

**REGULAR MEETING**  
**April 7, 2014**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Monday, April 7, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield.

Present: Councilors Hemmann, Kotkin, Manousos, Martino, Rell, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Barry, and Chairperson Montinieri. Absent Councilor Hurley.

Also present: Mike Turner, Town Engineer, Christine LaBrie, Project Manager, AppGeographics, Marlene Desjardins, Tax Collector, Jeff Bridges, Town Manager, Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk.

Deputy Mayor Barry led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Mayor Montinieri read a Proclamation announcing April 7 through April 13, 2014 as National Public Health Week as proclaimed by the American Public Health Association. Representatives from the Central Connecticut Health District were present to accept the Proclamation.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Mayor Montinieri presented the first item for public hearing. A Resolution concerning a grant application to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. He asked if anybody in the public wished to speak on that item. With nobody from the public wishing to speak, he declared that item closed.

Mayor Montinieri presented the second item for public hearing. A Resolution endorsing the Capitol Region Council of Governments Regional Performance Incentive Program. He asked if anybody in the public wished to speak on that item. With nobody from the public wishing to speak, he declared that item closed.

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Paul Copp, 100 Executive Square, commented that he was surprised to hear that the town leased the Deming-Standish House to the Historical Society. He stated that first he was surprised to hear that the building that houses Lucky Lou's was subleased by the Historical Society to the proprietor and that it was owned by the town. Secondly, he was surprised that the town had leased this town-owned property through the Historical Society for a use as a tavern. Third, he was shocked that the lease was for 50 years and that the town needs to spend \$500,000 of tax payers money on the property. Mr. Copp commented that after some investigation of some

meeting minutes that this lease is null and void as the lease to the Historical Society was signed by then Town Manager, Bonnie Therrien on September 3, 2008. He stated that the Town Council meeting of September 2, the day before, shows no mention of the lease or public authorization by the Town Council for the Town Manager to sign it. Mr. Copp stated that the Town Manager, as required, was never authorized in public session to sign the lease so the lease is null and void. Mr. Copp stated that the lease mentions are significant in the history, architecture, archaeology and the culture of Wethersfield. He stated that this current use does not further that purpose today except to admire it as you pass by. He stated that perhaps the property should be returned to the family who donated it, if they will accept it and stated that in any case, this should go further.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill Rd., commented that Mr. Copp's findings in the minutes regarding the Standish House were in line with some of the issues that he found in the minutes as well. Mr. Young commented that he has a copy of the lease dated September 3, 2008 retro back into September 1, 2007, doesn't understand why it was retro back. He stated that in reading the minutes, there was a tremendous amount of work that was put into this and extremely very few words put into the minutes. He stated that the Planning and Zoning minutes also has very few words. There is no word about the 50-year lease, not a word about the \$19,200 dollars that the town would pay the Historical Society if the building remained vacant and couldn't be rented for a restaurant and we the tax payers would pay for that. He stated that it's no wonder why our taxes keep going up. He stated that this lease is the proof of how bad our negotiations are in town. Mr. Young commented that Vision Appraisal shows Wethersfield as the owner of the Keeney Building, the Old Academy, Standish House on 220 Main Street and the Wethersfield Historic Society. He stated that he wants to see the documentation that authorized the Wethersfield Historic Society's name be on here and he wants to see who the lawyers name and the officials who signed it. Mr. Young commented that the lease is null and void and has not been executed and because it hasn't been executed he urges the Council to go back and find some documents because he plans to take it to the Ethics Commission in Hartford and file a complaint. Mr. Young stated that the Historical Society doesn't have any legal right to the money and we should get the money back from them.

Gus Colantonio, 16 Morrison Avenue commented that he would like to know which law states that it is against the law to install a stop sign in an eastbound direction from Morrison Avenue and he would like to know which law that is. He commented that he complained a year ago about the intersection about Main Street and Church and stated that every time he has to cross Main Street, he has to be in the middle of the southbound lane to see the approaching traffic from the south and it should not be like that and should be fixed. He stated that regarding Beverly and Wolcott Hill, the Town Manager said that as you come out of Beverly you can only see an off distance for the speed limit to be 25 miles per hour. He stated that he appreciates that it came down from 40 to 35 but still it is not safe. Mr. Colantonio commented that as he travels the Silas Deane from Hartford to Jordan Lane and Silas Deane and then there is the Route 5 and 15 Northbound off ramp, and when he is approaching this intersection, he sees a sign which says no right turn. He asked does that mean I cannot turn right on Jordan Lane or does it mean that I

cannot make a U-turn onto the off-ramp from Route 5 and 15 which is what he thinks that is what it means. He stated that we should get in touch with the State and see if we can change that.

