

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT

Special Town Council Meeting

APRIL 20, 2010

The following Minutes are the record of a Special Budget Workshop Meeting of the Wallingford Town Council which was held in the Robert Earley Auditorium of Town Hall. Chairman Robert F. Parisi Called to Order at 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday, April 20, 2010. Responding present to the Roll Call given by Town Clerk Barbara Thompson were Councilors Vincent Cervoni, Nick Economopoulos, Jerry Farrell, Jr., Craig C. Fishbein, John LeTourneau, Robert F. Parisi, Rosemary Rascati, John J. Sullivan and Vincent F. Testa, Jr. Councilor Jerry Farrell, Jr. arrived at the meeting at 8:06 P.M. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr. arrived at the meeting at 6:14 P.M. and Comptroller James Bowes arrived at the meeting at 6:06 P.M.

The meeting began with A Moment of Silence. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance. The Roll Call was taken.

3. BUDGET WORKSHOP

POLICE DEPARTMENT

*In attendance: Douglas Dortenzio, Chief of Police
Deputy Chief Tom Curran
Mary Duenas, Executive Secretary*

Chief Dortenzio said that since his budget submission his budget has been cut by 4% already and that remaining in that is the 53rd pay week, which accounts for some \$121,000 of the remain growth. He said that what drives their budget in computing the percentage increase from year to year is a line called Outside Contractor Pay, which they have increased by \$20,000 for the next year, noting that is essentially a bookkeeping entry and that there is an offsetting revenue account in the revenue budget. He explained that while there is a \$20,000 increase in that line no tax dollars are provided to fund that line. It is self-sustaining. He said that the 53rd week including computations for water, electricity and gasoline that those lines pretty much account for all of the growth in this budget and that most of the lines are flat and some have been reduced.

The Town council inquired about the following line items in the Police Department budget:

Line 9014 -Purchased Services-Crossing Guard - \$283,700

Chief Dortenzio said that this is a bid contract to provide the crossing guards to all of the schools in town. He said that we have oversight and a vested interest to making sure that the contracted guards show up. The Police Department is the backup, among other things and therefore is not in the Board of Education budget.

Line 9906 AFIS Livescan Interface Guard - \$13,500

Chief Dortenzio said that AFIS is automated finger print identification system. It replaces the manual process of fingerprinting. This interface product is software supplied by the Police Department vendor that will allow that scanned image to be scanned into the Police Department system at the same time that it is being entered into the state's system. He said that this is the 3rd time that he has submitted this line in their budget. The state is supplying the scanning device to bring the Police Department in line with most all of the other towns in Connecticut. This speeds up the booking process

Line 9911 Digital Photo Equipment- \$9,650

Chief Dortenzio said that there is a change in efficiency in going to digital. It's a cleaner neater process that will forego seeking out developing facilities. He doesn't think that they could have made the change three years ago since it is tied to other computer equipment for which funding was only provided about one year ago. They are still setting up the large storage devices and building the network and that this is the next step in that entire conversion process. He said that about one year ago the Town Council approved funding for new servers, firewall equipment, network switch-gear and a professional who is a civilian for that position.

Line 9902 Digital In-Car Video System - \$15,060

This funding will replace what is left of the analog system. It is much easier to manage DVDs that it is old VHS tapes...storage and costs are easier.

Line 9907 Personal Computers - \$7,200

They use the cheapest thing they can that will give them three years of reliability for use in the building, and not in cruisers. They have three operating platforms in the department.

Line 9903 Police Cruisers -\$134,000

For twenty years, they have replaced seven (7) cars every year. The Police Department is the 'supplier' for cars for other town departments in the rotation of vehicles in town. Last year that was decreased to six cars for financial reasons, and this budget is also for six cars. The vehicle cost includes the customization needed for a new cruiser in the transfer of specific police equipment from the old cruiser to the new one. The Chief explained the rotation and the criteria. He said that when a cruiser reaches 80,000 miles, it is considered ready for rotation, and at 100,000 miles the car they are close to ten years old and ready to trade.

Chief Dortenzio said a few years ago they added a few positions and that last year the budget was approved, and three positions went unfunded but not eliminated. This year he asked for those positions to be funded, so they could be filled, and only two of the three hourly bargaining unit positions have been funded but the wage freeze, and then one for this year, means that he will probably lose more positions. He discussed cost and training of a police officer.

