

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

OCTOBER 28, 1997

6:30 P.M.

AGENDA

Blessing - Deacon Joseph Cronin - Our Lady of Fatima Church

1. Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call
2. Correspondence
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Consider and Approve Tax Refunds (#120-156) Totalling \$7,131.40 - Tax Collector
 - b. Approve and Accept the Minutes of the September 9, 1997 Town Council Meeting
 - c. Approve and Accept the Minutes of the September 23, 1997 Town Council Meeting
 - d. Approve and Accept the Minutes of the October 14, 1997 Town Council Meeting
 - e. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$475 from Personal Computer and Printer Acct. #001-7010-999-9902 - Town Planner
 - f. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$7,500 from Health Insurance Acct. #8035-800-8300 to Professional Services Employment Exams Acct. #1600-901-9009 - Personnel
 - g. Consider and Approve Granting Permission to Wallingford Center, Inc. Use of the Parade Grounds on December 6, 1997 for their "Season of Celebration - A Victorian Holiday" Event - Wallingford Center, Inc.
4. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda
5. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD
6. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$5,000 from Liability Insurance Acct. #925-000 to Maintenance of Supply Mains Acct. #616-000 - Water Division

(over)

7. Consider and Approve One Appointment to the Position of Commissioner on the Planning & Zoning Commission to Fill a Vacancy Which Expires 1/8/98
8. Consider and Approve Accepting a Donation of Rescue Equipment From the North Farms Volunteer Fire Department to the Town of Wallingford - North Farms Vol. Fire Dept. Co.#7
9. Report Out on the Status of the Town-Owned Land in Durham as Requested by Councilor Thomas Zappala
10. Report Out on the Status of the Lacey Property (Prince St.) as Requested by Councilor Thomas Zappala
11. Discussion and Possible Action on Forming a Committee to Review the Status of the Pension Fund as Requested by Councilor Peter Gouveia
12. Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-18a(e)(4) of the CT. General Statutes with Respect to the Sale, Lease or Purchase of Property - Mayor's Office

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

OCTOBER 28, 1997

6:30 P.M.

ADDENDUM TO AGENDA

13. Acceptance of an Award by the Department of Police Services
From the V.F.W. Stanley Budleski Post #9965 For the
Apprehension of Individuals Responsible for the Flag Burning
Incidents in the Town of Wallingford - Mayor's Office

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

OCTOBER 28, 1997

6:30 P.M.

SUMMARY

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| 5. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD - Community Lake Deed Restrictions Comment; Request to Consider Purchasing Treasury Bonds; Question Re: 1996-97 Appropriation of \$30,000 in Public Works Budget for the Cleaning of Catch Basins; Comments Re: Skateboarding in Town and Parental Duties; Request for Street Lighting on Audette Drive; Comments Re: the Town's bid for the Town Hall Roof Project; Complaint Re: Condition of Fence Behind Town Hall; Inquiry Re: Cost of Feasibility Study for Senior Citizen Center Expansion Project; Discussion Re: the Temporary Closing of Community Pool | 2-7 |
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Addendum to Agenda

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13. **Accept an Award by the Dept. of Police Services by V.F.W. Stanley Budleski Post #9965 for the Apprehension of Individuals Responsible for the Flag Burning Incidents in Town**

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TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

OCTOBER 28, 1997

6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting of the Wallingford Town Council was held on Tuesday, October 28, 1997 in the Robert Earley Auditorium of the Wallingford Town Hall and called to Order by Chairman Robert F. Parisi at 6:31 P.M. All Councilors answered present to the Roll called by Town Clerk Rosemary A. Rascati with the exception of Councilor Farrell who arrived at 6:45 P.M. from an out of town appointment. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr. arrived at 6:38 P.M. and Town Attorney Janis M. Small arrived at 6:33 P.M.

A blessing was bestowed upon the Council by Deacon Joseph Cronin of Our Lady of Fatima Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given to the Flag.

ITEM #2 Correspondence - Withdrawn

ITEM #3 Consent Agenda

ITEM #3a Consider and Approve Tax Refunds (#120-156) Totalling \$7,131.40 - Tax Collector

ITEM #3b Approve and Accept the Minutes of the September 9, 1997 Town Council Meeting

ITEM #3c Approve and Accept the Minutes of the September 23, 1997 Town Council Meeting

ITEM #3d Approve and Accept the Minutes of the October 14, 1997 Town Council Meeting

ITEM #3e Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$475 from Personal Computer Printer Acct. #001-7010-999-9902 - Town Planner

ITEM #3f Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$7,500 from Health Insurance Acct. #8035-800-8300 to Professional Services Employment Exams Acct. #1600-901-9009 - Personnel

ITEM #3g Consider and Approve Granting Permission to Wallingford Center, Inc. Use of the Parade Grounds on December 6, 1997 for their "Season of Celebration - A Victorian Holiday" Event - Wallingford Center, Inc.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Approve Items 3a, 3b, 3c, 3e, 3f, & 3g of the consent agenda, seconded by Mr. Knight.

VOTE: Farrell was absent; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

Item #3d was withdrawn from the consent agenda.

ITEM #4 Withdrawn

ITEM #13 Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Move Agenda Item #13 Up to the Next Order of Business, seconded by Mr. Centner.

VOTE: Farrell was absent; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

ITEM #13 Acceptance of an Award by the Department of Police Services from the V.F.W. Stanley Budleski Post #9965 for the Apprehension of Individuals Responsible for the Flag Burning Incidents in the Town of Wallingford - Mayor's Office

Melvin Hewston, Commander, V.F.W. Post #9965 presented Police Chief Douglas Dortenzio with an award recognizing the efforts of the men and women of the Wallingford Police Department for their dedication and hard work which resulted in the apprehension of the individuals responsible for the flag burning incidents in town.

ITEM #5 PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville referred to the Council meeting of October 14th, specifically the Public Question and Answer Period during which Mr. Melillo discussed the deed restrictions pertaining to Community Lake. He informed the Council that the deed restriction pertaining to the height of the dam will no longer be addressed in the same manner. The State will allow the dam to be re-constructed at half of the height of the original dam. What will be done about that? Isn't that a violation of the deed?

Mr. Rys responded, the matter will have to be researched by the Town Attorney's Office. He will forward a copy of the article Mr. Melillo gave to the Council at the last meeting on this matter to the Town Attorney.

Janis Small, Town Attorney, stated that she will have to study the deed prior to commenting on this item.

Mr. Melillo next commented on the stock market activity which occurred the previous day and asked, why not take a more conservative approach to investing by purchasing treasury bonds? Why fool around with the taxpayer's money.

Mr. Centner responded, at a recent Finance Committee meeting Thomas Myers, Comptroller, explained the diversification of the retirement portfolio to all present. The upside growth was pretty significant in terms of potential but the downside limit that was explained to us was approximately ten percent (10%). Mr. Myers assured everyone that the Town's downside risk was pretty limited and the upside

growth was pretty reasonable.

Mr. Myers explained, the variations that the market experienced on Friday and Monday have almost corrected themselves today. The Wallingford Pension portfolio did not decline at the rate that the market did. That is partially because the portfolio is conservatively positioned. It has a risk factor of ten percent (10%) below the market. Some of the loss experienced in common stock on Friday and Monday has been made up at the close of today's market.

Geno Zandri, Jr., 37 Hallmark Drive stated, in reviewing the 1996-97 budget of the Public Works Department one line item, in particular, caught his eye. The line item had \$30,000 budgeted in it for the hiring of an outside contractor to clean catch basins. According to the year-end figures no dollars were expended from the account. Is there any explanation as to why the work was not done when it was targeted for an outside firm?