Dolores Sassano read a letter from Robert Garrey regarding the Standish House which will be included as part of the record.

### COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Kotkin reported that the Library Committee as mentioned earlier, is going to have a new Library Director. He stated that there were 31 candidates who applied by the deadline of April 1<sup>st</sup> and we have a group of current and retired library directors from Central Connecticut who are going through a screening process and they reduced that list of 31 down to 7 that they will interview and recommend finalists to the Library Board. So hopefully, the Library Board will be able to interview them in mid-May and we will have a new Library Director to replace Laurel who is retiring by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Councilor Kotkin reported that the Insurance Committee was looking at the coverage basically that the town had. Remember the town is self-insured and we cover all claims essentially out of our own pocket up to \$100,000 for each event. When we go over \$100,000 and this has been the level for a couple of decades, we have another policy that covers through Anthem Blue Cross that covers coverage over if somebody incurs \$200,000 because of a serious medical issue, the second \$100,000 is covered through this policy. He explained that the Insurance Committee looked at what would it, that \$100,000 level has been there for a long time, what would happen if we raised that a bit up to \$125,000. How much could we save on the premium and at the Insurance Committee, the view was the town could reduce the spending on its coverage by \$170,000 in the event that we change that really deductible and moved it from \$100,000 to \$125,000 and they unanimously 6-0 recommended that the town go in that direction. So make a change to a deductible that has really been in place for probably 20 years. Councilor Kotkin stated that he thinks we have done additional work and the savings is north of \$200,000 now. Mr. Bridges stated that he will talk about that in the budget presentation. Councilor Kotkin stated that it is a good sign that the Insurance Committee, many of whom have a lot of experience in the industry felt that it was a prudent step to take. He stated that they also looked at the potential of a \$150,000 but the incremental savings weren't that great and they really didn't feel that at least at this stage that the town should expose themselves to that additional \$25,000. So we are going to go through that at the budget. He stated that was the main topic that they met on last week.

Councilor Martino reported that a couple of weeks ago, the Wethersfield Advisory Commission for People With Disabilities met at the First Church Village and Curtin Transportation was there, the people who take care of Dial-A-Ride for us and they sat down with people and got their comments on what they were looking for. One of the things that came forward from people there were they had suggested that service be extended to Shop Rite in East Hartford because a lot of people like to go there and it was closer to take them there than to Newington to Price Chopper which was on the list. So they have started a survey on that and people write in to look starting

in July to switch to go there. So if there anybody out there that uses our Dial-A-Ride service and wants to go to East Hartford, please contact Social Services to get your name on the list for consideration of them doing that. Councilor Martino stated that they also worked with the people on a few other issues that they had and solved them so Curtin is being very friendly with our residents in helping them with their needs. Also, there was a meeting that same week with the Senior Citizens Advisory Commission and they are moving forward on May 19<sup>th</sup>, they are going to have a fair at the Community Center. There is going to be people there from Tourism to go over the various trail in town, wine trails, chocolate trails and antique trails, etc. and other vendors are going to be there for other things so that would be a good afternoon for any seniors to go down to the community center and see what's there and what's available for them.

Councilor Roberts reported that the Youth Advisory Board met last Thursday night and although there wasn't a quorum, the work is continuing on May 1<sup>st</sup>. They are having a volunteer recognition night and they invited over 300 of the town's youth to be honored for their service hours that they have given to the town. The Board is working on finalizing that event.

#### COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Manousos asked Dolores, and knows that in the interest of time she kind of cut short the letter that was sent by Mr. Garrey, and asked her if she could read it from the beginning because there are some important parts that should be on the record and the public should know. Ms. Sassano responded that we are going to put the whole letter in so that the public will know. Ms. Sassano reread the letter which will be included in the minutes' record.

Councilor Manousos commented as a follow-up, that it would be prudent if we could set up a committee of some sort with some of the stakeholders involved to review this and go through it in a methodical way to determine what the best approach would be. He stated that he would like to take charge of that and discuss it with the colleagues up here to see how we do that.

#### TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Bridges approached the podium to give a brief overview of the proposed budget that was delivered to the council over the weekend. Per the Charter, the Manager is to distribute the budget to the Town Council by the first Monday in April which is this evening. Tonight is a very brief presentation. There will be a more in-depth presentation of the budget at the April 21<sup>st</sup> public hearing which will be here at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Bridges pointed to a chart and the first page of the handout and stated that the top chart looks at the spending between the different functions between the current year and next year. As you can see, you heard from the Board of Education last meeting that their budget is increasing 3.7 percent, a dollar increase of \$1.9 million. The Town Budget not including roads which is about a \$206 difference is increasing \$1.5 million or 4.3 percent. He stated that a big piece of that and you will see that in a second is debt service on the new high school. The proposed mill rate is

37.05 for next year up from 33.46. He stated that a big function of that is reappraisal which impacted the overall grand list in the town. Spending increases for the past 10 years you can see spending from prior year 3.97 total spending proposed increased for the next year compared to the prior years since 2005. The grand list at reappraisal reduced 5.6%. We had probably the third lowest drop for those towns that reappraised last year. Some were more significant than ours. The average value of a single family home in Wethersfield is now \$168,800 down from \$187,000 last year on the prior grand list. Overall, about 1/3 of the homes in town will either see their taxes stay the same or go down under this and the remaining 2/3 will see their taxes go up somewhat depending upon what happened with their value during reappraisal. Mr. Bridges explained that about 17% of commercial properties in Wethersfield will see no tax increase or a tax decrease. The remaining commercial parcels will see an increase depending on what happened with their value. Overall, we had about 140 or 150 appeals on the value which for a reappraisal year isn't that significant. The VAA did finish up and the taxable grand list is a \$2,205,000 number. He stated that a big measure of fiscal health for community is unassigned fund balance. You can see we've got a policy that says we are trying to stay between 8 and 10% of general fund expenditures. Next year's proposed amount at the end of fiscal 2015 which is next June, not this coming June, but the following June we are looking at 9.8%. We are anticipating using \$300,000 of fund balance in this year's budget and another \$300,000 next year. That is how the budget is set up. Looking at initial revenues projections for the end of this year, we probably won't use all of that based upon other revenues coming in so this number will probably be greater once we get to audit in the fall. Mr. Bridges explained that the school project, the capital fund includes an appropriation of \$8.9 million dollars from state grants for the construction of the high school. As we have talked over the past few months since Thanksgiving on the High School project and how we'll work our way through this project to funding of \$83 million dollars. The State grant we are anticipating to complete the project will be budgeted as an appropriation in the capital fund. So it has no impact on the mill levy, it is a capital appropriation. It's a grant received and a grant expended for the high school project and that will show up in the capital fund. Also as part of the \$1.5 million dollar increase in total town-side spending, \$498,000 of that is for debt service on the first series of bonds. What we are looking at below and if you look at the chart that we put out for the referendum, this line here, these scaly lines or bars, that almost mirrors the same chart that we put out for the referendum. Over the next four years, we intend to issue a series of bond issues \$12 million apiece to pay for the high school project for with a cleanup at the end depending on what's left over. So these increases per year go from next year, a very small amount to a very large increase. In one of the last year's what we are proposing in this budget is to smooth it out by adding the same amount of money to each budget over the next five years to cover the debt service and the high school project. So it will be the same amount of money per year rather than one year a little bit of money up to \$900,000 in new money, we are proposing just to add the same amount every year until we get to the necessary debt service at the highest fixed single year of debt service which is 2019. So that is what's proposed in the town budget. Some additional highlights in the budget. There is an additional \$150,000 in the capital fund for security enhancement at the schools for doors and cameras. The MDC sewer charge to municipalities who run up \$69,000 to Wethersfield. The OPEB Trust Fund. Per the policy that we adopted last year, the town and the school will add