Line 6120 Rental of Equipment & Vehicles -\$26,000

This account covers rental of vehicles for narcotic surveillance.

Line 8370 EAP -\$2,630

Chief Dortenzio said this is Employee Assistance Program. Mr. LeTourneau asked for what. This is similar to the program offered to all of the other employees in the town through the Personnel Department but this one is specific to issues involving police officers.

Line 5700 Continuing Education & Training Expenses -\$57,150

This is for the initial cost of training at the state's training facility is a taxpayer funded institution of the State of Connecticut. We do not pay tuition to send employees there. We pay their salary, the equipment they need and books. Mr. Testa confirmed that there are no real training expenses for a new officer other than paying a new officer a salary when the officer starts. Chief Dortenzio offered that these expenses are for ongoing certification of officers, for continuing education credits mandated by the State of Connecticut related to training, some core courses, fire arms training, etc. All of these comprise this account.

Chief Dortenzio said that he has three (3) bargaining units in the agency. Among the 90 hourly, bargaining unit employees in this year's budget, 72 are police officers that are budgeted

and approved, and it was 75. He said that the two that are approved are for officers. According to budget, the Police Department is fully staffed for police officers but they are missing a dispatcher which is budgeted and will be filled. They discussed the impact of the no wage increase edict on the department in the number of police officers, and why they are down from 75 to 70. They also spoke about the operation of the Police Department with only 70 officers. The Chief said that he anticipates losing more officers based on the fact that the bargaining unit has already declined to forego their increase, which we owe them by law. They have a multi-year contract that was bargained for in good faith and if we don't fully fund that, then the department will lose additional positions. The Chief said that we have one of the lowest police officer per capita in the state, and we have had that for many, many years and at the same time that our community has continually grown. He reported that they are seeing crime go up, and significantly, with seven cases of assault and armed robbery, where last year, there were none. He said crimes across the country are going up – robberies, assault, theft, burglaries. If you want to solve these crimes, they are time consuming. We are burning the candle at both ends and we are looking at what functions we can abandon and no longer cover. He said that in this sense that Wallingford is not unique. He said all of us provide things in the way of presentations to seniors to DARE programs that consume hours of trained police officers. At the end of the day, you must address the core business. He said that is still responding to emergency calls. They discussed the length of the contract.

They talked about shifts as they relate to cruisers and their availability. Cruisers might be in repair and sometimes not enough to put onto the shift. He said that they have had up to ten marked, cruisers out at once. He said that not all cars are equipped in the same manner as it depends on the assignment and what function is responded to. He said that when they are short staff, they bring people in. There are 13 patrolmen on a shift and there are three shifts per day which totals 39. On occasion, they use overtime due to the variety of reasons one might be out such as being away for training purposes, being ill, etc. Overtime has been problematic for the Police Department by being understaffed. He stated that there are a finite number of people that he needs. He reported that over the years staff have been re-directed to other divisions to keep pace with the growing demands of the community so that patrolmen ranks have increased, and on the other hand when a case is routed to the detective bureau, the labor is not there anymore to handle that volume. He said that there have been times at night when they have been down to four people because of vacancies, people that are on injury leave, training, jury duty, illness, worker's compensation, FMLA. Deputy Chief Curran added that the night shift is not 13 but 12 and that on a good night, there are 7 or 8 cars that are running. They talked about patrolmen assigned to a shift, that all of those assigned might not work that shift for various reasons, and that those assigned only work five days of the week. The Chief explained and gave examples. They discussed the cars and how they are tracked, what records are kept as this related to trade-ins. Some town auction their cars.

Councilor Economopoulos stated that we could do a better job with our Crown Victoria trade-ins. Comptroller, James Bowes, commented that this is being looked into and that the town might want to change the ordinance.

Councilor Cervoni stated that he does not think there is any room to reduce this budget.

