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## **DECEMBER 15, 2003 REGULAR MEETING**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on December 15, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall.

Present: Councilors Adil, Cascio, Czernicki, Forrest, Fortunato, Hemmann, Montinieri, Deputy Mayor Karangekis and Chairperson Morin.

Also present: Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager; Representative Paul Doyle; Representative Anthony Guerrero; and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

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

Councilor Adil moved "**TO REMOVE ITEMS C.2.b AND C.2.d FROM THE TABLE**", seconded by Councilor Czernicki. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

### Proclamation - Wesley R. Christensen

Chairperson Morin asked Representatives Doyle and Guerrero, and Mr. Wes Christensen to step forward.

Representative Doyle stated that he has known Mr. Christensen for many years and was actually his paper boy at one time. He said that Mr. Christensen has provided a great service to Wethersfield over the years to the Historical Society and as a moderator during annual elections. Representative Doyle read and presented Mr. Christensen a Citation recognizing his many years of dedication and service to the Town of Wethersfield from the Connecticut General Assembly introduced by Representative Doyle, Representative Guerrero, Senator Ciotto, and Senator Fonfara.

Representative Guerrero congratulated Mr. Christensen on his well-deserved Citation of Recognition

Chairperson Morin presented a Certificate of Appreciation from the Town of Wethersfield to Mr. Christensen who has served the Wethersfield community for over twenty years as an impartial election official and also for the numerous contributions he makes to the Town through his love of and interest in history.

Mr. Christensen thanked all for the recognition bestowed upon him. He said that he has been compensated for his years of volunteering by all of the great friendships he has formed by doing so.

### Presentation - Wethersfield Library

Chairperson Morin introduced Polly Moon, a member of the Wethersfield Library Board, to give an update on the Wethersfield Library. Ms. Moon said that a main goal of the Board is to make the most of the Library's materials budget. The Library Director and her staff are doing all they can to get the biggest bang for their buck. Recently, the staff renewed magazine subscriptions and some of the little used magazines were dropped and the money saved has been used to subscribe to more popular magazines. Ms. Moon reported that there has been a 19% increase in the loans of magazines from October to November, 2003. There has been a 17% increase in total loans for the month of November, 2003 over November, 2002. The total number of loans for 2003 shows a 19% increase over 2002 at this time. This translates to nearly 22,000 items. The increase has put a strain on the Library staff which has had an increase of less than 2%. The staff continues to push for excellent customer service in addition to their duties of cataloging, shelving, repackaging, and weeding out of material. Ms. Moon said that there continues to be quite an array of children and adult programs offered at the Library.

### Presentation by the Central Connecticut Regional Health District - "Community Health Report Card and Strategic Plan

## Update"

Chairperson Morin introduced Central Connecticut Health District Director Paul Hutcheon to make a presentation. Mr. Hutcheon stated that the Health District was formed in 1996 with the towns of Rocky Hill and Wethersfield. The Town of Berlin joined the Health District in 1998. The Health District currently serves a population of approximately 63,800 people within the three towns. The Health District is overseen by a seven member Board which includes three members from the Town of Wethersfield. Mr. Hutcheon stated that both Councilor Czernicki and Town Manager Bonnie Therrien are on the Board as well as a Wethersfield resident. The three primary funding sources of the Health District are the Town's contribution which is based on a per capita membership rate (currently \$3.69 per capita), the State's Health Department contribution (currently \$1.66 per capita), and permitting and licensing fees. Each member Town has an office at their Town Hall with the Central Office being located here in Wethersfield.

Mr. Hutcheon began his presentation with the Community Health Report Card which compares the statistics of the Town of Wethersfield with those of Berlin, Rocky Hill, Hartford County and the State of Connecticut in the areas of Population, Household ages, Top Five Leading Causes of Death, Infant Deaths, Percentage of Low Birth Weight Births, Non-adequate Prenatal Care, Births to Teens under 20 years of age, Lead Screening, Lead Poisoning, Cancer Cases, AIDS Cases, AIDS Deaths, Food Borne Related Illness, Active Tuberculosis, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Lyme Disease, Asthma Emergency Room Visits, Asthma Hospitalizations and the Risk Factors of Current Smoking, Current Asthma among Adults, and Obesity.

The second part of the presentation addressed the Central Connecticut Health District's 3-year Strategic Plan. Mr. Hutcheon reviewed the Objectives Completed, Current Year Objectives, and Next Year Objectives. Mr. Hutcheon said that a new Health District website is available at [www.ccthd.org](http://www.ccthd.org) which offers information on services and programs provided.

Councilor Hemmann commented that she agrees with Mr. Hutcheon that the Cancer Cases statistics require more research and asked if there are programs available in Health Education that address sexually transmitted diseases. The Health Education curriculum in the schools may be a good avenue to pursue this subject.

Councilor Fortunato asked Mr. Hutcheon to provide information pertaining to the Health Needs Survey. Mr. Hutcheon said that the survey was conducted a year ago and it was a double sided response format. The Health District received approximately four hundred surveys back, which was a fairly decent response to the 1,000-1,200 surveys sent out. He said that he could provide a copy of the questions asked on the survey which required the respondents to rank what they saw as problems within their community. Councilor Fortunato stated that there seems to be a direct correlation with the age of and number of women in Wethersfield's population and the cases of cancer in women. She said that the numbers of sexually transmitted diseases may appear low because not all cases are reported. She asked if physicians are required to report STD's to the Connecticut Department of Health. Mr. Hutcheon said that there is a formal reporting process for all reportable communicable diseases. The reporting agency is required to notify the local Director of Health with a hard copy whenever a reportable condition is found. Mr. Hutcheon does not suspect under-reporting when the findings are present; however there are people who may have a STD and do not seek treatment. Regarding the lead screening, Councilor Fortunato asked what the ages are who are being screened, what the screening involves, and who incurs the cost. Mr. Hutcheon said that there are lead regulations in Connecticut which apply to children under six years of age. The local Health Department is responsible for investigating any report of lead poisoning, identifying the source of the poisoning, and ordering the source eliminated. Mr. Hutcheon is unsure who incurs the cost, but in the case of a suspected lead poisoning, assumes that a person's insurance company would cover the medical fees.