\$200,000 total per year into the program so current year we put \$200,000 in for OPEB. Next year we will put \$400,000 in for OPEB, the following year we will be put \$600,000 in for OPEB and so on, so it's an increase of \$122,000 on the town side and \$78,000 on the Board of Education side. The town has a higher level of post-employment retiree benefits than the Board of Education does, although opposite in terms of active. 5% increase in auto liability property insurance. This covers all properties, town and Board of Education and the town picks up that cost. It is in the town budget. As Councilor Kotkin said a few minutes ago we are going to see a slight decrease in health insurance. The claim volume and level stayed the same but the stop loss premium due to changing the stop loss pooling point to \$125,000 will go down \$244,000. The budget you see this evening, the only adjustment for that \$244,000 was \$54,000 reduction in the general fund. The best number we had at the time allowed us to take \$54,000 out of the general fund to that number. So standing here today, we can make another adjustment of roughly a \$180,000 to the total budget as a deduct without affecting any program. Mr. Bridges explained that we are seeing a 15% Worker's Compensation Insurance increase. Pension contributions are up as a result of just pension costs and our discount rate or interest rate has to go down to match the government accounting standing board's criteria. Increase of 2% with step movement for all unions with contracts next year. We have two unions that don't have contracts that expire this year. There is no budgeted raise for those employees at this point, but those contracts that are active after June 30<sup>th</sup>; they all have a 2% with step. Non-union and part-time 2.5% increase. There's a change in the delivery charges for electricity for municipalities. Our actual cost per kilowatt is fixed but the delivery charges are going up and for all town buildings, it's costing about \$67,000 more. In terms of revenues, Municipal Aid and the other revenues are basically the same. Maybe a slight increase in some but overall relatively unchanged which is good because it didn't go down but we still would expect between now and the time budget is adopted with legislatures still working, there may be changes on the revenue side and things become more clearer on municipal aid. Mr. Bridges stated that's briefly what it is. He stated that again at the Public Hearing there will be a more in-depth presentation.

Councilor Manousos commented that on the OPEB Trust contribution, he thought that we were doubling every year, so not 2, 4, 6 but 2, 4, 8, 1.6. Mr. Bridges responded no, 2, 4, 6. Mr. Bridges responded that we can do 2, 4, 8, but thinks that 2, 4, 6 is what we agreed on. He stated that we are still projecting based upon last year's activity in the active fund, we could move about \$1 million dollars from the active fund to the OPEB fund. So, by the end of this year, we will probably have close to \$8.5 – \$9 million dollars in OPEB which is pretty good. Nowhere near fully funded, but it's a huge step from where we were 3 or 4 years ago.

Mr. Bridges invited Mike Turner to the podium to introduce some guests to talk about AppGeo and GIS Enhancements.

Mr. Turner invited Kristen LaBrie who is with the firm Applied Geographics here in East Hartford. He explained that she is overseeing the town's GIS application. He stated that the town has been working with a GIS system for several years now and we have a system now that

is available that Kristen will describe to you and it's availability to you and to the general public as well as the town employees.

Ms. LaBrie thanked the Town Council and the citizens of the town for inviting her to come and speak. Ms. LaBrie stated that she is the Project Manager at Applied Geographics and she has overseen the creation of the website and stated that the town should be very proud of this site. It's got a lot of information and just want to hit the high points of it. She stated that handouts are available to give you a basic idea of the functionality of this site. Ms. LaBrie then went over the functions of the website. The website is [www.mapgeo.com/wethersfieldct](http://www.mapgeo.com/wethersfieldct).

### TOWN CLERK COMMUNICATIONS

Dolores Sassano asked to remove the minutes from March 17<sup>th</sup> from the agenda and stated that we realized today that they hadn't been uploaded to the Cloud.

Councilor Rell asked if the minutes were on the town website at all. Ms. Sassano responded that we don't put the minutes up on the website until after they have been approved and stated that she can send them to him tomorrow.

Deputy Mayor Barry moved **"TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION FROM THE CENTRAL CONNECTICUT HEALTH DISTRICT OF THERESA R. URBANSKI, 46 MARMOR COURT, FROM MARCH 3, 2014 TO JUNE 30, 2016"**, seconded by Councilor Roberts.

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

Councilor Hemmann moved **"TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATIONS FROM BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS FROM THE INLAND WETLANDS, ROBERT COBB, 99 MEADOWVIEW ROAD FROM JULY 1, 2011 TO JUNE 30, 2014 AND THE YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD, GEORGE BASHURA, 120 MOHAWK LANE FROM JANUARY 17, 2012 TO JUNE 30, 2014"**, seconded by Councilor Rell.