With Councilor Testa, Chief Dortenzio discussed Overtime, Line 1400; Wage Differential, Line 1450; and Replacement Pay, Line 1500 and how they differ, since they represent different kinds of pay. Overtime is incurred when an officer is assigned to events, for example. Wage differential is used for "out of classification", shift differential and holiday pay. Replacement pay is applied for vacation, sick, worker's compensation, etc. They discussed the increase in Regular Salaries and Wages, Line 1000, due to contractual obligations and the 53rd pay week, the decrease of 30% for Replacement Pay.

MOTION

Mr. Fishbein made a motion to adopt the Police Department budget as proposed by the Mayor for \$8,718,119.

2ND Mrs. Rascati seconded.

Mr. Economopoulos stated that he would support the staffing requests but that he will vote no based on the cars and the management of the fleet. He suggested working on the internet to sell our cars and named several locations, including Africa as locations that would be interested in the Crown Vics. He stated that Fairfield sells 7 to 10 of their police vehicles each year and receive from \$5,000 to \$8,000 each. His no vote is not a reflection in to Chief or his staff.

VOTE By voice, five (5) Councilors present voted Aye. Councilors Economopoulos, John Sullivan and Testa voted Nay. Councilor Farrell was absent.
5-Aye; 3-Nay; 1 absent
The motion passed.

PLANNING AND ZONING

In attendance: Linda Bush, Town Planner

Office Supplies and Expenses with regard to legal notices were discussed.

MOTION

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to approve the Planning and Zoning budget as presented.

2nd Mr. Fishbein seconded.

VOTE Seven (7) Councilors voted Aye. Mr. Testa was out of the room. Mr. Farrell was absent.
The motion passed.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

In attendance: Richard Boyne, Building Inspector

Line 9000, Purchased Professional Services-Secretarial; Line 9030, Purchased Professional Services-Demolition and staffing were discussed.

MOTION

Mr. Fishbein made a motion to adopt the Building Department budget as presented.

2nd Mrs. Rascati seconded.

VOTE Eight (8) Councilors present voted Aye. Councilor Farrell was absent.
The motion passed.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

In attendance: Eloise Hazelwood, Health Director

Mr. Fishbein discussed the addition of a part-timer, who will be replacing some of the services previously provided by the VNA, and his concern with regard to what services are being paid for and what services are being rendered. He asked how the Council will receive a report on this part-timer. The Health Director responded that would be forthcoming in their quarterly report.

Other discussion focused on the following lines in the Health Department budget
Line 6010 – Health Promotion Program
Line 6020 – Healthy Wallingford Program
Line 9004 - Community Health Services
Line 9005 - Purchased Professional Services- Community Dental Services;

MOTION

Mr. Fishbein made a motion to adopt the Health Department budget as submitted by the Mayor.

2nd Mrs. Rascati seconded.

VOTE Seven (7) Councilors voted Aye. Councilor LeTourneau voted Nay. Councilor Farrell was absent.

The motion passed.

LAW DEPARTMENT

In attendance: Janis Small, Town Attorney

Line 9001 -Labor Relations Attorney (labor, worker's compensation, grievances);
Line 9002 -Purchased Professional Services –Lawyer (worker's compensation and title searches); Line 9003 – Purchased Professional Services –Specialists (appraisals, foreclosures, court recorder); and staffing.

MOTION

Mr. Fishbein made a motion to approve the budget of the Law Department as presented.

2nd Mr. Cervoni seconded.

VOTE Eight (8) Councilors present voted Aye. Councilor Farrell was absent.
The motion passed.

TOWN COUNCIL

In attendance:

Chairman Robert Parisi

There was one question with regard to Line 6010-Council Expenses.

MOTION

Mr. Fishbein made a motion to accept the Town Council budget as presented.

2nd Mrs. Rascati seconded.

VOTE Eight (8) Councilors present voted Aye. Councilor Farrell was absent. The motion passed. Chairman Parisi called for a short break at this point in the evening. Councilor Farrell arrived at the meeting.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Wallingford Center Inc. Lines 6851 and 6852

In attendance: Steve Lazarus, President

Liz Landow, Executive Director

Wallingford Town Hall, 45 South Main Street

Joan Ives Parisi, Treasurer

Councilor LeTourneau and Councilor Rascati recused themselves from the discussion and vote on the budget line of Wallingford Center Inc. since they sit on the Board of Directors. Wallingford Center Inc. budget was given to the Council. It is part of the record of the meeting. Discussion included annual appeal letter to *Friends of Wallingford Center Inc.*; event donations; the façade program; volunteers; blade signs; design control; Yankee Cloth; Gardener's Market; many compliments from the Councilors themselves; repeat request of the open house event for the stores

MOTION

Mr. Fishbein made a motion to adopt budget lines 6582 and 6851 of the Social Service contribution budget as proposed by the Mayor.