Councilor Forrest asked Mr. Hutcheon if he has a time table for the results of any further statistical investigations. Mr. Hutcheon said that he has not set a time schedule yet. He said that the State has numerous physicians and epidemiologists who are quite capable of comparing Wethersfield's demographics and data and reporting back to the Town fairly quickly. He will bring back to the Council within a few weeks any additional information obtained.

Santa Claus visited the meeting at this time.

Councilor Cascio requested that a moment of silence be observed to pay respect to Mrs. Betty Potter who passed away

recently. She had a great spirit, giving Wethersfield a great name. Councilor Cascio wished Mrs. Potter's family the Council's deepest sympathy and the best for the holidays. A moment of silence followed.

Chairperson Morin requested that Town Planner Peter Gillespie come forward to review the new tax incentive program. Mr. Gillespie referred Councilors to an outline in their packet of the Proposed Tax Incentive Program as well as a copy of the related PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Gillespie stated that there is a specific Connecticut Statute Section 12-65b which refers to Tax Abatement/Incentives which allows municipalities to provide benefits to developers and/or property owners to reduce the assessment on their properties once improvements to the properties have been made. This is intended to provide a catalyst to property owners and developers to make improvements. The Tax Incentive Program is a significant economic development tool which has been identified as a recommendation of the Economic Development Strategic Plan. Many towns and cities in Connecticut provide tax abatement programs. Wethersfield has granted in the past tax incentives/abatements to specific developers. These include the Nathan Hale Senior Apartments in 1984, 1290 Silas Deane Highway in 1996, and most recently, the second Phase of the Nathan Hale Senior Apartments in 2003. The current draft of the Proposed Tax Incentive Program has been reviewed and approved by the Economic Development and Improvement Commission as well as the Town Attorney. The Program does not obligate or require the Council to approve any tax incentive request, but merely provides written guidance. The Council will make any final decisions and projects are looked at on a case by case basis. Mr. Gillespie's comments and suggestions for the Plan include the following:

1. Section 2.A. - add "permanent residential and transient residential uses"
2. Section 2.B - add "businesses relocating to the Town, new business development, business expansion"
3. Section 2.B - delete "residential uses"
4. Section 2.C - delete entire section
5. Section 3 - combine schedule and revise to comply with statutory limitations
6. Section 3 - add "these values are to be used as guidelines and the Council shall determine the specific deferral for each project based upon the benefits to the Town"
7. Section 4.A - add "apply to the Economic Development Manager"
8. Section 4.B - add "preserve existing employment opportunities"
9. Section 5 - add "each application shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis"
10. Section 5 - delete "items 1-5 of"
11. Section 5 - add "pursuant to the Council's decision the Town will enter into a written agreement with the owner or lessee of a real property, fixing the assessment of the real or personal property for the terms of the agreement"

Mr. Gillespie commented that it would be appropriate that a liaison from the EDIC be available to make any recommendations to the Council.

12. Section 6 - add "an applicant must commit to remain in the Town for a period of two (2) times the length of the incentive that may be granted. If the taxpayer shall cease to do business or move from the Town within such period, all taxes that would have been due shall become due retroactive to the due date of the taxes deferred, and any delinquencies shall carry interest as if the taxes had not been deferred"
13. Section 8 - add "in the event of unusual or extraordinary circumstances, the Council may alter or waive any requirements contained herein"

Chairperson Morin stated that Council questions and inquiries would be entertained during the planned agenda item time for the Tax Incentive Plan.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

## HEARING

RESOLUTION AMENDING THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TAX INCENTIVE PLAN

RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE ABANDONMENT OF TOWN PROPERTY ON COLUMBUS STREET

Betty Rosania, 88 Desmond Drive, spoke in support of the Economic Development Tax Incentive Plan as economic development is essential to the future of Wethersfield as an attractive site for businesses. Ms. Rosania thanked Councilor Cascio for recognizing Betty Potter and stated that she was the Chairperson of the first Silas Deane Highway study committee. Mrs. Potter always worked for the Town and its young people.

Tony Camilliere, 128 Boulter Road, Chairperson of the Economic Development Improvement Commission, stated that the EDIC supports unanimously the Tax Incentive Policy. The Policy is a key initiative and a priority of the Strategic Plan. He requested that Section 5 of the Plan be revised to include a member of the EDIC to help out in any way possible.

Frank Gesualdi Jr., 51 Linden Street, asked if the Columbus Street swap is made, how the Town will access its property. He also asked how it will affect the surrounding land owners. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that there has been no discussion on extending the street, so the property would be accessed by some sort of private easement. She said that the swapping of ownership should not have any affect on the surrounding property owners. It has been recommended that nothing be built on the swapped piece of property.

Steve Kelly, 29 Old Smithy Lane, stated that nothing came of his 2002 request to former Town Manager Erdmann to swap his property for an adjacent Town piece of land. Mr. Kelly said that he had never wanted the Town to abandon the property, but to simply swap it with his piece of property. The Planning & Zoning Committee sent a negative referral back to the Council because of the word "abandonment" in the request. Subsequently, Mr. Kelly met with Town Manager Bonnie Therrien, Mr. Turner, former Councilor Flynn, and former Deputy Mayor O'Connor at which the misinterpretation of "abandonment" was corrected as a "swap". Mr. Kelly cannot see that there would be any neighbors to consider in the swap and that the swap would not deny access to anyone.

Ken Sokolowski, 79 Main Street, asked that both Mr. Hutcheon's and Mr. Gillespie's PowerPoint presentations be posted onto the Town website.

No one else wished to speak and the Chairperson declared the Hearings portion of the meeting closed.

#### GENERAL COMMENTS

Dick Lasher, 100 Griswold Road, spoke as the Honorable Mayor of Griswoldville. Mr. Lasher wished holiday greetings to the Council and provided homemade gifts as well.