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

Deputy Mayor Barry moved **"TO APPOINT TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND RELATIONS COMMISSION, MARIA ALFONSO, 256 BRIMFIELD RD. EFFECTIVE APRIL 7, 2014 TO JUNE 30, 2017, TO THE WETHERSFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, JOSELYN VALENTE, 55 OLD COMMON, TERM APRIL 7, 2014 TO JUNE 30, 2014, TO THE YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD, MARIA ALFONSO, 256 BRIMFIELD RD., TERM APRIL 7, 2014 TO JUNE 30, 2014, AS THE OPEB RESIDENT TRUSTEE, 3-YR TERM, JOSEPH S. MASSARO, 155 CLEARFIELD RD., TERM APRIL 7, 2014 TO JUNE 30, 2017"**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Roberts moved **“TO ALLOW THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER / TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN THE APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE”**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Mr. Bridges asked Mike Turner to review this item. Mr. Turner explained that this application is actually for a pass-through grant as CRCOG receives federal funding or the town receives federal funding there has been agreement over the past 10 years or so where we essentially assign these monies to CRCOG to oversee them as a regional basis so this will allow the Town Manager to enter into those agreements. Those grants typically provide training for our Police Officers, Firefighters, equipment based on a regional basis that the region needs. Mr. Turner stated that there are different grants that we apply for for individual town projects and town equipment.

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

Councilor Kotkin moved **“TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE REGIONAL PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE PROGRAM GRANTS”**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Barry.

Mr. Bridges explained that CRCOG is putting together a series of regional grants to help with certain, somewhat administrative, but regional things like data backup, human resource information pooling, those kind of things. He stated that the two we would participate in is again the disaster recovery backup-type storage information, storage systems and human resource clearing house which is a combination of policies, procedures, job descriptions and if we evolve into that collection of members who went to arbitration on certain points or whatever, it's kind of a story house of information.

Mayor Montinieri asked how long does he anticipate that program will take to bud. Mr. Bridges responded probably more than a year. We are still in the applying for the grant phase and then once that's done, designing the program.

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

Councilor Kotkin moved **“TO TRANSFER THE UNCOLLECTED TAXES TO TAX SUSPENSE STATUS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 12-165 OF THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES AND THE ATTACHED LIST”**, seconded by

Councilor Martino.

Mr. Bridges explained that Tax Collector, Marlene Desjardins is here this evening to review this with you. This is an annual item per statute. Taxes that are unpaid after 15 years are moved to suspense which means that it's not that they can't be collected; we just don't pursue them at that time. Mr. Bridges asked Marlene to come up.

Ms. Desjardins explained that the accounts that are currently on the suspense list are all individuals that are deceased. We have tried every effort that we could to collect them. There was nothing left in the estates. Ms. Bridges asked what the total amount was \$4,402.28.

Councilor Kotkin asked if they are mostly motor vehicles. Ms. Desjardin responded yes. Councilor Kotkin asked if it's an actual property, do you end up liening it. Ms. Desjardins responded that they never suspend real estate.

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

Councilor Roberts moved **"TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF \$100,000 FROM THE CONTINGENCY FUND TO THE STREET IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR ADDITIONAL STREET REPAIRS"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Barry.

Mr. Bridges explained that the winter took a toll on our streets. The usual amount of money we keep in the street improvement fund per year for pothole repair and patching is about \$50,000. He stated that that has been expended and are requesting that \$100,000 be removed from the contingency fund to the street improvement fund. Mr. Bridges explained that if this was a general fund item, we could run it in the general fund but since the street improvement fund is a stand-alone fund, rather than run in the negative, we are asking to move money into it to keep it on the plus side. He stated that we have full expectation that at the end of the year, the Physical Services Division will be over budget due to snow and ice removal, so this will be one of a few transfers you'll see regarding Physical Services and their operations.

Councilor Kotkin asked if that is basically to provide tar or whatever to town employees so they would fix or does this go to a contractor? Mr. Bridges responded that this is usually for town crews to fix town streets. It may be used to rent a paving box for some of the bigger areas that need to be corrected, but mostly just for black top. Councilor Kotkin asked so we are just buying more. Mr. Bridges responded yes, just buying more. Councilor Kotkin commented that he mentioned this several months ago and that was because I had a complaint from a town resident who fell on his bicycle going down the downhill side of Nott Street, coming down on the east of Ridge. It's very rough there so before we have any more of our residents wipe out; I would hope that some of this \$100,000 could be used on that stretch. I know it's not going to fix it for good but it's among our major streets, that's one of the worst stretches. Mr. Bridges responded that there is a tree right there and he doesn't know if it is something that it keeps it wet, he doesn't know. Councilor Kotkin stated that it's just before you get to Amherst. For some reason, it's the

