of the Year - International Institute of Cosmetology, Town Beautification - Bob's Fruit Stand, Town Employee - Laurel Goodgion, Town Volunteer - Larry Spellacy, Public Safety - Fire Chief Chuck Flynn, and Educator of the Year - Margaret Zacchei who will receive acknowledgement at the Awards Dinner. Chairperson Morin announced that Councilor Cascio is being recognized as the Chamber Member of the Year. Councilor Cascio said that six Wethersfield High School graduating seniors will receive Chamber of Commerce scholarship money at a ceremony to be held on May 31. He announced that the Memorial Day parade will take place on Saturday, May 27 and that the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce is in the process of planning a "Business After Hours Stroll" to be held on June 21.

Councilor Kotkin asked if the State DPUC has authority over the quality of the signal of local access TV. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that she is not sure about this, but once WCTV changes location, if the transmission has not improved, the necessary authorities will be contacted.

Councilor Walsh thanked the members of Company 2 for inviting the Council members to their 39th Annual Dinner event to honor the sacrifices of spouses and families so that the firefighters can volunteer.

Councilor Walsh reminded everyone that this weekend is the 225th Anniversary celebration of the Washington-Rochambeau meeting in Old Wethersfield.

Chairperson Morin announced that the Town Manager is working with the Board of Education staff regarding the skylight issue at the Charles Wright School.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien provided an update on the concern of the police radio system not working for a time recently. She said that there has not been a problem with the system for quite a while and definitely not during the week stated at a previous meeting. The Town Manager went on to report that a thirty-year-old valve went at the Wethersfield High School pool, and this valve will be very difficult to replace. She said that estimates for repair are being sought and the pool will be closed for quite a while. She said that the Town will be able to use Rocky Hill for swimming lessons and other events in the mean time.

Chairperson Morin announced that the next Town Council meeting on June 5 will be held at Wethersfield High School. He announced numerous upcoming community events as well.

COUNCIL ACTION

Councilor Adil moved **"TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF ROBIN A. BOURASSA FROM THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS"**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Councilor Cascio moved **"TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF THERESA A. FORSDICK FROM THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION"**, seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Councilor Adil moved **"TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF MARK S. FANELLI, JR. TO THE SCHOOL PROJECTS BUILDING COMMITTEE FOR THE TERM 5-15-06 TO COMPLETION"**, seconded by Councilor Cascio. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Councilor Cascio moved **"TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF RICHARD P. ROBERTS TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION FOR THE TERM 5-15-06 TO 6-30-06"**, seconded by Councilor Walsh. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Fees for Dial-A-Ride Transportation

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien requested that the Council withdraw this item since Dr. Stilwell has spoken with her counterparts from other Towns and has decided to wait another year without a fee increase until the utilization of the services is further reviewed.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO WITHDRAW THE FEES FOR DIAL-A-RIDE TRANSPORTATION AGENDA ITEM"**, seconded by Councilor Cascio.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato thanked the Town Manager and Dr. Stilwell for holding off on this item for a year since it will give time to review the utilization and the impact the increase may have on users. She suggested that negotiations with the funder be held in order to insure that the fee increase keeps with the spirit in which the grant was awarded.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Naming of Newt Griswold Road - Company 2

Councilor Adil moved **"TO NAME THE ENTRANCE WAY TO THE COMPANY TWO FIRE STATION 'NEWT GRISWOLD WAY'"**, seconded by Councilor Walsh.

Chairperson Morin said that the Wethersfield Volunteer Firefighters are greatly appreciated and he fully supports the motion.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Use of Town Hall Offices - Stock Option Films

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE USE OF THE LOWER LEVEL TOWN HALL**

OFFICES FOR FILMING BY STOCK OPTION FILMS", seconded by Councilor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that she was approached by Wethersfield resident and aspiring filmmaker, Jim Fiorino and Susan Morgan regarding the possibility of utilizing the Parks & Recreation Office for filming of his low-budget, independent film "Fishwrap". She said that Mr. Fiorino has said that the filming will take approximately six days and will be done on weekends. The Town Manager said that some Wethersfield staff members have won roles in the movie and therefore will be present for the filming.