Marlene Schaeffer, 142 Coleman Road, who was Wethersfield's first female Patrol Officer and has since retired. She commented on the nice Proclamation presented to Mr. Christensen for his twenty years of voluntary service to Wethersfield. She said that her retirement was effective in April, 2003 and has received no recognition at all for her twenty-eight years of service to the Town. She feels that she was ostracized by the Police Department because of a complaint she filed with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunity. Ms. Schaeffer read a letter she sent to Town Manager Bonnie Therrien, Police Chief Cetran, Union President Robert LaBonte, Police Benevolent President Kevin Dillon, and IBPO President James Horan. The letter stated that she has yet to be honored with a retirement party and that she will be available for such in January or February of 2004. The letter also requested that her retirement card, which she returned to the Police Department because her name on it was incorrectly spelled, be corrected and perhaps be presented to her at the retirement party. Ms. Schaeffer stated that her letter is posted in the Police Department and feels that the reason it is posted is to cause her further embarrassment and humiliation which, after twenty-eight years of service, she does not deserve.

Chairperson Morin thanked Ms. Schaeffer for her years of service to the Town and stated that he will have the Town Manager look into this matter.

George A. Ruhe, 956 Cloverdale Circle, spoke on behalf of the Wethersfield Taxpayers Association, Inc. He said that the Wethersfield Taxpayers Association, Inc. is initiating a new communication initiative titled "Citizens Alert" which addresses their opposition to turning Cottone Field into a commercial sports complex. Mr. Ruhe shared excerpts from the initiative and provided a written copy to the Council. The main question of the Wethersfield Taxpayers Association, Inc. is whether the renovations to Cottone Field will improve the quality of life or detract from it. The

Wethersfield Taxpayers Association, Inc. feels that the renovations will have a significant negative impact. The initiative stated that the priority of the Cottone Field project in the total scheme of things is distorted and to move ahead can only be described as irresponsible. Mr. Ruhe also stated that the Wethersfield Taxpayers Association, Inc. opposes the Board of Education's School Resource Officer proposal, favoring instead other alternatives and approaches.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Road, stated that he opposes spending funds on Cottone Field when it is already functional. Mr. Young said that he also opposes the proposal for a School Resource Officer at Wethersfield High School.

Ken Sokolowski, 79 Main Street, stated that it would be interesting to break down Mr. Hutcheon's statistic of 24.7% of Wethersfield's population over sixty-five years of age into how many are male and how many are female. He said that he would also like to see a breakdown of the Sexually Transmitted Diseases into separate categories. Mr. Sokolowski is in favor of a directory of local health services. He stated that it would be helpful to remind/inform practicing physicians in Wethersfield what the reportable diseases are.

Liz Brown, 15 Harding Street, said that she was disturbed by the news story this evening regarding illegal drugs in Wethersfield; however she is unsure if a School Resource Officer is the answer to Wethersfield High School's problems. Her husband, Tom Brown, is a science teacher at WHS and they have concerns that if the School Resource Officer is not the way to go, how will the staff and students be protected from predatory children? Her husband feels that it is his responsibility during school hours to protect students and Mrs. Brown would like to know what the Town is planning to do to protect the students, the staff, and specifically her husband.

Steve Kelly, 29 Old Smithy Lane, commented that he grew up and attended school in Wethersfield. He feels that the renovations made to-date to Cottone Field have not improved the field. The proposed renovations could be very useful for the whole High School. It is important to consider the quality of life of the students as well. School spirit is essential. The School Resource Officer is another quality of life issue for the students. Mr. Kelly supports the proposal as it is important for students to feel safe in their school environment.

Town Clerk Sassano read a letter from Mr. Paul Courchaine stating that he is in full support of the Tax Incentive Plan.

No one else wished to speak and the Chairperson declared the General Comments portion of the meeting closed.

### COUNCIL ACTION

#### Acceptance of Resignations from Boards & Commissions

Deputy Mayor Karangekis moved "**TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF ANDREW ADIL FROM THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION AND CHRISTOPHER V. WHITE FROM THE TOURISM COMMISSION**", seconded by Councilor Forrest. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

#### Appointment of Town Treasurer and Assistant Town Treasurer

Councilor Adil moved "**TO ACCEPT THE APPOINTMENT OF HARRY L. LICHTENBAUM AS WETHERSFIELD TOWN TREASURER AS OF 12-15-03 AND GLORIA P. MCLEAN AS ASSISTANT TOWN TREASURER AS OF 12-15-03**", seconded by Councilor Forrest.

Councilor Cascio asked if the term for Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer are always left open ended. Chairperson Morin said that this is proper past procedure.

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

#### Economic Development Tax Incentive Program

Councilor Adil moved **"TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TAX INCENTIVE PLAN INCLUDING THE TOWN PLANNER'S PREVIOUSLY STATED REVISIONS AND TO INCLUDE IN SECTION FIVE THAT A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE EDIC BE CONSULTED"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Karangekis.

Councilor Hemmann suggested that the application format include room for detail about the twelve-month and twenty-four month property inspection and completion of the improvement(s). This would provide some sort of follow-up and accountability. She asked for a definition of the term "permanent residential". Mr. Gillespie said that this refers to some sort of stable, residential environment such as apartments and condominiums as opposed to transient residential properties such as hotels and motels. Councilor Hemmann asked if "permanent residential" also refers to a single-family home. Mr. Gillespie said that this is not the intent and that the term could be further defined by defining "multi-family". Mr. Gillespie commented that the terms "permanent residential" and "transient residential" come right from the State Statute without any definition. The Town could take the initiative to define these terms further.

Councilor Forrest said that the agreement seems to be unclear whether the construction project needs to be completed within twenty-four months from commencement or from approval. Councilor Forrest asked why someone will be limited to a project that must be completed within twenty-four months. There could be many worthwhile projects that will take longer than this amount of time. Mr. Gillespie agreed with Councilor Forrest stating that a way to resolve this is to provide a clause in the Plan stating that the Town Council can extend the terms without the agreement becoming void. It is important; however that progress is made and that projects do not continue on for an undefined period of time.

Councilor Czernicki referred to Section 4.B.4, #8 and asked Mr. Gillespie why the Town would not want to create additional employment opportunities. Mr. Gillespie said that this is spelled out in another comment or it is already in the Plan. Councilor Czernicki asked if there is some sort of quantitative measurement devised for the types of improvements and the tax benefits derived. Mr. Gillespie said that these figures are quantified by the Assessors Office as an annual filing for personal property and the assessed value imposed upon the property. Mr. Gillespie confirmed Councilor Czernicki's question that there will be an actual physical inspection of all improvements by the Building Department but that he is not familiar with the personal property aspect. Councilor Czernicki asked about the viability of a specific business within the community and the desire of Wethersfield to attract higher-end, long-life businesses. She would like to think that the Incentive Plan will attract businesses that the community truly wants. Mr. Gillespie said that businesses that are viable and sustainable probably won't even require the Incentive Plan. He said that Financial Incentive Programs are geared to those people who need it most and may impose more of a risk. Councilor Czernicki commended both Mr. Gillespie and the EDIC for the work they have put into the revision of the Tax Incentive Plan and is happy to see it moving along.