Mayor Dickinson responded, he would have to guess that either there was a problem in entering into a contract with an outside firm or some other situation occurred that prevented the town from going ahead with that. He would have to consult with Mr. McCully on the matter.

Mr. Zandri stated, what concerned him is that budgets are compiled and reviewed early on in the year and if we are targeting dollars for outside firms he assumed that contracts would already be in place to go forward at the beginning of the year so that the work could be performed within that calendar year. In checking this present year's budget the same line item is budgeted once again for \$30,000.

Mr. Parisi responded that he recalled discussion on the matter and it was supposed to be more efficient to have the work performed by an outside firm than Public Works. That is why the item was approved and it was placed in the budget; what the status is of the situation, he did not know. He stated that he would obtain the answer the next day and pass the information along to Mr. Zandri soon after.

Mr. Zandri made it clear that he was not questioning the hiring of an outside firm but rather the budgeting of \$30,000 that was collected from the taxpayers and not used. The services budgeted for that we need are not being performed yet we are budgeting once again for the same \$30,000. He hoped that the work would be done this fiscal year.

Reginald Knight, 21 Audette Drive stated, in reading the supplement in the newspaper this past weekend which lists the candidate's views on various issues, there is a lot being said about the

skateboarding issue. It is a freedom of the children of the downtown area who live between Main Street and Colony Street. It is a residential area. The children outnumber the shelf-keepers very much. One candidate goes to the point of saying that "A solution is in place already. An ordinance designed to keep public areas safe was passed by the Council. It was needed and it was too bad that the parents of these children creating havoc in business areas....."

Mr. Rys admitted that the comments were attributed to him.

Reginald Knight continued, in other words Mr. Rys is saying that the parents are failing in their duties to look after their children. He looked up the word "havoc" in the dictionary to find out exactly what it meant. According to the Random House Dictionary it means, devastating, ruinous damage and pillaging. That must have been what the youths, on their roller skates, were doing. He reminded everyone that the Police Chief placed three police officers on a strong surveillance of the downtown area using very sophisticated equipment for three or four weeks. His report stated that there was absolutely nothing to be held against the skaters or skateboarders. Yet, the Council went against that and one member describes the scenario as being "havoc". These children have as much right as the children in any other area of the town. Audette Drive has no sidewalks and the children in that neighborhood skate and play stick ball on the streets upon which the neighborhood cars drive. Everyone gets along. He finds it hard to believe the allegations made of the children. Some candidates would have you believe that they are there to represent the people yet, when the skateboard issue was before the Council there were at least 250 people in attendance for the children. Yet, the Council voted against the will of the people present. When it came to locating the recreation center out to Fairfield Blvd. the majority was against it two to one yet, the Council still voted for the Fairfield Blvd. location. How can the Council say that they represent the people when the voice or sentiments of the people is different than what you are doing? How can that be? The Mayor, himself, said that he could have vetoed the skateboard ordinance but he would not.

Mr. Parisi responded that the Councilors receive many calls on the issues. Mr. Reginald Knight has no idea how many calls they receive. The people don't have to be in attendance to be heard, they can call the council members at home or talk to them in public. The Council listened to quite a few members of the public.

Mr. Reginald Knight stated, the reason some people will not come down to the meeting is because the Council will not listen to them.

Mr. Parisi responded, or it could be because they cannot get to the microphone.

Reginald Knight responded, if the Council allowed the time, there would be time for everyone. He then asked the Mayor what the status was of his request for an additional street light on his road?

Mayor Dickinson responded, a light was put up on Audette Drive approximately one week ago according to Mr. Cominos, General Manager of the Electric Division.

Reginald Knight informed the Mayor that a light was put on the old pole where the other light was. It is a slightly stronger light but as you travel up the street the lights are approximately forty feet apart. In fact, two of them are approximately 150 yards apart.

Mayor Dickinson responded that he will notify Mr. Cominos and request that he visit the area once again to see if additional lighting is still needed.

Frank Wasilewski, 57 N. Orchard Street stated, in reading the legal notices in the newspaper he noticed that the Town of Wallingford is going out to bid to hire a consultant to look at the roof of the Town Hall. He asked if there were problems with the roof?

Mayor Dickinson responded, this is a flat roof and there is an interest on the part of Public Works to get a review analysis of the roof and possibly put on a new roof. We would need someone to analyze what is there and gives us an idea...design for us a new roof and move in a direction of recovering the building.

Mr. Wasilewski asked, how long have we been in this building, eight years and we are already talking about having a re-designed roof that should have been done in the first place?

Mayor Dickinson answered, the Town Hall has been occupied nine years and at this point Public Works feels that we should take a look at changing the design and hopefully we will have better success. Some equipment has been installed on the roof since it was put in place and we have had a continuous battle with that issue.

Mr. Wasilewski stated, the roof has leaked since day one. He reminded everyone of the problems the town had with the air conditioning system at the Town Hall. He hoped that the town will not get stuck with a big bill on this roof that should still be in good working order. He hoped that the contractor who put the roof on was still in business unlike the contractor who installed the air conditioning.

Philip A. Wright, Sr., 160 Cedar Street asked, has there been any water leaking in since the new steps have been put on the entrance of the Town Hall?

Rosemary A. Rascati, Town Clerk explained that there was no evidence of water leaking in during the heavy rains last week.

Mr. Wright stated that the steps look fine. He next pointed out that the fencing behind the Town Hall is looking quite shabby and needs work.

He next asked if there was any news to report out on the Senior Center?

Mr. Knight answered, a meeting was held yesterday afternoon. Unfortunately, his business commitments made it impossible for him to attend.

Mr. Parisi stated that there was an article in the newspaper today announcing that the State will provide a limited amount of funding for the project. The committee will be making a presentation to the Council in the near future.

Mr. Wright informed those individuals present in the audience as well as the viewers at home that every resident has the right to contact the Law Department to find out the particulars of a lawsuit discussed during executive session providing that action was taken by the Council upon exiting executive session to settle the case.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville stated that the Town had expended in excess of \$1 million on consultant fees last year. We have professional people working for the Town who can perform the majority of the work themselves.

Mr. Parisi responded, the services are for technical assistance. Some of the funds were used to hire consultants for the computer system. It is money that is expended for very specialized services/input and most likely far above the expertise of the normal duties of the department head. The private sector has to hire consultants in many instances as well.

Mr. Melillo expressed his dissatisfaction with the Town's practice of hiring consultants as often as they do.

Mr. Parisi pointed out that the Council does not readily approve the hiring of a consultant without reviewing the matter carefully.

Mr. Melillo next commented on the expansion of the senior center. It is his feeling that the center should be added on at its present location. A new building is not needed.

Mr. Knight explained that the Council recently funded a feasibility study to determine whether or not the center can be expanded upon at its present location. Nothing has been decided as to what is going to happen.

Mr. Melillo asked Mr. Centner to explain why it is costing the taxpayers approximately \$140,000 for a study of the proposed locations?

Mr. Centner explained that the cost is very much in line. Initially the plan is put forward and the feasibility study is performed. The programming that was requested by the advisory panel to the senior center ran a footprint or square foot requirement of somewhere between 16,000 and 25,000 sq.ft. The committee will review the programming requirements and try to fit it in the package; to see if it is feasible to fit it onto the parcel the way it stands. The numbers expected to be serviced would require parking to support it as well. The feasibility study will determine whether or not the existing building can be added to or demolished and a new one built. The expected cost of the project has been reduced by the \$60,000 which the State will give the Town to apply towards the project.

Mr. Melillo asked if it is true that Community Pool will be closed next summer?

Mr. Parisi responded, it will most likely not be available.

Mayor Dickinson commented, there was never an expectation that we could do all the work without losing the pool for one summer.