2nd Mr. Cervoni seconded.

VOTE Seven (7) Councilors voted Aye. Councilors LeTourneau and Rascati abstained.
The motion passed.

SOCIAL SERVICES

S.C.O.W. (Spanish Community of Wallingford) Line 6882

*In attendance Maria Harlow, Interim Executive Director, former Board President
Steve Knight, Board of Directors*

Discussion of the S.C.O.W. budget line of \$10,000 in the overall Social Service budget included the impact of not having the town's contribution to S.C.O.W.; the continuing growth of the agency to serve 8% of Wallingford's population; the town's contribution keeps clients and meets the service needs; the vulnerability of losing the two state grants that they currently hold which keeps a population from being at risk; S.C.O.W. helps people to be fully integrated into the Spanish Community; the important role on S.C.O.W. in the schools; S.C.O.W.'s work with Adult Education; town contribution to agencies; many accolades to S.C.O.W. for integration and success from the Town Councilors. Ms. Harlow thanked the community for all of their contributions.

MOTION Mr. Cervoni made a motion to approve Line 6882.

2nd Mr. Letourneau seconded.

VOTE Eight Councilors present voted Aye. Councilor Fishbein voted Nay.
The motion passed.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Masters Manna

*In attendance Cheryl Bedore, President
Kelly Massoni, Board Member
Mary Hagan Weiner, Secretary*

A budget for 2009 was presented to the Council. The report is part of the record of the meeting. Discussion included the 'great' service that is being provided; their facility's shower, licensed kitchen, diaper bank, CRP training, laundry, Red Cross transition, free medical clinic, six local doctors who work with the agency, pre-vocational and vocational training, approved court ordered community service

location; population that is served and integration of population from other nearby towns- Meriden, Durham, Wallingford and Yalesville, East Haven, Middlefield; Meriden Senior Center grant; Community Foundation of Greater New Haven grant; food donations from Cheshire as well as from organizations; individual donations and corporate donation from Napier, which helps to support their three vehicles; non-emergency medical transportation, for instance, there are several clients who are transported for dialysis; Masters Manna work is strictly through grants and private donations; no federal or state funding; the difficulty of the times facing their clients; families that are served; daily meals; being served are 501 families Wallingford and Yalesville (1/3 of total served), 870 families Meriden, 247 surrounding towns; contracted with Connecticut Food Bank and complying with their standards; the challenge of using Wallingford tax dollars to serve clients from other towns; serving Meriden clients allows for eligibility of Middlesex County grants; operating budget of Masters Manna is approximately \$146,000 from donations and nothing that generates income; homeless prevention rapid re-housing program fueled by federal stimulus dollars- Masters Manna only agency licensed to administer this program; bulk of providing rides is for Wallingford clients; growth may cause another look at what towns will eventually be accepted for Masters Manna services; what the intention and the impact of the contribution funds from the Town of Wallingford will be at Masters Manna; some discussion regarding using town funds for this purpose and its fairness in providing to people who do not live in Wallingford.

There was another question from the Chairman with respect to the Veterans' contribution from Meriden and what is owed and if it has been collected. Comptroller Bowes reported that the Veterans' contribution has been made by Meriden after they were billed, with documentation, upon completion of the fiscal year of the totality of the costs, and they send their check for 50%. He said that since the office has been reduced from full-time to part-time status, going back several years, there was a period of time where the City of Meriden, through their budget process, went through their Social Service contribution line items and made significant cuts to many of the agencies that provide service to the City of Meriden. He indicated that one of those was the Meriden-Wallingford Veterans Center. He said that Meriden is approximately \$35,000 in arrears to the Town of Wallingford for the Veterans' Service Center. He commented that when he first came to this job that he compiled the necessary information and billing for those back years and sent it along to the Meriden City Manager requesting payment. It was not forthcoming since Meriden only sent was had been budgeted. Since there has been a Veterans' Service Center office cost reduction in Wallingford, Meriden has been contributing 50% because the office costs are somewhere around \$25,000 per year.