Councilor Cascio said that he likes the addition in Section 8 that the applicant remain in Town for a period of two times the length of the benefit granted. He asked if the applicant will be required to initial specific clauses to verify that they have read and are aware of the stipulations therein. Mr. Gillespie said that this can be included in both the application and the agreement as a term of execution. This will further bind the applicant to the terms of the agreement. Councilor Cascio asked Mr. Gillespie if a plan is in order with the Tax Office to collect from those who do not adhere to the terms of the agreement. Mr. Gillespie said that the details of this haven't been worked out yet, but as the Town moves forward with the Plan, a plan for collection will be established.

Councilor Czernicki asked Mr. Gillespie to define the term "high density housing". Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that this refers to the residential hotels and this is the addition that Mr. Gillespie is suggesting putting in with regards to the transient housing. Mr. Gillespie said that other Towns, depending on if they want this kind of development, are offering the tax incentive for such. Councilor Czernicki is uncomfortable with the addition to Section 8 referring to the Council's option to alter or waive any requirements contained within the Plan. She fears that this option may open the door to "favorite person" status. She asked if there is any way to refine and limit this portion. Mr. Gillespie said that this can be refined by the Council to be more limiting.

Councilor Adil understands Councilor Czernicki's concern; however he reiterated Mr. Gillespie's comment that any request must first pass through the EDIC who is not prone to politics. Councilor Adil feels that there are safeguards in

place and that by adding to the amendment that the EDIC be included in the review process, this will take care of any kinds of favorite status.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the State Statute must always be followed so that possibly the best move would be to completely remove this paragraph in Section 8.

Chairperson Morin asked if one member of the EDIC would be part of the review process or if the EDIC as a committee would do so. Mr. Gillespie said that the EDIC meets once per month and this could delay the progress of an application. The EDIC liaison could possibly work with the Council on the side. This could all be worked out.

Councilor Cascio asked if the addition of number thirteen will be completely removed from the Plan. Chairperson Morin responded that since there have been so many comments and ideas offered this evening, he suggests that the Incentive Plan be cleaned up and revised by Mr. Gillespie and Town Manager Bonnie Therrien and brought back to the Council at their next meeting. He'd like to make sure that this Plan continues to move forward.

Councilor Czernicki moved **"TO TABLE THE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TAX INCENTIVE PLAN FOR THE PURPOSE OF CLARIFICATION"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Karangekis.

Councilor Forrest stated that he does not think that it is necessary to table the resolution. He clearly understands the Incentive Plan and amendments and would like to move forward with the resolution.

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

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

##### Request for Abandonment of Town Property on Columbus Street

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that this is a request for a swap of Town property on Columbus Street with a piece of property owned by Mr. Steven Kelly. She said that if Council still wishes to move forward, the Town Attorney has suggested that they refer the request back to the Planning & Zoning Commission or deny the request. She reminded the Council that an 8-24 review requires a two-thirds vote of the Council.

Councilor Cascio moved **"TO APPROVE THE REQUEST TO SWAP TOWN PROPERTY ON COLUMBUS STREET WITH THE ADJOINING PROPERTY OF MR. STEVEN KELLY OF SURREY DRIVE"**, seconded by Councilor Hemmann.

Councilor Adil said that he is concerned about proceeding with an approval as the Planning & Zoning Commission still had questions and he would like to know what benefit the Town will reap from this swap.

Councilor Forrest said that he is not in favor of the swap at this point and would like to move the request back to the Planning & Zoning Commission for their opinions.

Councilor Montinieri said that in reviewing the information provided to Councilors, she cannot see that there will be a problem with swapping the land; however, she'd like to see the request sent back to the Planning & Zoning Commission as this is their area of expertise. She'd feel more comfortable approving the swap after they have had the opportunity to have all their questions answered with Mr. Kelly present.

Councilor Cascio clarified that the main reason that the Planning & Zoning Commission did not approve the swap was because Mr. Kelly did not attend the meetings. There did not seem to be any other negative comments from them. The swap appears to be beneficial to both parties.

Councilor Adil said that he agrees with Councilor Montinieri's comments.

Councilor Fortunato asked if the lots are comparable in size and said that she will look to the Planning & Zoning Commission for information regarding the waterway running through the property. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the subcommittee determined that the Town's lot size is a little bigger and the swap would need to be equal.

Councilor Czernicki commented that Councilors feel that since there were no adverse comments from neighboring property owners, there is a fair amount of comfort with making the swap. She asked if the action of the Council is to move the request back to the Planning & Zoning Commission, could it at least be sent with the Council's preliminary approval. This may aid the Commission in their deliberations. Chairperson Morin said that this could be provided to the Commission.

Deputy Mayor Karangekis said that it seems the only reason that the Planning & Zoning Commission denied Mr. Kelly's request is because they were unable to discuss the matter with him. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that it was for this reason and that they wanted to hear any comments from the neighbors.

Councilor Fortunato commented that this referral will give neighbors additional time to comment. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien stated that with an 8-24 referral there does not have to be a public hearing. Chairperson Morin said that the neighbors were notified of tonight's Council meeting and were invited to attend and share any comments they have.

Councilor Forrest commented that the Planning & Zoning Commission's letter does not indicate that they would have approved the request even if Mr. Kelly had shown up at one of their meetings. The letter states that there was a lack of sufficient information as well as a lack of advocacy. Councilor Forrest does not want to send the request to the Commission with his approval as he feels that it is being sent to them to obtain information so as to get his approval. He said that swapping property is a big deal and that he'd like to have more information before approving such.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted NAY. Councilors Cascio, Czernicki, and Hemmann voted AYE. The motion failed 3-6-0.

Councilor Czernicki moved **"TO REFER TO THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION FOR AN 8-24 REVIEW THE REQUEST TO SWAP TOWN PROPERTY ON COLUMBUS STREET WITH THE ADJOINING PROPERTY OF MR. STEVEN KELLY OF SURREY DRIVE"**, seconded by Councilor Adil.