Mr. Melillo stated, that was not the way it has been presented at these meetings.

Mayor Dickinson disagreed. He always understood that the pool would be closed for at least one summer. It was never represented that the pool would always be open.

The Chairman declared the Public Question and Answer Period closed at this time.

ITEM #6 Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$5,000 from Liability Insurance Acct. #925-000 to Maintenance of Supply Mains Acct. #616-000 - Water Division

Motion was made by Mr. Rys, seconded by Mr. Farrell.

Correspondence from Roger Dann, General Manager of the Water & Sewer Divisions states that a recent inspection of the raw water main from Lanes Pond to Pistapaug Pond reservoirs revealed a section of pipe exposed at a stream crossing requiring immediate

repair. In order to perform the work of dropping the pipe below the stream bed a transfer of \$5,000 is being requested.

Mr. Farrell asked Mr. Dann to explain exactly where Lanes Pond is.

Mr. Dann responded that the pond is located in the town of Guilford; adjoining the town boundaries of Northford and Guilford. The main repair will be made to a segment of pipe which is running through North Branford. The pond is accessed by way of Route 17 and Lanes Pond Road.

Mr. Centner asked, will the division need to pump around the main while it is being repaired as they do with sewer lines?

Mr. Dann answered, no. On a water main you can isolate a segment of the main between valves. The pipe is then drained to allow for the repair. In this case it is a raw water main and does not need to be in continuous service. It is used to transport untreated water between the two reservoirs.

Mr. Centner asked, how long will the repair take?

Mr. Dann responded, approximately 3-5 days to complete the entire project which will include site work and stream bank stabilization.

Dave Gessert, Chairman, Public Utilities Commission informed everyone that the pipe is eight inches (8") in diameter. It is not a very large pipe. No one will be out of service while the repair is being made.

Mr. Renda asked, what caused the pipe to be exposed? Is there a chance that the problem will occur again exposing the pipe once more at a later date? How long is the pipe?

Mr. Gessert responded, it is his understanding that the problem was caused by drainage and the fact that it crosses a stream bed. Because of a build up over the years, erosion took place exposing the pipe. The pipe will be lowered into the stream bed and covered with concrete to protect it and prevent erosion.

Mr. Dann added, the length of the pipe is 6-8' long. It is a relatively narrow channel and is not a continuously flowing stream. It is more of a drainage channel. In heavy storms, however, it does flow more rapidly causing erosion to take place.

Mr. Zappala recalled making the suggestion that the division check all pipes crossing stream beds when Mr. Dann was before the Council in the past for the Quinnipiac River crossing. He asked if the division has been checking the pipes?

Mr. Gessert responded, the division's inspection of the pipes has significantly increased. The P.U.C. (Public Utilities Commission) has been given a thorough report on every different location where there are streams interacting or intercepting pipes. The report also listed the condition of the pipes as well as recommendations for those areas which have problems or could potentially have problems in the future. Many of the areas so identified have had corrective measures taken to eliminate the problems.

Mr. Gouveia asked if the transfer was approved by the P.U.C. at its October 21st meeting?

Mr. Gessert responded, yes.

Mr. Gouveia asked if the minutes from that meeting have been filed with the Town Clerk yet?

Mr. Gessert answered, the minutes would have been forwarded yesterday or today.

Mr. Gouveia informed Mr. Gessert that the minutes would be late if they were filed today. In the past the Council had always received the Director's Report with the P.U.C. minutes along with the financial pages of the budgets. The information was extremely helpful to the Councilors for they could check the different accounts involved in the transaction. The Council is the financial body of the Town as well as legislative. He is not doubting the validity of the transaction but it is helpful to have another set of eyes checking the figures.

Mr. Gessert stated that he will be happy to request that the Director's Report and the financial pages be included in the packets to the Council.

Ms. Papale was surprised to learn that the Town owns property so far from its boundaries.

Albert E. Killen, 150 Cedar Street asked, is the insurance policy paid up? Is that why there are excess funds in the Liability Insurance Account from which the \$5,000 is being taken?

Mr. Dann explained, at the start of the year the division receives a summary of the total costs to be incurred for the year. The insurance premiums are paid on a monthly basis and the summary breaks down the total cost of the insurance for the year into monthly payments. Although the policy has not been fully paid there is money set aside for the remaining monthly payments to be made this year.

Mr. Killen asked, how much money was originally appropriated to the Maintenance of Supply Mains Account?

Mr. Dann responded, approximately \$700.

Mr. Killen thought that the figure was very unrealistic.

Mr. Dann explained that the division has not typically experienced any significant repairs. At the best it may be a single leaking joint or something like that. That type of repair could be accomplished with that amount of funding. This is unusual and we have not had this type of repair experience. Rather than to budget funds as a sort of insurance policy and then not utilize them year to year, the division does budget for the normal maintenance experienced.

Mr. Killen thought the fund should be budgeted a little more realistically.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

ITEM #7 Consider and Approve One Appointment to the Position of Commissioner on the Planning & Zoning Commission to Fill a Vacancy Which Expires 1/8/98

Motion was made by Ms. Papale to Appoint Vincenzo DiNatale to the Position, seconded by Mr. Zappala.

Ms. Papale stated that the Planning & Zoning Commission is the most important commission in the Town. All the commissions work very hard as does the Board of Education and the Town Council, however, with the activity taking place in the town presently, the Planning & Zoning Commission is playing an important role in the community. She was very pleased that Mr. DiNatale was chosen and endorsed by the Democratic Town Committee.

Mr. Parisi stated that he looks forward to Mr. DiNatale serving the town very well in the position.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

The Town Clerk performed the Swearing-In Ceremony at this time.

ITEM #8 Consider and Approve a Donation of Rescue Equipment From the North Farms Volunteer Fire Department to the Town of Wallingford - North Farms Volunteer Fire Department Co. #7

Correspondence from Chief Timothy S. Wall, Co. #7, to Chief Wayne Lefebvre, Dept. of Fire Services, states that Co. #7 is donating five (5) cold water/ice rescue suits with an approximate value of \$425. each; one (1) fourteen foot row boat, model #140B; and one (1) sixteen foot trailer to transport the boat, model #NG14600B.

The letter also states that the donated equipment will be stored at North Farms Co. #7 and transported and stored on Rescue #7.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys, seconded by Mr. Knight.

Chief Lefebvre stated that he is very pleased that the organization pursues funding through various fundraising activities and donates the equipment to the community. It is a great help at budgetary time that these people are out there doing it on their own.

Chief Wall added, the donations are made possible through the fundraising events held by Co. #7 as well as privately donated funds. The department received memorial gifts in honor of a recently deceased fire chief. His family asked that donations be made in his name to the fire department. All of the funds acquired through the memorial gifts were used to purchase some of the rescue equipment.

Mr. Parisi noted that some of the Councilors did attend a demonstration of the equipment on October 3rd at Co. #7. He commended Chief Wall's department for their efforts in this matter.

Mr. Knight stated that the equipment is very elaborate and requires a great deal of training to be sure that it is operated properly. He was very pleased to have been able to attend the demonstration.

Mr. Parisi noted that Councilors Knight and Renda suited themselves up in some of the equipment to help in the demonstration of it.

Chief Wall welcomed the Council to attend training sessions held at the department.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

ITEM #9 Report Out on the Status of the Town-Owned Land in Durham as Requested by Councilor Thomas Zappala.

Mr. Zappala promised himself a while back that he would continue to place this item on the agenda of each Council meeting in an effort to get the Town to move on selling the property. He is very disappointed with the lack of action on the part of the Town. He asked if any progress has been made since the Council last discussed this issue?