MOTION Mr. Testa made a motion to remove \$25,000 of the Wallingford contribution from the Mid-State Medical Center budget Line 6740 and transfer \$8,000 of those monies to the line item for Masters Manna making the total Wallingford contribution \$10,000.

2nd Mr. LeTourneau seconded. For the record, Chairman Parisi said all the Council seconded the motion that is eight (8) seconds to the motion.

Chairman Parisi said that he wanted to suggest a tabling motion so that when they get down the live that the Council can visit this line item. He said maybe more can be done. Mr. Testa replied that he does not think more is appropriate and that \$10,000 is extremely generous, and he is even grappling with that but that it is reasonable. He said next year as they go on with their fundraising perhaps they won't need a

contribution. Mr. Testa said he do this with the intention that it si going to be an ongoing thing.

It was suggested that this group and Scow and other Social Service groups submit complete budgets, reporting income with income sources and expenses.

VOTE The Council voted individually by voice in the following order:
Economopoulos – Yes; Testa –Yes; John Sullivan-Yes; Rascati –Yes; Farrell – Yes;
Fishbein –Yes; Cervoni –Yes; Letourneau –Yes; Parisi –Yes

The motion passed

SOCIAL SERVICES
Senior Center

In attendance: William Viola, Executive Director

Mr. Viola stated that he is so grateful to have lived in a town for the last fifteen years and served as the director of the senior center. Here in Wallingford that thinks so highly in a forward thinking manner to have created a beautiful senior center and funded wonderful service for the older adults of this town. He said that Wallingford is a leader in Connecticut with our facilities and services and are the envy of every town in the state...just about. He applauds the town and it leadership for doing it.

Chairman Parisi remarked that he was around when things weren't always running at 110 mph; and that when Mr. Viola "climbed up on the buckboard and picked up the reins" that the staff, the people and the volunteers have done with the direction of Mr. Viola is beyond his wildest expectation. He spoke about the energy of the senior center and described it as "Wow!" Honor was given for the achievements of Debbie Voelker, Senior Center Program Director, who 'filled up' the new senior center with activities, programs, trips and the parking lot is full.

Mr. Fishbein spoke about a \$50,000 allotment for the Health Services contract bid that he does not see in the backup documents. Mr. Viola responded that there used to be a line item in the Senior Center budget to pay for the VNA services at the Senior Center but it was not \$50,000. He stated that it was about \$42,000 in the past, or maybe \$45,000, and that is now contained in the health services portion of the budget under the Health Department. It is no longer in the Senior Center budget. Mr. Bowes added that Mr. Viola reduced his request to the town, and he referred to page 44, Line 6750-Committee on Aging. They talked about line 9004 in the Health Department budget.

Also discussed: Line 9004 in the Health Department budget; and Lines 6750 and 6760 which are Committee on Aging

MOTION Mr. Fishbein made a motion to adopt the budget as reflected in Lines 6750 and 6760 in the Mayor's proposal.

2nd Mr. Cervoni seconded.

VOTE The Council vote Aye.

The motion passed.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Line 6500-Contribution –Wallingford Transit Authority - \$60,000

Chairman Parisi called out the budget lines of the Social Services budget asking for questions. Questions ensued for Lines 6500-Contribution –Wallingford Transit Authority \$60,000 request of the State of Connecticut; town needs to keep mass transit working. They discussed application with the Engineering Department for funding through a State of Connecticut program for a Rt. 5 bus shelter at WalMart.

MOTION Mr. LeTourneau made a motion to reduce the contribution to the Transit Authority from \$60,000 to \$50,000.

2ND Mr. Fishbein seconded.

Mayor Dickinson and Mr. Fishbein discussed Public Transportation. Mayor Dickinson remarked that public transportation and the ability to keep that bus moving through Wallingford to be very important and that this isn't an increase in that it is the same amount of funding over the years and having to deal with the Department of Transportation, and possible loss of the service, is not something he wants to see or deal with. We need to have mass transit. Mr. Fishbein expressed concern with the contributions from the City of Meriden. They discussed bus routes from Meriden to New Haven. To comply with Mr. Fishbein's request, Mayor Dickinson said that he would attempt to get information with regard to the contributions of other towns to this program before that final budget vote. Mayor Dickinson said that we need to do what is necessary to Wallingford.