Councilor Cascio asked when the next Planning & Zoning Commission meeting will be. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that it is some time in January. Councilor Cascio asked what will happen if Mr. Kelly is not present at that meeting. She said that if Mr. Kelly does not attend the meeting and there is a question that she cannot answer, this could hold up the process. The Town Manager said that by State Statute, if there is no response by the Commission to the referral within thirty days, it is automatically denied. Chairperson Morin suggested that Mr. Kelly check his schedule and communicate with Mr. Gillespie when he will be available.

Chairperson Morin said that he would like to provide Mr. Gesualdi's comments that he has no problem with the swap to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

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

#### School Resource Officer

Councilor Adil moved **"TO APPROVE THE FUNDING OF A SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER AT WETHERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL"**, seconded by Councilor Czernicki.

Councilor Czernicki commented that at the last meeting Police Chief Cetran notified the Council that there is approximately \$14,000 available to fund the position for this year and asked if this information is accurate. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the information is accurate. Councilor Czernicki asked if this motion is approved and then the Federal Government does not provide funds through the SRO Grant, what the financial obligation of the Town will be. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that she has already spoken with Chief Cetran and they have decided that a member of the Wethersfield Police force will be moved into this position. There will not be a new

Officer hired until the Town is sure that monies will be received through the Federal Grant. Councilor Czernicki, through the Mayor, addressed Deputy Mayor Karangekis and asked him what the chances are that the Grant will be approved. Deputy Mayor Karangekis said there are often delays for Federal Grants; however he thinks that there is a good chance that the Grant will come through. Councilor Czernicki asked if the financial responsibility will be solely that of the Town or if the Board of Education will be participating. Chairperson Morin said that he personally sees this as being the sole responsibility of the Council and the Town. Councilor Czernicki asked at what point the determination is made that the need is so great that an SRO is required at not only the High School level, but at the Middle School and Elementary School levels as well. She clearly understands the need for this position at the High School, but is concerned about the financial aspects.

Councilor Adil said that he would hope that an SRO would not be required beyond the High School level. He thinks that the SRO at the High School could help to encourage students to have respect for themselves, others, and property; as well as to aid in security issues.

Councilor Cascio commented that the Board of Education has yet to vote on this issue and that they are scheduled to address the issue at their January meeting. He asked the Town Manager if she has any idea where the Board stands at this point. Councilor Cascio believes that even if the Council approves the position, the Board of Education must ultimately approve the SRO to allow the Officer into their facility. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien verified that the position cannot occur until the Board of Education votes to approve it. Chairperson Morin said that once the concerns of the financial aspect of the position are addressed, he believes that the Board will move along with approval. Councilor Cascio commented that the climate of Wethersfield High School is certainly changing but that the majority of the students are good kids and this cannot be forgotten. The SRO will not solve all the problems at the High School, but will complement the facility and the students, staff and faculty there.

Councilor Hemmann supports this type of Grant and feels that this is a wonderful opportunity to look at the collaboration of Youth Services and the School Personnel in terms of cross-training and resourcing so that each is better equipped to handle various situations.

Councilor Montinieri supports the SRO and asked if the Council can obtain a report from the Police Department providing accurate information regarding the situations that have occurred at the High School. She'd like to see the SRO work closely with the Residency Officer at the High School as she has heard that there are children who take a city bus from Hartford to attend Wethersfield High School. Councilor Montinieri does not foresee the need for an SRO at the Middle School.

Deputy Mayor Karangekis reiterated Councilor Cascio's comment that the large majority of the young people at the High School are there to learn and enjoy their time there. He said that the SRO program has two functions; to put a new face on Law Enforcement for young people who will continue on in life as good citizens, and also for those whose lives will lead to criminal acts. Deputy Mayor Karangekis said that the position of SRO is needed at this time in this day and age.

Councilor Fortunato supports the SRO and as a former Board of Education member feels that the once the Board is aware that the Town is extending the offer to pay the salary of the Officer, they will vote favorably. She commented that there are prevention plans in place at the Middle Schools, but unfortunately some kids slip through the cracks and have bigger issues. Hopefully the SRO will be able to establish relationships with the kids to be a good role model and to help set some on the right path.

Councilor Forrest said that he is confused in that it was stated that there is \$14,000 available for a new Officer, and then the Town Manager stated that an existing Officer will be put into the position. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that a brand new Officer would never be given the SRO position. The vacancy of a current, seasoned Officer taking the position would need to be filled. Councilor Forrest commented that the Town Charter states that it is the Council's charge to preserve the good, order, peace, health, and safety of the Town's residents. This certainly includes the schools in Town.

Chairperson Morin feels that the SRO is a very important position and agrees that although the position is not a cure-all, it provides an avenue to help the students and staff in the school.

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien clarified that the resolution includes wording that the Town will cover the funding for four years. Chairperson Morin said that this is correct.

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

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Moeller Home Renovation - Architect Selection

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that Recreation & Parks Director Kathy Bagley along with the Moeller Committee went out for a Request for Proposal for an Architect, they interviewed three firms and the Committee has unanimously recommended that the Town hire Moser Pilon Nelson of Wethersfield for the project.

Councilor Adil moved **"TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE ARCHITECTURAL FIRM OF MOSER PILON NELSON TO BE THE ARCHITECT FOR THE MOELLER HOME RENOVATION AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$48,260"**, seconded by Councilor Czernicki.

Councilor Adil asked Ms. Bagley if this was the architect firm used two years ago to put together the design for the referendum. She said that it is. Councilor Adil asked Ms. Bagley if she has a total cost for the project. She said that the Town Budget estimate is approximately \$600,000. Councilor Adil asked how the fund raising with the Friends of the Wethersfield Nature Center is progressing.

Mr. Perry Cornwall, a member of the Moeller Committee stated that \$100,000 was received from the estate of Eleanor Buck Wolf and that \$50,000 was pledged by the Friends of the Wethersfield Nature Center. He said that \$100,000 is available through matching funds of which \$50,000 has been received in the past six months. There is another thirteen months left for fund raising. Mr. Cornwall read from literature of Helen Buck Wolf which accounts the Nature Center and Council related activities since 1928.