Mayor Dickinson responded, as you know we have to purchase property to be able to sell property. Until we purchase property the Durham property will hopefully be in fine condition and not under any pressure other than our interest in disposition of it.

Mr. Zappala answered, the property is not going to change. There is an opportunity for the Town to sell and buy land in Wallingford which we should do. He fails to understand why the Town is not moving on this as quickly as it should.

Mr. Parisi stated, this is probably about the sixth or seventh report out on the matter. It has been made very clear what the procedure is going to be. He does understand Mr. Zappala's frustration with the speed of it.

Mr. Zappala noted that it was one year ago August 16th that the Town Council voted to sell the property. He is not sure that the appraisal has been performed on the parcel for it was the Mayor's responsibility to see that it was done. How slow can we possibly move?

Mayor Dickinson answered, it is not simply a process of selling it. We need to have a piece that we want to purchase. If there were a piece (of property) pending before us right now then it would be appropriate to put it on the table but we have to find a willing seller of a piece of similar size that the Department of Environmental Protection will deem a proper substitute. The Conservation Commission has been involved; they have provided us with a list and we are in the process of contacting property owners. All of these things take time, we cannot just go out and sell it. If we could do that it would probably be sold by now.

Mr. Zappala stated that the Conservation Commission has compiled a list of 1,200 acres of land in Wallingford. He did not understand why they have not moved on it. He vowed to bring the item up again if re-elected.

Mr. Gouveia stated, there is plenty of land in Town to be purchased for open space. About a month ago the Chairman of the Planning & Zoning Commission attended a Town Council Planning & Zoning Liaison Committee meeting requesting emphatically that the Council do something about purchasing open land in Wallingford. Mr. Gouveia is a little surprised that the request has not been before the Council yet. The Chairman of Planning & Zoning stated that he was going to come before the Council at its very next meeting and request of them, beg them to purchase some land; land that he (Chairman of Planning & Zoning) knows is available. There is plenty of land available to purchase. He is aware that the Town must have a piece of land to purchase so that it can sell the land in Durham and use the proceeds to pay for the replacement of the land. Nonetheless there is plenty of land in Town and he does not know why it takes so long to purchase that land.

Mayor Dickinson responded, if any member of the Council wants to make a motion this evening for the Town to enter into a contract with a specific property owner for a certain amount of acreage,

that is the Council's province to do so. No one has made a motion for purchase of a piece of property. We are pursuing several pieces that the Conservation Commission has identified. No one from the Council has come forward with a piece that they say we should purchase, negotiate a price, let's buy that one.

Mr. Gouveia informed the Mayor that his statements were not entirely correct. The Council has sat in executive sessions where some members of this Council have told the Mayor to move at least on one particular piece of property in Town. The Mayor has been told to move on that property so that statement is not entirely correct. The reason why none of the Councilors have made the motion is because they want to work with the Mayor to go out there and get the best piece of property for the money. You (Mayor) were asked by the Council to go ahead; you were given a priority list of land to consider for purchase. There was at least one particular parcel that three or four of the Councilors asked the Mayor to try and purchase. That is true.

Mayor Dickinson responded, that is not true. The Council indicated that all of the pieces on that list should be pursued; no individual piece was identified for purchase. It was recommended that every piece be pursued.

Mr. Gouveia answered, that is correct but you (Mayor) were also told of one specific piece of property that has been available since at least three years ago.

Mayor Dickinson answered, my direction was to pursue all pieces. No one moved to pursue a particular piece.

Mr. Gouveia asked, and now you are going to use that as an excuse for not moving on any piece?

Mayor Dickinson answered, I am moving on all of them. I was asked to proceed regarding all of the pieces. No one said to move on a particular piece.

Mr. Gouveia reiterated, there were at least three people from this Council that identified one particular parcel....you know exactly what I am talking about Mayor.

Mayor Dickinson answered, three people do not make a majority on the Council. I cannot take direction from three when nine people are on the Council.

Mr. Gouveia reminded the Mayor that he stated, there was not one single Council member that has identified a piece of property or at least told you to move on a piece of property. That is not correct, there were at least three Councilors who kept telling you there is at least one piece of property in town that has been

available for sale that will be sold very soon for it is a very attractive piece of land for development and before you know it you will have perhaps forty or fifty houses on that piece of property.

Mr. Parisi interjected his feelings that the matter cannot truly be put into the proper perspective without violating the rules of executive session.

Mr. Gouveia pointed out that he did not mention the property and everyone understands that this Council, in executive session, has discussed the purchase of property. That is no secret, that is not violating anything.

Mr. Parisi reiterated that the discussion cannot be put into proper perspective without violating the confidence of the executive session. There were also some other stipulations by the Council.

Mayor Dickinson commented, at an earlier time we proceeded with a first refusal option which was refused by a property owner. There are several pieces that were identified; he understands that perhaps individual members of the Council liked one piece or another but at no time did the Council, as a whole, direct that any given piece be the subject of more attention than any other. Ultimately, it is a Council decision to purchase property.

Ms. Papale suggested, in order to put this issue in the proper perspective Mr. Zappala should place this item on the agenda of the next Council meeting along with the list of properties that she recalls the Council prioritizing in executive session. Some of the Councilors identified parcels they felt should be a priority over others. All of the Councilors know what is being looked at and what they would like to see happen. When Mr. Zappala puts the item on the agenda...

Mr. Parisi pointed out that there was not a majority opinion on the matter.

Ms. Papale stated that the matter was never voted on.

Mr. Gouveia reminded the Chair that votes cannot be taken in executive session therefore there is no way of telling whether or not there was a majority opinion on the matter.

Mr. Parisi stated, there was no consensus.

Mr. Gouveia responded, you cannot take a consensus in executive session, that is the same thing as a vote.

Mr. Parisi stated, you can take a consensus, you cannot take a vote.

Mr. Gouveia disagreed and suggested that Mr. Parisi consult the Town Attorney on the matter.

Ms. Papale suggested that when Mr. Zappala is ready to put the item on the agenda it should be put on with the list of properties that have been given priority.

Mr. Parisi responded, it can be discussed again in executive session. It should be requested that way. Then the Council can be more specific on the matter.

Mayor Dickinson suggested, if there is a desire to identify an individual piece it can certainly be identified by a number or a letter and a vote taken out of executive session to identify that piece or pieces as the subject for immediate action. That certainly can be done but was not done.

Ms. Papale stated, she did not realize that it was going to be up to the members of the Council to put the property that they were interested in on the agenda. We were waiting to get more information from the Conservation Commission and from the Mayor's Office.

Mr. Parisi stated, the Council directed the Mayor that night to pursue all of the properties in various ways.

Ms. Papale noted that the Mayor stated earlier that no one ever identified a piece of property. She did not realize the Council can do that. Now that she knows otherwise, she thinks it can be done.

Mr. Parisi recalls the executive session clearly and remembers the Council directing the Mayor to look at all of the properties. No one specific piece of property was singled out.

Ms. Papale recalls the Council placing priorities on certain pieces of properties.

Mr. Gouveia agreed.

Mr. Parisi also recalled that everyone was talking on the issue in executive session and the recommendation may have been made and not heard by everyone.

Mr. Zappala is well aware that the Council has the power to sell or purchase land however, he feels that everyone had been trying hard to let the Conservation Commission make a decision since that was the recommendation of the Mayor which everyone was respectful of. He vowed to put the item on the next meeting of the Council.

Mr. Parisi stated that the Council was waiting for a ranking of the properties.

Mayor Dickinson commented that the Conservation Commission had ranked the property. It was a matter of finding out who was willing to sell and who was not.

Mr. Zappala stated that he has a particular piece of property in mind. He has a letter stating that the owner is willing to sell it to the Town. He will place the item on the agenda of the next meeting. It appears as though the Conservation Commission cannot make up their minds so we will have to make it up for them.