downhill side and not the uphill side that is worse, so if you could address that. Councilor Kotkin commented that the State did Prospect last year and thinks it held up quite well in the winter and asked if Wells was on anywhere. Mr. Bridges responded the summer from coast to coast. Councilor Kotkin asked from Newington to Silas Deane? Mr. Turner responded yes. Councilor Kotkin asked if we knew the timing of it. Mr. Turner responded that the State is actually doing repair work right now starting to prep for catch basins and things like that, especially near the Wolcott Hill Road. Councilor asked if it was a spring thing or summer. Mr. Turner responded that it was part of the Vendor In Place process so they need to wait for the same contract that we do to be awarded so that they can do that.

Councilor Hemmann asked if there was any money left in contingency. Mr. Bridges responded that we anticipate that we will spend it all for the snow and ice depending where Physical Services Operation ends up. Councilor Hemmann asked how much is left before this transfer. Mr. Bridges responded \$340,000, we haven't touched it. So there will be \$240,000 but we anticipate that Physical Services will have spent more than that and there's other line items in the budget that will be under spent that will move to take care of those things.

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

Deputy Mayor Barry moved **“TO APPROVE THE SMALL CITIES LOAN SUBORDINATION FOR 219 FOREST DRIVE, WETHERSFIELD, CT”**, seconded by Councilor Martino.

Mr. Bridges explained that we have someone who got a Small Cities Housing Rehab Loan and they want to do some refinancing. Town Attorney Bradley has prepared the necessary subordination for that to take place with the property owner's bank. There's plenty of equity in the house and with the loans so we are recommending that that be approved.

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

Councilor Kotkin moved **“TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL FROM BLUM, SHAPIRO FOR THE 2013-2014 AUDIT”**, seconded by Councilor Martino.

Mr. Bridges explained that Blume Shapiro who does the town audit yearly, we are proposing to renew their contract for one year next year for a price of \$39,300. It's up about \$800 from the current year. He stated that the Budget and Finance Committee met with them recently on the audit and my understanding was a satisfactory conversation.

Councilor Kotkin commented that essentially one of things is that the auditors for the town really work for the council not for the Finance Director, Manager, or School Superintendent so they are basically our sort of watchdog on town government and I think there was some concern prior to this past year that maybe the watchdog needed to be a little bit tougher or more eyes and so forth and we did agree last year to go another year with Blum Shapiro. There was a changeover in the

lead partner on our account. Councilor Hurley is not here, but he and the other three members of the Budget Committee met with them without the town officials in the room they gave us a very objective, very deep view of both the town finances as well as the Board of Education's finances. They had number recommendations, which I believe the town is in the process of implementing, so I think they did a good job and a more thorough job at least that I have seen over the last several years so I would recommend that we go with them for another year. The other thing is, of course, we just added a new Finance Director and given the fact that Mike just started, I think it would be a bit disruptive if we had a new auditor come in at the same time especially if there really wasn't a major justification.

Councilor Hemmann asked when was the last time we went out to bid. Councilor Kotkin responded the previous year.

Mayor Montinieri thanked Jeff for the summary on that and stated that he knows that he has worked with the Finance Committee on it who was comfortable with that outcome.

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

#### BIDS

Councilor Roberts moved **"TO AWARD CRCOG BID #608 TO EAST RIVER ENERGY FOR DIESEL & HEATING OIL"**, seconded by Councilor Martino.

Mr. Bridges explained that CRCOG bid out the diesel fuel and heating oil. Based upon the results, the actual cost is going down a couple of pennies a gallon. Staff is recommending taking CRCOG's old bid of East River Energy for diesel fuel and heating oil for next year. He stated that these prices are reflected in the budget proposed.

Councilor Kotkin asked is this reflected as far as we know in the school budget too or just on your side. Mr. Bridges responded stated that we would have to check we told them pricing. It would be a good question to ask them at the joint meeting.

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

Councilor Roberts moved **"TO APPROVE THE BID OF ADVANCED ALARMS FOR \$26,847"**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Barry.

Mayor Montinieri invited Mr. Turner to the podium to explain the item.