VOTE The Council voted as follows:
Cervoni –no; Economopoulos-no; Farrell – no; Fishbein – yes; LeTourneau – yes;
Rascati – no; Sullivan –no; Testa – no; Parisi – no
7-Nay; 2-Aye

The motion failed

SOCIAL SERVICES

Line 6550 John Nerden RTC Camp - \$13,743

It was established that there are 11 Wallingford campers who are children with special needs and that there are 232 days. There was no motion with regard to this budget line.

Mr. Fishbein asked where do we draw the line with these contributions in general. He named some groups that do not get contributions. Mayor Dickinson said that most of these lines were there before he became Mayor. He said that the Emergency shelter and Masters Manna are both new ones. He said that contributions to the sport and athletic leagues are in the Recreation budget. Mr. Fishbein expressed his concern about selection of groups that receive contributions that use people's tax dollars. The Mayor does not feel comfortable to take anyone off this list given the work that they do. Mrs. Rascati said that she has visited this camp and will not approve cutting even one dollar from this budget line. Mr. Economopoulos reported that he truly wanted to be the one who made cuts in this budget but then he reminded himself that the bottom line is that it effects people in our town to cut this \$13,000. He would rather look at large, major expenditure items like bleachers and snowplows that would save taxpayers dollars. He stated that in his own integrity that is what is doing. Mr. Fishbein stated that he supports the camps and all of these things but he does it because he chooses to and not because he is forced to through his tax dollars. Mr. Testa

pointed to the senior camp budget line which is the Senior Center. He said we do a little bit for everyone when we can.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Line 6771 - Elderly Meals Program - \$2,000

Mayor Dickinson said that this budget line is in place should the program need more funds if it falls short. Don Roe, Program Planner Director, oversees this program.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Line 6772 – Social Services Contributon-Counseling - \$4,000

Mayor Dickinson said that it is funding for a Social Worker a Wallingford Day Care. Mr. Fishbein wanted to know why this isn't being provided through Youth & Social Services. Mayor Dickinson said that this is for an individual on site at the facility and does not know if Youth & Social Services have been involved. Craig Turner, Director Youth & Social Services, said that these services are contracted through the VNA and they have provided this service for many years. He discussed the conduit from which some of these funds flow and its relative cost to administer.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Line 6780 – ARC of Meriden/Wallingford - \$8,500

Mayor Dickinson said that this is the Wallingford Association for the Retarded which helps to provide transportation for these citizens..

MOTION Mr. LeTourneau returned to Line 6772 – Social Services Contributon-Counseling - to make a motion to remove \$4,000 from this budget line.

2nd Mr. Fishbein seconded.

There was no discussion on this motion.

VOTE The Council voted by voice in the seating order as follows:
Economopoulos-no; Testa – no; Sullivan –no; Rascati – no; Farrell – no;
Fishbein – yes; Cervoni –no; LeTourneau – yes; Parisi – no
7-Nay; 2-Aye

The motion failed.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Line 6810 – Contribution-Fuel Crisis Committee - \$8,000

Mayor Dickinson said that there is an increase in this program that is administered by Joan Stave in the Mayor's Office. He said that this fuel assistance is coordinated with the Youth and Social Services Social Worker. This is in addition to several other programs to help people in real need. Mr. Turner said that *Operation Fuel* is right now out of funds and that there is no more money to provide

SOCIAL SERVICES

Line 6820 – Historic Program Matching Funds - \$30,000

Mayor Dickinson remarked that typically this money isn't spent until the end of the year. It is a matching grant program for the Historical Society and the Preservation Trust. If these two entities raise funds, then they receive a matching amount to what they have raised up to \$10,000 for the Historical Society's Parsons House and up to \$20,000 for the Preservation Trust. The funds are awarded at the end of a fiscal year

if at all. He said that the Historic Commission has a very limited purpose and that is to qualify for grants and for other issues. This budget is not related to the Historic Commission.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Line 6840 – Contributions- Region II Mental Health- \$2,440

Mayor Dickinson referred to a letter that the Council should have. He reported that this is a Region II Mental Health Board and that this supports evaluation improvement efforts regarding in mental health services in the 36 towns of South-Central Connecticut. It is calculated on a per capita basis.