Philip Wright, Sr., 160 Cedar Street stated that this issue has been bouncing around now for at least two years. Now there is the added impediment of the Conservation Commission getting into the middle of this. The last time the Town purchased open space was two years ago when Tom Solinsky was Chairman of the Council. He had to push the Town very hard to get us off the dime on a chunk of the Williams property. Now everyone has claimed in their political literature that they are in favor of purchasing open space yet here we are tonight beating this issue around again, beating it to death. Why can't you waive Rule V of the Council meeting procedures and put the darned thing on as an executive session and handle it tonight? Isn't there some way to get it off the dime here or are we totally impotent?

Mr. Centner responded, the list presented to him at the last executive session was the first list that he has seen in descending order of parcels that would satisfy our uses in terms of open space in which we can make an exchange with the Durham land. At that point the list had about eighteen parcels on it and we asked the Mayor to take initiative on all eighteen. He was not aware of what the other Councilors were talking about.

Mr. Wright asked once again, can the item be put on the Council agenda under waiver of Rule V so that the it is not delayed for another two weeks or a month until after election is over and everyone wants to forget about it again?

Mr. Centner responded that he does not believe that to be the case. The Mayor is taking initiatives now and is going to report back the status of the parcels on the list. At that point the Council will then see more clearly which ones would be more preferred.

Mr. Wright asked again, can the Council waive Rule V?

Mayor Dickinson responded, it can be put on under executive session but we don't have any terms. There is no price identified. There are no terms of sale.

Reginald Knight, 21 Audette Drive asked, is the land that is being discussed now located out of the Town's boundaries? Is there another piece of property in another town separating Wallingford from the parcel?

Mayor Dickinson responded, the Durham property is outside of the Town of Wallingford.

Reginald Knight next asked, how did the town come to acquire it?

Mr. Parisi responded that it was purchased as a buffer, a watershed area to a potential reservoir.

Reginald Knight asked, why would the Water Division¹ say it is a watershed area when the property is located on the other side of the ridge? It is going the other way.

Mr. Parisi answered, at one time there was going to be a reservoir developed between the Town of Wallingford and Durham. It was to be a cooperative venture. That is why the land was bought but the deal never really got put together.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville congratulated Tom Zappala for his persistence. He suggested that the Conservation Commission be invited to the next Council meeting when the item is discussed.

Mr. Centner explained that the Council cannot discuss the list of property with the Conservation Commission at a Council meeting.

Mr. Parisi continued, if you talk about where the Town is considering the purchase of property it will create a land rush.

Mr. Melillo asked, is there a statute of limitation on when the Town must sell the Durham land?

Mr. Parisi responded, no.

Mr. Melillo asked, how much does Wallingford pay Durham for property taxes on this parcel?

Mr. Parisi responded, it is only about \$400 per year.

Mr. Zappala stated that the taxes amount to about \$1,200 per year.

Mr. Melillo asked if there is a valid excuse for delaying this matter for so long?

Mayor Dickinson responded, it is not a question of excuse. The issue is what the town should undertake at any given time. Let's not forget that we just finished the school expansion project.

That means a \$3 million debt payment each year in the budget; \$1.5 million of which comes from local taxpayers. We cannot do everything at the same time, financially it cannot be handled. We look to accomplish the purchase of open space but we have finished some major projects which allows us some financial freedom to make those kinds of investments. Other projects took priority.

Mr. Melillo stated that everyone needs to work together as a team. That is the missing ingredient. Can any town resident hike or picnic on the property owned by the town?

Mr. Parisi reminded Mr. Melillo that this issue was discussed a few years ago. There are restricted uses of the property. It has been a team effort because many of the Councilors accompanied Mr. Zappala on a trip out to the property.

Frank Wasilewski, 57 North Orchard Street responded to the Mayor's comments regarding debt payment by stating that the debt payments have increased from \$4,320,720.00 to \$5,000,000. every year. There is an increase of \$805,000. or 18.06% increase for this year. That is not including the swimming pool or the senior center. We are paying an awful lot of money for our debt service which is probably over \$60 million now, isn't that right?

Mayor Dickinson responded, that is correct.

Lester Slie, 18 Green Street explained that a woman called him five years ago about a nice parcel of land she wanted to sell to the Town. Tom Solinsky was the Chairman at that time. The Mayor received a copy of the notice as did Mr. Solinsky and a few others. Five years have passed and the property is still there. Durham, Middlefield and Wallingford were going to build a reservoir as a joint venture. The other two towns backed out and Wallingford took over the entire property. That is what originally happened.

Mr. Zappala informed everyone that the land in the Town of Durham was purchased in 1966 for the purpose of a joint effort for a reservoir with Durham and Middlefield. It never materialized, it has been sitting there and we have been paying taxes to Durham on it all this time. Regardless what the Mayor said, it is an opportunity for us to sell that land and what ever money we get from the sale should be used to purchase land in Wallingford. That is all he is looking for. He is not looking for a golf course or anything like that, he would like to replace the land in Durham with land in Wallingford. There is an opportunity for us to do that if we are willing to buy land in Wallingford. The open space belongs in Wallingford, not Durham.

ITEM #10 Report Out on the Status of the Lacey Property as Requested by Council Thomas Zappala

Mr. Zappala stated, in reading the minutes of the 1995 Town Council Meeting, the land was purchased with the understanding that something was going to be done with the property right away because the Town Hall was in need of additional parking spaces. In 1996 Henry McCully, Director of Public Works, reported that the parking lot could be constructed at a cost of \$35,000. John Costello, Town Engineer at the time, verified that information. He (Mr. Zappala) voted against purchasing the land back in 1995 because he felt that the price was too high. He failed to understand why nothing has happened with the property since 1996 when the job was quoted as costing \$35,000. The property, itself, does not look very neat and appealing. He asked for an explanation as to why nothing has been done?

Mayor Dickinson responded, before John Costello left he submitted an informal site plan to the Planning & Zoning Commission. The commission wanted a formal plan before that could be developed. The Town Engineer then retired. The new Town Engineer has undertaken that as a project that has to be finished. A formal plan is to be submitted to Planning & Zoning. That is the story on the parking lot. It is expected that there will be approximately seventeen parking spaces.

Mr. Zappala read the minutes of the March 13, 1995 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting which states that the commission voted to approve the acquisition of property on Prince Street for the purpose of expanding the existing town parking lot.

Mayor Dickinson responded, P&Z approved the purchase which is what they have to do with the acquisition of property. They also have to approve the improvements or changes we would make to the property. When the information went to P&Z they indicated that they wanted a formal plan rather than an informal representation. John Thompson, Town Engineer, is putting that plan together.

Mr. Gouveia responded, with all due respect, since the Town Engineer retired isn't the Asst. Town Engineer who was left in charge capable of drawing a plan for a parking lot?

Mayor Dickinson answered, we don't have an Asst. Town Engineer.

Mr. Gouveia asked, there was no one left in charge who was capable of drawing a plan for a parking lot?

Mayor Dickinson responded, there was only one (individual) with civil engineering capability in that department and that is the Town Engineer. No one else has that capability. It would require a sign-off by a civil engineer and without having someone to do it it was not done. We had an interim individual who dealt with P&Z applications and was kept very busy as a consultant during the time that we did not have a Town engineer. This is a project that

has now awaited John Thompson and he will put the formal plan together and submit it to Planning & Zoning.

Mr. Gouveia responded, he hopes that the people understand and realize the frustration because it is beyond comprehension that to draw a plan for a parking lot would take so long to find anyone to do it. If he had not heard it directly from the Mayor's mouth he would think that the Mayor was making up another story.