Councilor Adil asked if there is special insurance required to do this. The Town Manager answered that she has informed Mr. Fiorino that he will have to obtain liability insurance and he is willing to do this. Mr. Fiorino stated that currently he carries approximately \$1 million in liability insurance. Councilor Adil asked if a representative from the Town will be present during the filming. The Town Manager said that there will be staff present.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato asked if there will be a contract agreement signed and the Town Manager answered that there will be a short agreement drawn up regarding clean up, hours of use, and other such items. Deputy Mayor Fortunato asked Mr. Fiorino what the new legislation adopted by the State encouraging film production in Connecticut means for his business and also for incentives for Towns. Mr. Fiorino answered that the incentives start at \$50,000 and his film budget is much below this; therefore it does not affect him. He said that the legislation is to attract film making with a budget of \$50,000 or more. Deputy Mayor Fortunato said that because of the heritage in Wethersfield, she would like to see this community included in films in the future.

Councilor Cascio thanked Mr. Fiorino for bringing this opportunity to Wethersfield and asked Mr. Fiorino to provide a brief description of his film. Mr. Fiorino stated that his film is a satirical comedy about a 35-year-old film critic who is forced to move back in with his parents.

Councilor Adil commended Mr. Fiorino for his work and said that there have been others who have filmed in Wethersfield also.

Chairperson Morin said that he is intrigued; however, he would like the Town Manager to provide him with reassurance that the Town and the participants are legally protected. The Town Manager said that the motion can be amended to include that the Town Attorney has reviewed the contracts and that ample liability insurance is in place.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved **"TO AMEND THE ORIGINAL MOTION TO INCLUDE REVIEW OF THE CONTRACT BY THE TOWN ATTORNEY AND APPROPRIATE LIABILITY INSURANCE PROVISIONS"**, seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion as amended passed 6-0-0.

Use of Cove Park - Town of Rocky Hill

Councilor Walsh moved **"TO AUTHORIZE ROCKY HILL RESIDENT USE OF THE WETHERSFIELD COVE BOAT LAUNCH AT THE WETHERSFIELD RESIDENT RATE WHILE THE ROCKY HILL BOAT RAMP IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION"**, seconded by Councilor Adil.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that while the Rocky Hill boat ramp is under construction they would like to be able to send their residents over here immediately to obtain passes.

Councilor Adil stated that this and the State's bass fishing tournament could create greater enthusiasm for the Cove.

Councilor Kotkin asked how many passes are expected to be issued to Rocky Hill residents. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that she was told there would be approximately 60-70.

Chairperson Morin stated that this is an opportunity for Wethersfield to work with a neighboring community.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

8-24 Report - Agreement with Omnipoint Communications

Councilor Adil moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN A COMMUNICATIONS SITE LEASE AGREEMENT AND ALL RELATED DOCUMENTS WITH OMNIPOINT COMMUNICATIONS, INC. AS FINALIZED BY THE TOWN ATTORNEY AND OMNIPOINT COMMUNICATIONS, INC."**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that this is a carrier that will go onto the tower at Kelleher Court and it is one of the last ones to go on. She said that there is a clause in the contract that includes a 3% annual increase and the monthly fee to start is \$1,800. The Town Manager said that the Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed this and forwarded a positive referral to the Council. She said that the Town Attorney is currently working with Omnipoint Communications to finalize the terms of the lease and she will not sign the contract until the Town Attorney is completely satisfied with the terms.

Councilor Adil said that he wants to be sure that Councilor Cascio's concerns regarding firefighter parking space have been resolved. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that Chief Flynn has sent her a memo stating that he is agreeable to the use of the space.

Councilor Kotkin asked how many more can go on the tower and the Town Manager said that she believes that one more can; however, she will check on this.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

BIDS

None.

ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING TAX FIXING AGREEMENTS TO ACCOMMODATE PHYSICALLY DISABLED PERSONS

BE IT ORDAINED AS FOLLOWS:

- a. The Tax Assessor for the Town of Wethersfield may enter into a written agreement with an owner of residential real property who agrees to improve, rehabilitate or renovate such property in order to accommodate physically disabled persons. The Assessor may, as part of said agreement and in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes 12-65g, fix the assessment on such property as of the date of the agreement for a period of not longer than five (5) years and to defer any increase in assessment attributable to such improvement, rehabilitation or renovation during such period, provided:
 1. the agreement shall be approved by the Building Official of the Town of Wethersfield;
 2. such improvement, rehabilitation or renovation shall conform to the applicable accessibility portions of the State Building Code and be completed not later than three years from the date of the agreement and, upon completion, shall be subject to inspection and certification by the Wethersfield Building Official for conformity with the applicable provisions of the Building Code and of the agreement;
 3. such owner shall submit documentation of such physical disability satisfactory to the Assessor and thereafter shall annually certify his continued eligibility for the benefits of this Ordinance;
 4. such owner shall not be in default, during any period covered by the agreement, of any obligations owed to the Town of Wethersfield.

The provisions of this ordinance shall apply only to owner occupied, single family, dwellings and to owner occupied apartment buildings intended for not more than four families.

- b. The agreement shall terminate upon the earlier of the expiration of the period fixed in the agreement, the failure of the owner to demonstrate continued eligibility for the benefits of this Ordinance, or the sale or transfer of the property.
- c. As used in this section, the term "physically disabled" shall mean an individual that has any chronic physical handicap, infirmity or impairment, whether congenital or resulting from bodily injury, organic processes or changes or from illness, including, but not limited to, epilepsy, blindness, deafness or hearing impairment or reliance on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device.

RESOLUTION REGARDING THE AUTHORIZATION AND SUBMISSION OF A GRANT FROM THE CONNNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND YOUTH SERVICES AND THE AWARD OF FUNDS FROM THE GRANT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND YOUTH SERVICES

BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Wethersfield, that Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager, and Nancy Stilwell, Director of Social and Youth Services are hereby authorized to make, execute and approve on behalf of the Town of Wethersfield, a contract between the State Department of Education and the Town of Wethersfield Department of Social and Youth Services. Said contract shall be in the amount of \$21,596 for contributions to program services within the "Youth Services Bureau" for fiscal year 2006/2007.

ORDINANCE OF THE REVISED CHARTER AND CODE OF WETHERSFIELD EXEMPTING SOLAR ENERGY HEATING AND COOLING SYSTEMS FROM TAX ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION FOR FIFTEEN YEARS

BE IT ORDAINED, that Revised Charter and Municipal Code of the Town of Wethersfield, Connecticut, is hereby amended by adding to Chapter 149 the following section:

Section 149-10.1

- a. Pursuant to 12-81 (57) of the Connecticut General Statutes, any Class I renewable energy source, installed for the generation of electricity for private residential use, shall be exempt from taxation provided such installation occurs on or after the effective date of this ordinance and before October 1, 2020. Such Class I renewable energy source shall be exempt only to the extent of the amount by which the assessed valuation of such real property equipped with such Class I renewable energy source exceeds the assessed valuation of such real property equipped with a conventional energy source. Such exemption shall only apply to the first fifteen assessment years following construction of such building or addition.
- b. As used in this subsection, "Class I renewable energy source" shall have the meaning contained in Connecticut General Statutes § 16-1(26), as it is now or may be amended.
- c. Any person who desires to claim the exemption provided in this subsection shall file with the assessor for the Town of Wethersfield, within thirty days following the annual assessment date, written application claiming such exemption on a form as prescribed by the Tax Assessor. Failure to file such application in said manner and form within the time limit prescribed shall constitute a waiver of the right to such exemption for the assessment year.

MINUTES

Councilor Adil moved "**TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING OF APRIL 24, 2006**", seconded by Councilor Walsh. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Deputy Mayor Fortunato moved "**TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING OF APRIL 26, 2006**", seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Councilor Walsh moved "**TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 1, 2006**",

seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:55 p.m., Councilor Adil moved "**TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**" seconded by Councilor Walsh. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Councilor Forrest arrived at the meeting at this time (7:57 p.m.).

At 8:01 p.m., Councilor Adil moved "**TO ENTER BACK INTO THE REGULAR MEETING**" seconded by Councilor Cascio. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Councilor Cascio moved "**TO ACCEPT THE POLICE UNION 3-YEAR CONTRACT AS PRESENTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER**", seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 7-0-0.

At 8:02 p.m., Councilor Adil moved "**TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**" seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano
Town Clerk

Approved by vote of Council June 5, 2006