Councilor Cascio commented that the time line for the renovation indicates a completion by March, 2005. He asked if there is a date of commencement for the project. Ms. Bagley said that the Building Committee estimates construction beginning in the Summer or Fall of 2004. Councilor Cascio broke down the \$600,000 total expenditure to indicate that \$250,000 will come from the State Grant, \$100,000 from the Eleanor Buck Wolf estate, \$50,000 from the Friends of the Nature Center, and an additional \$100,000 from matching funds. This leaves \$100,000 to be raised in thirteen months. Ms. Bagley said that to-date the total is \$400,000 and that the Friends of the Nature Center have the option of an additional \$100,000 if they match it. Currently they have raised \$50,000 toward the \$100,000 match. Councilor Cascio recognized former Councilor Peter Gardow for his dedication to the Moeller Home renovation.

Councilor Czernicki commended the efforts of the Friends of the Nature Center. They have stepped up their efforts for fund raising and she feels that they will reach their \$100,000 goal.

Councilor Fortunato asked if the Town's Grant Writer is providing any technical support to the Friends of the Nature Center. Ms. Bagley said that the Grant Writer has given advice regarding the directions to take and how to fill out the Grant to make it more attractive. Councilor Fortunato suggested speaking with the Grant Writer regarding business matching giving programs.

Mr. Cornwall shared with the Council a button he was wearing depicting a snowy owl which is a fund-raising technique. The buttons can be purchased for \$5. He said that Town Manager Bonnie Therrien has been very supportive of the Nature Center's move to the Moeller Home and he thanked her for this.

Chairperson Morin stated that this is a very exciting concept and will be a nice addition to Wethersfield.

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

### Crest Street Park - Removal of Basketball Court

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the Town Clerk's Office staff contacted signers of the petition to inform them that this would be an agenda item this evening and invited them to come and speak. There appeared to be no one from the neighborhood in attendance at the meeting. The Police records have been checked and there were very few calls regarding the Crest Street Park.

Councilor Adil does not support removing the basketball court; however he does support the posting of signs addressing the use of foul language to minimize the complaints of the surrounding residents. He suggests that Officers sweep through this area more frequently.

Councilor Czernicki agreed with Councilor Adil that better signage is necessary and that this signage be erected at all playgrounds throughout Wethersfield. She commented that the Wethersfield Schools have fallen very short with regard to Physical Education and that every opportunity should be available for kids to congregate outside to play sports.

Councilor Cascio asked the Town Manager to explain why the Recreation & Parks Advisory Board is not recommending that the basketball court be removed. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that the Board members do not see a problem with the basketball court remaining. They feel that the court is needed in the neighborhood and if there are problems, the neighbors need to work with the Police Department to rectify the problem. Ms. Bagley said that the Police Department has been very cooperative in the past. Councilor Cascio said that this land was given to the Town and asked what the intent was. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the intent of the deed was for a playground.

Deputy Mayor Karangekis stated that the problem at Crest Street Park has been ongoing and that the Police have always responded whenever there is a reported disturbance there. The Park does become an after-dark hangout and there is a Town Ordinance prohibiting anyone from being on Park property after a certain time. Councilor Czernicki stated that this is posted at the Park.

Councilor Montinieri said that she feels for the woman who spoke at the last meeting regarding the nuisance of foul language at the Park. Councilor Montinieri does not feel that the basketball court should be removed though. She suggested that neighbors call more often when there is a problem at the Park.

Councilor Forrest commented that he does not think that the signage concerning foul language is Constitutional. He would rather see a new Policy set whereby a summons is issued on the spot to those who break the Ordinance to be off the property by a certain time. It is now necessary that Police Officers do not give a break to anyone who breaks this Ordinance.

Chairperson Morin said that he spoke with Mrs. Rosado who said that her concerns are not only for after hours, but also for during the day. He shares and understands her concerns and would like to investigate appropriate, legal verbiage regarding appropriate behavior that could appear on a sign. Chairperson Morin requested that the Chief of Police, through the Town Manager, be made aware of the priority of surveillance of this Park.

#### Part Time Position and Increased Hours for Department of Social and Youth Services

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that Dr. Nancy Stilwell, Director of Social and Youth Services is requesting additional hours for one of her part-time clerical positions, as well as a part-time Social Worker as the caseload in her Department continues to increase.

Councilor Hemmann asked if this would be a temporary measure until Budget time. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that it will be and that it will need to be looked at during Budget Hearings. Councilor Hemmann said that she will not support this as a permanent measure until it is discussed at Budget time. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the Unions need to be considered as well.

Councilor Czernicki asked how the Department would have functioned if the employee had taken the early retirement package. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that she may have had to request of the Council funds from the contingency account on a temporary basis. Councilor Czernicki asked if the requested part-time Social Worker could work only 19 hours per week so as not to have to provide benefits. Dr. Stilwell said that she is concerned that the

person will be effective with the staff and clients and then leave for a position that provides benefits.

Councilor Czernicki moved **"TO HIRE A SOCIAL AND YOUTH SERVICES PART-TIME SOCIAL WORKER AT 19.5 HOURS PER WEEK AND TO INCREASE THE CLERK'S HOURS FROM 22 TO 28 PER WEEK TO BE REASSESSED DURING BUDGET DELIBERATIONS"**, seconded by Councilor Cascio.

Councilor Forrest asked from where the money for the new position will come. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that it will come from the position of the person who took early retirement.

Councilor Montinieri asked what the likelihood is of getting a qualified Social Worker without providing benefits. Dr. Stilwell said that her concern would be with the hiree's tenure. Most Social Workers are looking for a position that provides benefits.

Councilor Cascio asked if benefits go into effect as soon as an employee is hired. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the health benefit depends on when in the month the employee is hired. Everything else goes into effect immediately. Councilor Cascio said that the position will need to be deliberated during the Budget Session as the Council will need to determine where the money will come from.

Councilor Czernicki commented that the half-time position requested by Dr. Stilwell and recommended by Town Manager Bonnie Therrien would have to include a benefits package ranging from \$4,495 to \$12,268. She feels that this is a large sum of money at a time when most Departments are being required to cut back. She does not want to set the precedent of employees taking retirement packages after the budget is finalized so as to make monies available to the Department.