Mr. Turner explained that this is a capital budget item. We have budgeted \$40,000 for this piece of work and what it is is to install close circuit TV cameras here at this building, basically around the exterior of the building to cover the entrances and parking lot area. He stated that it is not something that will be monitored full time by a staff person. It will essentially go into like a

EVR recorder found in the basement. It will be accessible should there be a problem via police through our fiber optic or something like that, we can tap into it so someone can view the cameras live if we chose to do that, but essentially it is for a loss prevention side, accidents in the parking lot, slip and falls. We've had several, two or three over the past couple of years that I'm sure the losses would be more than paid for by having some documentation of actually what happened.

Mayor Montinieri commented that this came in under budget of \$40,000. Mr. Turner responded that this came in under our \$40,000 budget, yes.

Councilor Rell asked if it did come under budget of the \$40,000 would there be any consideration to put similar video cameras at other town buildings? I know the cove warehouse was just recently broken into. Would that be something we would consider? Mr. Turner responded that this particular project was budgeted for this particular building. We would have to go back and reprogram those dollars because it would essentially be a stand-alone system. It would have its own server and its own recorder and what have you all wired in so.

Deputy Mayor Barry asked how long is the tape kept? Does it recycle? Mr. Turner responded that it records for 30 days and then recycles itself. Mr. Turner stated that they are motion activated cameras. In other words it's not continuously recording for 30 days. If you walk in front of the camera, it will turn the camera on, record the activity and then turn off. Deputy Mayor Barry asked how long do you have to give notice to the town after an incident if you slip and fall. Mr. Bridges stated that he has seen people come in months later. Mr. Bridges commented that usually we will know right away though. If someone files an accident report or an ambulance shows up at the building, we'll know enough to take capture of that record.

Councilor Manousos asked if that was the only reason why we are trying to install this to reduce our costs for slip and falls. Mr. Turner responded that this will serve should the town desire this for a security system itself. Councilor Manousos asked if there are any other issues that we are seeing in town hall of people breaking in. Mr. Bridges responded that the building is generally unsecured at night because it is open to meetings and those kind of things so having some recording of who's coming and going is probably a pretty positive thing. Would you like us to get a price on the warehouse? Councilor Manousos commented that what Mike is kind of referring to is is it more important to put it here or maybe elsewhere.

Councilor Rell commented not just the warehouse but the Nature Center, Physical Services. Mr. Turner responded that we have this at Physical Services. Mr. Bridges commented that we will take a look at other buildings.

Mayor Montinieri asked if this came up through CIAC. Mr. Turner responded correct, this came up through the whole CIAC process.

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

Councilor Martino moved **“TO AWARD UP TO \$300,000 OF PAVING WORK TO TILCON BASED UPON THEIR 2014 STATE VIP BIDS”**, seconded by Deputy Mayor Barry.

Mr. Turner explained that every year we have piggy-backed both our milling and our paving bids off of the State bids. In this case here, the State VIP which is Vendor In Place, we tag off of that for our particular district for the paving costs. That contract has not yet been awarded but Tilcon did agree to hold the prices that they bid in anticipation that it would be awarded. Because of the variability of the bids and the unit prices, there are two vendors that bid in our region, Gilasso and Tilcon. Mr. Turner explained that Tilcon has actually held the contract with the town for the 18 years that I have been here. They have been the low vendor so that is our recommendation to stick with Tilcon on this particular bid. What this does, this bid will get us through the spring paving that is scheduled and then we will come back to you again this summer once all the bids are awarded for the fall paving program.

Councilor Rell asked if the spring batching plants have started up. Mr. Turner responded that they are just starting to open right now. Councilor Rell commented so we should start to see some, obviously, the pot hole patching. Mr. Turner responded yes, we have been using the cold mix up until this point.

Councilor Manousos asked if this is within our road paving budget. Mr. Turner responded yes. This comes out of the \$1.2 million dollar road levy account.

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

Deputy Mayor Barry moved **“TO REJECT THE ELEVATOR BIDS FOR THE WETHERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECT”**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin.