Philip Wright, Sr., 160 Cedar Street stated that what he is about to say is out of order and asked for the Council's indulgence. He listened to the Mayor speak about Community Pool; he has watched Ms. Papale, listened to Ms. Papale at a recent meeting and he listened to Tom Dooley come here and explain to us to the best of his ability why it was impossible to open Community Pool this year; to complete the project and have the pool open. Somewhere, what the Mayor is saying does not square with what Tom Dooley came here to explain to us; he was justifying why it was not to be done. If it was not planned to be done within the year without shutting it down Mr. Dooley would not have been here and Ms. Papale would not have had to express her disappointment at the last Council meeting. There is something here that does not square.

Mayor Dickinson offered a response however, Mr. Parisi asked that the speaker stay on the agenda item.

Frank Wasilewski, 57 N. Orchard Street stated that he brought up the Lacey property issue approximately six months ago and he reminded everyone that the final plans had to get to Planning & Zoning. Had it been done then we would have had that parking lot done. This is the way the Town of Wallingford works. For example, Fairfield Boulevard, when that was before the Council we were going to move right in. Right into Fairfield Boulevard two years later.

Dave Sepatowski, 3 Hampton Trail stated, the last two items on the agenda really began to make his blood boil because what he has seen here is a classic situation of the public interest being football'd whether it be by the Mayor using a few fine words or by the Council not taking the action by taking the bull by the horns. As Mr. Wasilewski stated, if this is the way Wallingford operates, as a taxpayer he does not want it to be that way. He wants someone sitting in the chairs (Council) who wants to take leadership, that wants to take control. He commended Mr. Zappala for bringing up the item and thanked Mr. Gouveia for doing even a better job for engaging in a conversation and bringing this to the forefront for the taxpayers.

ITEM #11 Discussion and Possible Action on Forming a Committee to Review the Status the Pension Fund as Requested by Councilor Peter Gouveia

Mr. Gouveia made a motion for the Council to Approve the Appointment of a Committee to Review the Status of the Pension Fund with Respect to Contributions, Investments and Liabilities; Where it is, Where it is Going and Where it Should be Going. This Committee Should Consist of Five (5) People; Two (2) Councilors, One (1) Member of the Department of Finance, One (1) Mayoral Appointment and One (1) Member of the Pension Committee. Further the Committee Should be Empowered to Hire a Professional in the Field to Assist in Achieving Its Goals. The Committee Should Report Out its Findings and Recommendations to the Council and the Administration Within Six (6) Months of its Inception. Seconded by Mr. Zappala.

Mr. Gouveia explained his reason for making the motion. He feels that everyone believes that the Pension Commission watches over our investments of our pension fund and has done an outstanding job for the Town of Wallingford. This in no way has anything to do with what that committee does. This is totally independent from that committee. The Town's pension fund has been the subject of a great deal of public debate for quite some time. This debate has intensified during the past year due to the efforts, in part, of a very respected businessman who happens to be a member of the pension committee. Because of this debate a meeting was held about a month ago in the Mayor's Office. Mr. Gouveia, Mayor Dickinson, Comptroller Thomas Myers, Personnel Director Terence Sullivan, Pension Committee member Fred Valenti, Councilor Zappala and Councilor Rys attended that meeting. He asked those who attended that meeting and were present this evening to correct him if he reports out incorrectly on his assessment of what took place in the meeting. The issue addressed at that meeting was, is the Town contributing more to the Pension Fund than is recommended by the actuary? The answer was an emphatic yes, the Town is contributing more to the Pension Fund than the what the actuary recommended. One of the reasons is because the actuary's recommendation is based on a percentage which is calculated by using figures that are two years old. By the time the Council acts on the recommendation, salaries have increased and contracts have been passed and the Town pays more into the pension fund than is recommended. In looking back at the financial statements of the Town of Wallingford for the year 1990, it indicates that the actuarial recommendation was \$1,827,000. The actual amount put into the pension fund in that year was \$4,359,479. In looking at 1991, the actuary recommended \$1,980,000. The actual amount placed into the account was \$3,607,000. He does realize that payroll increases in two years and using two year old figures, there is obviously going to be some sort of discrepancy. He feels that the discrepancy should not be so large. In addition to that, the actuary's recommendations for the Town's contribution to the pension fund is based on a formula which estimates a return on investment of about 8%. In recent years the pension fund has returned an annual contribution of

over 20% therefore the recommendation of the actuary has been very, very conservative in light of what the actual is which is over 20%. That indicates that there is more money in the fund than is necessary. The other question is, is the pension fund over-funded? Again, the answer is, yes. The dollar amount needed to fully fund the pension fund is a moving target which changes from time to time. At this point in time the actuary maintains that about \$80 million is the amount that is sufficient to fully fund the account. Currently, the fund has approximately \$113 million. The Town's annual payout of pension benefit is about \$3.8 million. It seems then that if you were to take the \$113 million and invest it in the most conservative of all conservative investments it would yield a much greater amount than the \$3.8 million needed for the pay out. In the early 1980s when the pension fund was in a precarious condition it was determined that the Town would undertake a plan to fully fund this pension. That plan was to take thirty years to fully fund. In less than fifteen years we have more than over-funded it.

The Town also does not have, admittedly, an employee with expertise in pensions. Also, it was stated that the Town has employed the same actuary for quite a few years already. These truths are self evident. It is time to name a committee to take a fresh look at the pension fund; where it is, where it is going and where it should be going. He was sorry that Mr. Valenti could not attend the meeting this evening.

Mr. Zappala stated that he seconded the motion because he was at the meeting on September 17th where the pension fund was explained. At the time the meeting eased his concerns about the funding of the pension account. One thing that was very clear that no one objected to was that the fund is over-funded. There is nothing wrong with that if you feel that it is the right thing to do. He, personally, did not think it was the right thing to do. If you are putting more money into the fund that means the taxpayers today are being over-taxed for no purpose. Maybe it is not done intentionally, it is because of the way the interest rate has been. He did not see anything wrong with establishing a committee with their main interest focused on the over-funding issue. The Pension Commission has done a fantastic job but the committee could study the issue of contributing more than is necessary to the fund. Perhaps the committee will come up with a conclusion that will be better than what we are presently doing. The money has been accumulating in the fund and the Town is in very good shape therefore there is no reason to continue down the same road as we have been because we should not be over-funded to this degree.

Mr. Centner explained the reason why he will vote in opposition to the motion by stating, in February of this year he Chaired a meeting of the Finance Committee. There was a three hour dissertation given to all those who wanted to attend. Comptroller Thomas Myers provided detail on our government accounting principals.

The meeting was very informative and shortly thereafter Mr. Centner was made aware by Albert Killen that he did not see the announcement in the newspaper for the meeting. Subsequently Mr. Myers came back out and re-visited that same portion of his presentation. On September 17th a member of the public came forward and requested additional information on the same item. The issue was re-discussed bringing the total number of times that matter was reviewed in one year to three. By virtue of the Town's accounting awards for nine years in a row and the fact that we had no qualified audits in any of those years, he was satisfied with that hence, he will vote no for an oversight committee.

Ms. Papale asked the Comptroller, why do the people who set up the pension fund feel that \$80 million is not a sufficient amount? Why is there more...?

Mr. Myers responded that he cannot answer the question because he is not an actuary. Pension funding is part actuarial science, part accounting; it requires a discipline and is a moving target. He cannot answer the question of how does the actuary arrive at the figure they feel is sufficient for the fund.

Ms. Papale asked, is the actuary the person who comes up with the amount of \$80 million?

Mr. Myers answered, the actuary comes up with what is required to pay pensions to employees on a particular date and time which is the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Papale asked, why is the pension fund "over-funded" as some people say?