Councilor Adil emphasized Dr. Stilwell's desire to hire a Social Worker with benefits who will stick around for a long period of time, rather than saving on a few hours per week and benefits to hire someone who may leave within a short period of time. Dr. Stilwell said that the cases being dealt with are multiple and complex and she needs someone with experience and who will provide continuity with clients over a period of years. Councilor Adil said that he trusts Dr. Stilwell's judgment and cannot support the motion as it stands.

Deputy Mayor Karangekis asked if the part-time person might, at the first chance, take a full-time position with better benefits. Dr. Stilwell said that this is possible, but that there are a lot of Social Workers who are looking to work part-time and this position would be very attractive to them.

Councilor Forrest asked Dr. Stilwell if this position will be necessary next year. Dr. Stilwell said that it will be.

Councilor Czernicki clarified that the increase in the hours will be from 22 to 28 hours. Dr. Stilwell said that she was granted permission last August to bump the hours from 22 to 28 and now she is asking to have those hours remain through this fiscal year and beyond.

Councilor Fortunato asked Dr. Stilwell if she has considered contracting with a MSW who does social work so as to avoid the benefits situation. Dr. Stilwell said that she has not looked into this. Councilor Fortunato asked Dr. Stilwell if she is referring clients to outside organizations. Dr. Stilwell said that her staff is doing this constantly and that collaborating with these contacts is very time consuming. Councilor Fortunato asked Dr. Stilwell how long, on average, a case is kept open in her office. Dr. Stilwell said that it varies from a few weeks to multiple years.

Councilor Montinieri commented that since it appears that the funds are available and the position is temporary, she would like to leave the hours at 22 as Dr. Stilwell has requested.

Councilor Forrest moved **"TO AMEND THE ORIGINAL MOTION TO CHANGE THE PART-TIME SOCIAL WORKER HOURS TO 22 PER WEEK"**, seconded by Councilor Adil.

Councilor Cascio said that it is easier to add to something than to take away. He cautions the vote because the Council is entering into a very tough budget session. By passing this motion, the Council is giving something that all Departments are going to want. He said that there will be many requests and the Council cannot fulfill all of them. He

said that he does not oppose increasing the hours; however adding an employee to a Union may cause problems later when the employee's position is done away with. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the employee can be removed or laid off because the position was eliminated from the budget. Councilor Cascio said that the Town will then be responsible financially for unemployment. Councilor Cascio said that he supports the concept that the Social Services Department needs more hours, but he does not support the motion for 22 hours per week.

Councilor Montinieri asked if the person will be hired with the understanding that their job is temporary. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that she will suggest to Dr. Stilwell that the person is told that the position may not exist after July 1, 2004.

Councilor Adil asked if the person would still be entitled to unemployment even if the hours per week were fewer than 22 per week. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that this is true.

Councilor Czernicki urged the Council to look very carefully at this motion that involves a 2.5 hour per week difference and will cost the Town of Wethersfield between \$4,495 and \$12,268. In her opinion, this is a fiscally irresponsible move for 2.5 hours per week between now and the end of the fiscal year. She feels that the tasks necessary can be done in 19.5 hours per week.

Councilor Hemmann clarified that the person filling in for this position will go back to her regular position at the Senior Center so that this will be a new individual hired, and at budget time the need for the position will be reassessed.

Councilor Fortunato said that she thought this position was going to be temporary and that now it appears to be more permanent. She'd like to do an analysis of the staffing in the Department before approving a benefited position. Councilor Fortunato reiterated her suggestion of contracting out for the position temporarily.

Chairperson Morin stated that he thinks that the fee paid to a contracted individual would in some manner include the cost of their benefits through the contracting agency. Chairperson Morin confirmed that the part time position to be filled was a full time position in the previous budget.

The following roll call vote on the amendment was taken:

|                     |     |                         |     |
|---------------------|-----|-------------------------|-----|
| Councilor Adil      | AYE | Councilor Hemmann       | NAY |
| Councilor Cascio    | NAY | Councilor Montinieri    | YEA |
| Councilor Czernicki | NAY | Deputy Mayor Karangekis | YEA |
| Councilor Forrest   | AYE | Chairperson Morin       | YEA |
| Councilor Fortunato | NAY |                         |     |

The motion to amend passed 5-4-0.

The following roll call vote on the original motion was taken:

|                     |     |                         |     |
|---------------------|-----|-------------------------|-----|
| Councilor Adil      | AYE | Councilor Hemmann       | NAY |
| Councilor Cascio    | NAY | Councilor Montinieri    | YEA |
| Councilor Czernicki | NAY | Deputy Mayor Karangekis | YEA |
| Councilor Forrest   | AYE | Chairperson Morin       | YEA |
| Councilor Fortunato | NAY |                         |     |

The motion passed 5-4-0.

## BIDS

Town Manager Bonnie Therrien explained that three bid proposals were received for police uniforms and that she recommends that the bid be awarded to Security Uniforms of New Britain.

Councilor Cascio moved **"TO AWARD THE BID FOR POLICE UNIFORMS TO BIDDER #3 SECURITY UNIFORMS OF NEW BRITAIN - IN THE AMOUNT OF \$17,000"**, seconded by Councilor Czernicki. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

#### ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

#### MINUTES

Councilor Cascio moved **"TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF NOVEMBER 24, 2003"**, seconded by Councilor Czernicki. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Adil moved **"TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 1, 2003"**, seconded by Councilor Czernicki.

Councilor Czernicki amended the minutes to remove Councilor Fortunato's name from the second of the motion on page 16329 as she was not in attendance at the meeting.

Councilor Fortunato amended the minutes on page 16337 to delete her from each of the votes to approve the minutes of previous meetings.

All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. Councilor Fortunato and Councilor Hemmann ABSTAINED. The motion passed 7-0-2.