Mr. Turner explained that earlier this evening the Building Committee voted unanimously to reject the elevator bids and recommend that you reject the bids and authorize a rebid. If you recall, we had originally rejected the elevator bids once because we only had one vendor respond originally when we went out to bid with all the projects. One vendor respond, that was Otis and they missed half of the scope of work. So we rejected those bids, we went back out to bid this time and we received two bids, Bay State Elevator and Otis Elevator. Again, in the interview and vetting process of those vendors we discovered discrepancies that the low vendor was approximately about 2/3 of our budget came in substantially lower than our budget but he had proposed an elevator that was not the specified elevator. Mr. Turner explained that he went outside the bid scope, bid on something that he felt was appropriate and came in 2/3 and would have been the low bidder. If we went with Otis, we would be just slightly above our budget, but in talking with both of these vendors, they offer a new technology elevator which essentially negates the need for an elevator machine room next to it. All of the controls and machinery are

housed right within the door frame essentially of the elevator itself. Both of these vendors offer this as an option. It would be budgeted slightly higher than the low bidder that we received but we'll save an awful lot of real estate and additional supplemental work by other traits. So, based on that fact, it was the recommendation of our Construction Manager and endorsed by our Building Committee to reject the bids and let us go back out to bid one additional time with this newer technology and solicit bids and hopefully we'll get two competitive bids and we'll save a substantial amount of money.

Councilor Manousos commented that this compares in between an electric traction and the hydraulic and asked how new of a technology is this hydraulic, he didn't think that it was very new. Mr. Turner responded that hydraulic has been around, but this is called a holeless hydraulic. Old hydraulic elevators, you used to drill a shaft down into the ground 20-30 feet deep to have a piston down in the ground that would go back and forth. These new systems are essentially housed from ground level up. They are kind of like the hydraulics on a back hoe. He stated that they are limited in other words, we could'nt do this on a 50-story building but because our building, the maximum height is a 5-stop elevator but it is really going up only three stories, it's within the limits that this will work. Councilor Manousos asked if this was something that our Architect and Project Manager didn't know was a product out there. Mr. Turner commented that the combination of the controls without the machine room less and hydraulic is very new. The first elevator that got approval of this was just applied for in February and this will not cost us any additional design or Architect time to put this back out. Councilor Manousos commented that it seems like a substantial savings.

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

#### ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS FOR INTRODUCTION

No items to be introduced.

#### MINUTES

No meeting minutes to be approved.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Gus Colantonio, 16 Morrison Avenue commented on the budget and the union people are asking for a 2% increase and non-union 2.5% increase. He commented that he is retired and considers himself a government employed guy and he got just 1.5% increase last year and stated that the union gets 2% its 30% more than him and the non union it's about 70% more increase and he thinks that's something to think about percentage wise. Mr. Colantonio commented on piggy-backing with the State and questioned if we can do the same work for a little bit less somewhere else.

Mr. Young, 20 Coppermill Rd. commented that there are several ways of doing a budget and one way is spend everything or do a budget where you are trying to economize and save something and stated that this particular budget doesn't shoot for saving anything. This budget is designed to spend everything. We look at the Board of Education, they front load all those salary accounts that they have and as the year goes on they end up transferring money from those accounts down to accounts that they've already expended all their budget and they put in more money into those accounts so they spend it all. Mr. Young commented that the town does the same thing. Mr. Young shared his view on how the budget should be done. He stated that you need to find ways to save money and not transfer money from other accounts. Year after year we see the Board of Education taking money from those salaried accounts, there's about six or seven of them up there and the benefits and pushing the money down to budget to other line items that have already met their budget and they end up spending more for some other monies. They could have come back with thousands of dollars. He stated that things have changed and it is greed and we need to spend everything possible and when it comes time for budget we front load all of those accounts to such a point that that tax payer gets hammered and this happens year after year. Mr. Young referred to the Standish House lease and stated that it's a shame what was done and agreed to. He commented that we had no strength in negotiating that contract and because they were our friends and buddies. He stated he would not have a problem with giving the money to the Historical Society but let them do all the upkeep on that building. Mr. Young commented that continuing to up front money to organizations in town puts the rest of us on the line.

Mayor Montinieri commented that Councilor Rell's dad passed away just a short time ago and he mentioned to Mike that he didn't have the honor of meeting him at any point, but most of us have read a little bit about him and have recognized not only his service to his country but his leadership and contributions while Mikes' mom and his wife were Governor of this State. Mayor Montinieri asked for a moment of recognition of silence on behalf of Mike, his family and extended family.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:35 p.m., Deputy Mayor Barry moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"**, seconded by Councilor Kotkin. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 8-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano  
Town Clerk

Approved by Vote of Council  
May 5, 2014