Mr. Myers answered, there is no question, the pension plan is over-funded because the town had the discipline to stick to the actuarial report and because we have had tremendous interest earnings. The actuarial assumption was an interest earning of 8% when we actually realized a return of 24%, three times more than expected. A 24% return on \$100 Million equates to an income of \$24 million in one year. In addition, the Pension Investment Committee has paid particular attention to the investment program and that has helped to produce the results.

Ms. Papale responded, we seem to get into this discussion so often because many people believe that we should not have that much money in the Pension Fund. That is what brings us to the table so often. There is too much money there. If a committee was set up what would we accomplish?

Mr. Gouveia responded, you would have someone who is an expert in the field. Mr. Myers admitted that he does not have the expertise nor do we have an employee of the Town on the Pension Committee who does.

Mr. Myers explained that he is an expert in accounting and finance matters, Terence Sullivan is an expert in personnel matters and the actuary is an expert in pension actuarial matters.

Mr. Gouveia added, not only would you have an expert in the matter but a fresh look at the numbers since the town has had the same actuary overseeing the fund for many, many years. Keep in mind that the actuary has been basing his recommendation on an 8% return. Eight percent of \$113 million is \$9 million. Twenty percent (which is the actual rate of return) of \$113 million is roughly \$22 million. You can see why this fund keeps increasing at the rate that it has. In reply to Mr. Centner, this has nothing to do with how well our accounting department does their job. Mr. Myers admitted that naming this committee would not be a bad idea at all. In politics you will never resolve all the matters or issues but nonetheless you would have a better manner in which to state the position on an issue if you had a report from an expert compiled with other members who sit on the committee. The present pay out in benefits equals \$3.8 million. One of the questions raised at the meeting in the Mayor's office was, what if we were to take the money that we presently have which is \$113 million; regardless of the gyrations of the market over the past two or three days, today our pension fund is probably higher than \$113 million; and invest it in the safest of all investments? It would generate or yield more money than is needed for a pay out. Someone asked, maybe we should start looking into insurance annuities? We are not experts in this field, we are not sure. We don't want anyone who is not an expert in the field to start suggesting that we should invest our monies in annuities instead of what we are presently investing in. A committee would help to answer some of these questions if they were empowered to hire someone with the expertise necessary. It is something that would benefit the Town, Department of Finance and Pension Committee. It will cost some money to hire a consultant but we should not be afraid of information.

Ms. Papale asked, would the committee hire a professional and have them do all the leg work and report back to the committee? The two Councilors serving on the committee will not have the expertise and will only have their own judgment on what the outcome is.

Mr. Gouveia responded, the committee would not make any decisions at all. The information would be reported out to the Council and Administration and if there was any action to be taken then the Council, in conjunction with the Administration, would decide if something would change.

Ms. Papale asked, isn't there a Finance Committee? Didn't they hold a meeting on this very subject?

Mr. Zappala responded, yes, he called for a meeting because he was concerned about the amount of money that was being contributed to the pension plan. That issue has been cleared up at the September meeting. The issue that Mr. Gouveia raised is a valid one and everyone was pretty much in favor of having a committee look into the issue of investments.

Mayor Dickinson commented, the function performed by the actuary is a professional service that is bid. It has been the same actuary but it is bid and he has been the lowest bidder. No one should get the impression that as a result of the success in earnings in the pension fund that there is not been a resultant adjustment of our contribution. It has dropped from 22% of total salary to a current 4.6% of salary. The actuary has advised us on not only what to contribute but has taken into account that there has been successful investment and has recommended credits to us because of that. The dollar figure we raise in taxes to contribute has dropped from 22% to 4.6%.

Mr. Centner asked the Mayor if he ever sees the contribution being zero?

Mayor Dickinson answered that he is told that it would never be zero.

Albert Killen, 150 Cedar street asked, if the funds are capable of producing all that is necessary how come we will always have to fund the account?

Mayor Dickinson answered, due to changes in the number of employees, the age of employees and the variety of benefits paid to employees, all of those changes result in new liabilities that the Town incurs. As a result, those are all factored in annually by the actuary and a figure is determined for contribution to the pension plan. It is extremely unlikely that there would be a zero contribution because of those changes. It is a plan that does not have an end; it is not forecasted that it will all come to an end as of a given date.

Mr. Killen responded that he is not impressed by the actuary's reasoning. For one thing, if they are incapable of telling us that we are using two year old figures to arrive at our conclusion then he is not impressed. Let's assume that we keep going at the rate that we are going now and the market keeps going the way it is going now, they are still saying that we are going to have to make a contribution, Mayor? Do you really believe that?

Mayor Dickinson answered, that is what the actuary has told us. It is not an easy thing to understand. On the other hand, if the Town is accepting professional advice from an actuary using accepted professional standards, we are generally pretty safe in

following those standards. Those standards are recognized by other professional groups and by those who review our books and are asked to invest in the community by way of bonds. Those standards are recognized on a national level.

Mr. Killen pointed out that the Town has been taking the advice of the actuaries who told us how many years it would take to reach where we are. We are way ahead of the ball game. Can they make an error? Of course they can. Are we supposed to follow them blindly just because they carry the title of actuary? The old saying is, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing." The Town of Wallingford and a lot of its investments and the way the money is handled, this town has very little knowledge and we are in very dangerous condition at times.

Sharon Sanders, Academy Street stated, two years ago S.N.E.T. (Southern New England Telephone) offered a buy-out to their employees. They were expecting 600 people to take the buy-out. They were stunned when over 2,500 took it. They had to have that money from the pension fund and they had to have it now. Who is to say that the majority of people in town could not take that buy-out? I would rather have it be over-funded than under-funded.

Mr. Killen commented that he presumed that the last comments were aimed at him for the simple fact that it seems to be a rebuttal to what he said. He responded, I hope that the Town of Wallingford never pulls a Southern New England Telephone Company on us.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville stated that it was a good practical idea that Mr. Gouveia came up with. He feels that the Town does not have to hire a professional simply because a sub-committee can be established with the Councilors themselves so long as a format of checks and balances is followed. He pointed out that approximately every two weeks the Wall Street Journal reports out on one-half to three-quarters of a page a list of brokerage firms and individuals working for them who are fined by the Security Exchange Commission habitually. They are experts; they are professionals; think about that. Commissions are the drive behind which investments are made when and where.

Frank Wasilewski, 57 N. Orchard Street congratulated Mr. Gouveia for coming up with the figures on the pension fund. It is a good idea to hire professionals but we did not follow their advice. The actuaries recommended a contribution of \$1.8 million but the Town contributed \$4 million. The Town was not taking the advice of the experts. We should have some growth in the pension fund. Back in 1990-91 the Program Planner was making \$43,399. In 1993-94, in three years he is getting a salary of \$54,486., an increase of \$11,000. That is the way the salaries go in Wallingford. That means we have to have growth in our pension plan. Not to the extent that we have now. The salaries are far higher than anyone

thinks they are in Wallingford. Another salary increased \$23,000 over the course of three years. If you work, you have to have a retirement plan. The employees of Wallingford, whether you like them or not, are entitled to a good retirement. How many people who work for Wallingford are in this pension plan?

Mr. Myers responded, approximately 600.

Mr. Wasilewski reiterated, we did not listen to the actuary or the Pension Committee four years ago. They have been advising us to lower our contributions but we didn't, we added more to them and that is where we made the mistake.