#### GENERAL COMMENTS

#### REPORTS

Councilor Czernicki reported that on Monday, December 8, she attended a meeting with members of the CT Transit Company and neighbors from Goodwin Park Road. She said that the neighbors still have concerns because the bus continues to use Goodwin Park Road and it was their understanding, as well as the Town Manager's and Councilor Czernicki's that this would cease. CT Transit has informed Councilor Czernicki that this will continue for a while as they cannot remove and reroute these busses through the State DOT on Wolcott Hill Road. Councilor Czernicki reported that the Town Manager and Mr. David Lee from CT Transit will both have further conversation with a member of the Labor Department to possibly have the busses layover in that lot. The CT Transit will also be speaking with HELCO to possibly use their property for the layover. Councilor Czernicki asked the Town Manager for the cost of the snow storms on December 5, 6, and 7 as well as the most recent storm last week. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that she does not have the numbers yet, but she's estimating that 40%-50% of the overtime budget has been used. Councilor Czernicki said that she shared with a Physical Services employee her gratitude for the great job the division does with snow removal. Councilor Czernicki asked what the status is of the threatened litigation between the Town and the MDC regarding the Wethersfield Cove. Chairperson Morin said that options will continue to be discussed and pursued and that a decision has not yet been made. Councilor Czernicki asked who the Town representative is on the Webb School project. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that Chief Building Official Brian O'Connor is the representative. Councilor Czernicki commented that the agenda for the Special Meeting for information on the Wethersfield Cove did not clearly indicate exactly what would take place at the meeting. She wants to make sure that procedure is followed correctly so that there are not any problems. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that she was unaware that the MDC was going to give a PowerPoint presentation that evening.

Councilor Fortunato reported that she met with the Library Director Laurel Goodgion and the Library Board Chairperson on December 11, and was given a tour of the facility and an orientation which included the planned renovations. She announced that the next Shared Services meeting will be on January 5, 2004 at 5:30 p.m. in the Town

Manager's Conference Room.

Councilor Adil reported that he met with the Economic Development and Improvement Commission (EDIC) on December 11 and that many ideas were discussed. He stated that this group is very proactive in the economic climate and hopes that they receive the support they require to continue the job they're doing.

Chairperson Morin said that the past week included the Town tree lighting ceremony, the Fire Department's award ceremony, and the EDIC Salute to Business event, all of which were very well attended. There was also a bus trip to view the lighting of a school field in Bloomfield which was attended by Councilors and residents of Wethersfield. Chairperson Morin reported that he has asked the Town Manager to request of the Police Department that the flag on Main Street is attended to on a daily basis. She said that she will discuss this concern with the Police Chief. Chairperson Morin received a call regarding the concern for traffic on Route 3 in the Griswoldville section of Town. The Town Manager is looking into the accident reports and other pertinent information. Chairperson Morin echoed the comments of Councilor Czernicki regarding the great job they are doing with regard to snow removal.

## COUNCIL

Councilor Hemmann asked what the current status is of the Dial-A-Ride program, with the change in provider. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that the Town is either on key or just a little below. She will provide the information in her next Manager's Report.

Councilor Cascio stated that he will not be at the January 5, 2004 meeting of the Town Council or the Shared Services Committee as he will be out of Town. Councilor Cascio asked Chairperson Morin if his request to appoint Councilor Hemmann to the Drainage Committee had yet been given consideration. Councilor Cascio also wished all a happy holiday.

Councilor Forrest asked to obtain a copy of the December 9 Special Meeting meeting. Town Manager Bonnie Therrien said that they will be included in the agenda of the next Council meeting. Councilor Forrest requested a copy of the proposals to alleviate tax burdens. Councilor Forrest said that under Section 903 of the Charter, there are General Statutes referred to and he would like a list of the Statutes as well as a copy of the listing of initiatives/directives for the Town Council regarding the aesthetic vision of the Town's commercial properties.

## PUBLIC

Jim Clynch, 903 Ridge Road, commended the Town Manager for the smoothness of the leaf pick-up program this year. He said that there are trucks parked at Goodwin Park and wonders if the owners are to be paying taxes to the Town of Wethersfield to do such. Mr. Clynch asked if the Town gets any of the money collected from the Christmas Light display at Goodwin Park. Mr. Clynch suggested that a turnaround for the busses be installed near D'Esopo's Funeral Home underneath the Highway. He wished happy holidays to all.

Ballou Tooker, 65 Harmund Place, commented that there was a recent article in the Wethersfield Life regarding the Dial-a-Ride program. The article stated that Dr. Stilwell met with disabled residents at the First Church Village who are requesting the addition of service to West Hartford, East Hartford, and Westfarms Mall. Mr. Tooker commented that the intent of Dial-A-Ride is not to take people shopping, but for necessary trips such as doctor visits, grocery shopping, and banking. He cautioned the Council about the addition of unnecessary routes to Dial-a-Ride. Mr. Tooker commented that he does not believe that the EDIC has made much progress in recent years. He spoke with the Town Planner and Town Manager regarding the old Providence/Worcester railroad line to make them aware of the properties along this line. Mr. Tooker would like to see the development of something other than retail and is trying to promote the creation of action with the railroad. Mr. Tooker who is a member of the Wethersfield/Rocky Hill Rotary Club said that the club is trying to promote activity by offering day passenger runs on the railroad from Wethersfield to Middletown and vice versa.

George Ruhe, 956 Cloverdale Circle, commented that he still does not agree with the idea of an SRO at the High School. Mr. Ruhe said that Police Chief Cetran spoke of this position as a possible part-time job. Mr. Ruhe stated that we cannot make every thing absolutely safe. This will not happen. Mr. Ruhe said that the benefits of an SRO have not

yet been proven. He feels that this position is simply a way to acquire another Police Officer. He would like to see other avenues pursued to deal with "bullying". Mr. Ruhe is concerned with the operation of the audio/visual equipment of the Council Chambers and the resulting transmission. This should be a priority. He wished happy holidays to all.

Councilor Hemmann commented that the Town has lost a very avid sports advocate, Bo Galinski, and she was very saddened to hear of his passing yesterday.

Chairperson Morin wished the residents of Wethersfield a very happy holiday season.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

At 10:50 p.m., Councilor Adil moved "**TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION**" seconded by Deputy Mayor Karangekis. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

At 11:09 p.m., Councilor Czernicki moved "**TO ENTER BACK INTO THE REGULAR MEETING**" seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Councilor Czernicki moved "**TO ALLOW ONE TIME BONUSES FOR THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT STAFF AS RECOMMENDED BY THE TOWN MANAGER**", seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson, voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

At 11:10 p.m., Councilor Czernicki moved "**TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**" seconded by Councilor Adil. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano  
Town Clerk