MOTION Mr. LeTourneau made a motion to remove \$2,440 from Line 6840 – Contributions-Region II Mental Health.

2nd Mr. Fishbein seconded.

There was no discussion on this motion.

VOTE The Council voted by voice in the seating order as follows:
Economopoulos-no; Sullivan –no; Rascati – no; Farrell – no;
Fishbein – yes; Cervoni –no; LeTourneau – yes; Parisi – no
Testa – absent
6-Nay; 2-Aye; 1 absent

The motion was defeated.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Line 6860 – Contributions- Quinnipiac River Watershed Association -\$5,000

MOTION Mr. LeTourneau made a motion to remove \$5,000 from Line 6860 – Contributions-Quinnipiac River Watershed Association.

2nd Mr. Fishbein seconded.

Mr. Cervoni asked about the history of this contribution. Mayor Dickinson referred to the letter from Paul Roy and Mary Mushinsky of which the council should have a copy. This letter accounts of the effort to improve the Quinnipiac River. He named from the letter the groups and programs with whom association works in their projects that are focused on the river.

VOTE The Council voted by voice in the seating order as follows:
LeTourneau – yes; Cervoni –no; Fishbein – yes; Farrell – no; Rascati – no;
Sullivan –no; Testa – no; Economopoulos-no; Parisi – no
7-Nay; 2-Aye

The motion was defeated.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Line 6880 – Contributions- Center Street Cemetery -\$69,407

Mayor Dickinson reported that the town owns the Center Street Cemetery. He noted that it is Town of Wallingford property and that there is a Cemetery Association which has stewardship of the cemetery and the town provides funds in order for the cemetery

to operate. He explained that people can be buried there, that Bob Devaney is the caretaker, that the grass is mowed and that there are efforts to restore and maintain the historic and other gravestones. There are conducted walks through the cemetery. He said that funds support those services and the maintenance of the cemetery.

Mr. Fishbein said he finds it difficult to vote in favor this without backup information. Mayor Dickinson referred to the Cemetery Association request. Mr. Fishbein said the letter shows only the request but not what it's for.

Mayor Dickinson said in another year we will ask that everyone requesting funds to provide budget and some idea of how the money is spent.

Mr. Farrell, President of the Cemetery Association, remarked that in effect this is a town agency and that: \$30,000 -stone repair; vandalism -\$10,000 to \$20,000; \$8,000 to \$12,000 -tree trimming. He stated that is primarily where the money goes. He said that they have \$3 million worth of deferred maintenance that is slowly be addressed. He said he can't report specifically on wages and that Mr. Devaney gets paid depending on burials, which are hand dug. There is some minimal contract labor. When he started, Mr. Devaney was being paid \$600 per year and that it has changed since then with a base wage, pay per burial, and pay per use of personal vehicle. They discussed burials, including welfare cases. Mayor Dickinson reported that Bob Devaney cares for the cemetery like it is his own and takes personal interest in everything that goes on there. It is a wonderful thing to behold this kind of caring dedication. Mr. Farrell noted that he tries to save this budget even a dime. He and his friends perform little favors especially when it comes to the cemetery machinery. Mr. Farrell said that given the situation of the town, the cemetery offered to reduce their budget by \$20,000 as over the years they had accumulated some funds to offset a budget reduction. Mr. Testa made a statement with regard to back up to some of the budget lines especially on the Social Service budget.

The Council did not discuss other budget lines.

MOTION Mr. Testa made a motion to accept the Social Service budget as amended.

2ND Mr. Fishbein seconded.

VOTE Seven (7) Councilors voted Aye. Mr. Fishbein and Mr. LeTourneau voted Nay.
7-Aye; 2-Nay

The motion passed.

Mr. Sullivan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Farrell seconded. Nine (9) Councilors present voted Aye. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra R. Weekes
Town Council Secretary
Meeting digitally recorded

Jerry Farrell, Jr., Vice-Chairman Date

Barbara Thompson, Town Clerk Date