Geno Zandri, Jr., 37 Hallmark Drive stated that he disagreed with the Mayor on the statement that the amount of contribution from the Town will never be zero. What the actuaries are doing is a study of what the liability is of the Town. That is why they are coming up with a figure of \$87 million that is needed in order to fund the pension plan. What they do on a year to year basis is to analyze the increase in salaries, the extra years the employees are working and then they come up with a new figure for the upcoming year. That new figure may be \$10 million and they are using an 8% figure for earnings which takes care of \$8 million. They are saying that the Town has to contribute \$2 million to stay status quo with the pension plan. That is how it works. What we have to take into consideration on the Town side is when they are projecting 8% earnings and we earn 20% then it is not necessary for the Town to contribute the \$2 million because the earning was a higher projection than what the actuary anticipated. The earnings themselves cover the Town's contribution. That is what is missing here. That is why the fund is over-funded and those dollars could be used for other projects in town, projects that people have been waiting a long time for.

Mr. Melillo suggested taking \$20 million out of the pension fund and give homeowners a tax break.

Philip Wright, Sr., 160 Cedar Street stated that he attended the meeting of the Finance Committee at which Mr. Myers reported out on this subject however some issues were brought out this evening that deserve consideration.

Mr. Killen asked that the Council give everyone a fair shake, bring in some outside help and to see if the situation is what it is, what have you got to lose?

Mr. Gouveia stated, Mr. Myers is a professional and an expert but not in pension funds. Mr. Sullivan is a professional and expert but not in pension funds. Attorney Small and her staff are professionals and experts but not in the field of pensions. We do not have one employee of the Town that has expertise in this field.

He went on to say that the Council has another opportunity to "kill" this if they do not so desire to go forward with it. There will most like be R.F.P.s (Requests For Proposals) to find out how much this is going to cost; if the cost of this project is the obstacle then the Council does not have to fund it. He did not think it would be cost-prohibitive. The expert will provide the knowledge and information on the issue. At that point it will probably come down to philosophies again but at least you will be satisfied that some knowledge and information was obtained from an expert in the field. It would be a missed opportunity if the Council does not go forward and vote to establish the committee. The Council would not be appointing individuals this evening to serve on the committee, that would come at a later date.

Mr. Knight explained why he will oppose forming the committee. He did not think that there is one single person in the community that knows enough about the subject to start discussing it with any kind of expertise; that includes Mr. Myers. Under the bid process we went to an acknowledged expert in a very complex accounting function. Where we get into trouble...this committee does not have nearly enough members, it needs twenty-two; eleven on each side because this is the political football of the year. When towns get in trouble is when they decide they can cut corners and grab the profits, not look in the future and not take a conservative expert viewpoint. That is what this town did up until about fifteen years ago. We found ourselves in a precarious position. We do not want, through the establishment of a committee, to start jeopardizing and disregarding the expertise that we have counted on over the years and the expertise that, through the good fortunes of the stock market and the expertise we are given, we find ourselves in a funded, competent position. We owe the employees of this town the piece of mind that what we are doing is going to drop dead guarantee them that when they retire that their money is there. We possibly could use some education but he is not sure that we should disregard the expertise we have been given.

Mr. Zappala stated that Mr. Knight confirmed what the issue is; we don't have the knowledge. None of us have the answers and we should all be open to Mr. Gouveia's recommendation. We are talking about multi-millions of dollars which the Town has and does not belong to us but the workers of Wallingford. The last he heard, if each and every worker for the Town of Wallingford were to retire tomorrow we would have enough money to pay them all plus money left over. He asked Mr. Myers if his statement was correct?

Mr. Myers responded, yes.

Mr. Zappala stated, we need to find out what is the best way to manage the surplus of funds for the people of Wallingford. We are simply looking for advice.

Mr. Gouveia stated, the actuary is not an expert in pension funds. He is an expert in actuarial statistics, longevity, death rates, etc., not in pension funds. Mr. Knight is right; no one in this town including our comptroller knows enough about this issue. Is Mr. Knight saying, no one knows enough about the issue so therefore it is not worthwhile discussing it or asking an expert to come in and educate us on the issue? Should we move ahead with blind eyes? When the pension fund was in dire straights the employees were protected; no one has never received their pension check even when the fund was under-funded. This is a fund in perpetuity; the Town of Wallingford will live forever. He appealed to his fellow Councilors to take the opportunity to at least see how much it will cost to hire an expert. Let the idea live for another day.

Ms. Papale stated that she has always voted to pass the amount that was budgeted for each year in the pension fund but she feels now that by forming the committee there is nothing to lose.

Mr. Killen asked, what did the actuary recommend for 1990?

Mr. Gouveia responded, \$1,827,200. and according to the financial statements of the Town for that year the actual contributions were \$4,359,000.

Mr. Killen asked, who recommended the \$4 million figure?

Mr. Gouveia did not know.

Mr. Killen asked the other Councilors if they knew? Mr. Knight speaks to the fact that experts are making our recommendations. Who was the expert who recommended the \$4 million?

Mayor Dickinson answered, what ever was contributed would have been a recommendation through the Personnel Department as part of the budget process.

Mr. Killen pointed out that there was no expert controlling the pension fund contribution. It was about time the Town had one.

Mr. Parisi stated, we have to remember that the Council cannot appoint committees beyond the Council's term; we are criticizing the present so-called expert that we have yet we are going to go out and hire an expert. He was not comfortable with the action. He stated that he is voting against the motion and recommends that the Council refer this to the Council's Finance Committee who can meet with Mr. Myers and from there take what ever direction they see fit. If, at that point, they feel that they should go forward with this or a similar proposal that would be fine with him.

Mr. Gouveia emphasized the fact that the actuary is not an expert in pension funds.

Mr. Parisi asked, who is the expert?

Mr. Gouveia responded, that is the issue, we don't have one. You have to send out an R.F.P.

Mr. Parisi stated, an actuary and pension fund expert go hand in hand.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Move the Question, seconded by Mr. Centner.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

VOTE ON ORIGINAL MOTION: Gouveia, Papale and Zappala, aye; all others, no; motion failed.

ITEM #12 Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-18a(e)(4) of the CT. General Statutes with Respect to the Sale, Lease or Purchase of Property - Mayor's Office

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Enter Into Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Knight.

VOTE: Gouveia abstained; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

The Council entered into executive session at 9:37 P.M.

Present in executive session were all Councilors, Mayor Dickinson and Atty. Small.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Exit the Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Farrell.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

The Council exited the Executive Session at 9:48 P.M.

Motion was made by Mr. Farrell to Adjourn the Meeting, seconded by Mr. Centner.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:48 P.M.

Meeting recorded and transcribed by:

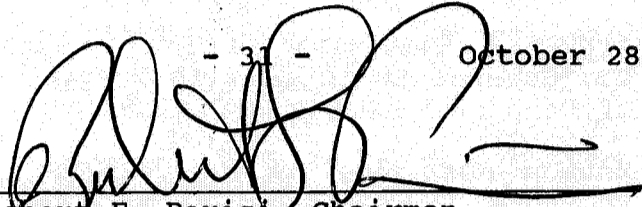
Kathryn F. Zandri
Kathryn F. Zandri
Town Council Secretary

Town Council Meeting

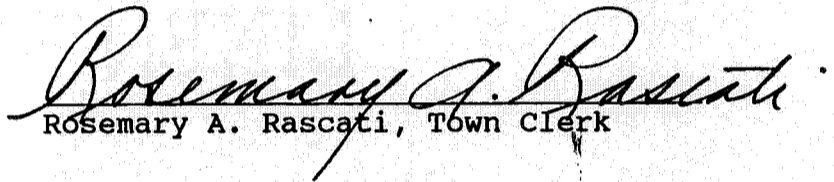
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October 28, 1997

Approved by:


Robert F. Parisi, Chairman

Nov. 25, 1997
Date


Rosemary A. Rascati, Town Clerk

Nov. 25, 1997
Date