

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT  
*Special Town Council Meeting*  
APRIL 27, 2015

*Town Council Chambers*  
FY 2015 – 2016 BUDGET WORKSHOP

MINUTES

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The Special Budget Workshop Meeting of the Wallingford Town Council was called to order at 6:31P.M. It began with a Moment of Silence. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were: Chairman Vincent Cervoni and Councilors Craig Fishbein, Tom Laffin, John Letourneau, Christine Mansfield, Robert F. Parisi and John Sullivan. Councilor Larry Russo arrived at 6:39 P.M., and Councilor Vincent F. Testa, Jr. was absent from the meeting. Mayor Dickinson and Comptroller Bowes were at the meeting.

3. BUDGET WORKSHOP

PARKS & RECREATION

*In attendance: Michelle Bjorkman, Superintendent of Recreation  
Jen Griswold, Executive Secretary*

Discussion began with the report that the Wallingford Playgrounds System has not been upgraded for fifteen (15) years. The department is looking for some help with this in their budget. The Wallingford Community Pool was renovated in the year 2000 and now needs professional sandblasting and a new liner. The Fitness Room has a floor problem that needs to be addressed. Chairman Cervoni asked if these items were contemplated in the Approved Budget. It was understood that they are.

Henry McCully, Director, Public Works, who was also in attendance, stated that Doolittle Park and basketball courts are in the Public Works budget and that Moran and Dag are in the Six-Year Capital budget. The playgrounds are not funded and are on a wish list. Capital and Non-Recurring funds include Pat Wall Parking makeover. Neither Community Pool or the Fitness Room at Parks & Recreation are funded.

Councilor Mansfield in pointing to Line 57234, learned that the copier has been purchased.

Councilor Russo arrived at the meeting.

Councilor Sullivan received responses to his inquiries: employee count is down, some retirements; pay-for-play has not grown; league contributions remain static; Vietnam Veterans' Park has a bid out for chip seal and the department hopes to use the park in the spring and summer.

Councilor Fishbein inquired why Line 56746 (Purchased Services-Entertainment) has gone down and heard that negotiated costs for bands they hire has gone down and that Stop and Shop has made a donation. Line 56782 is half of what it was this year is the result of going out to bid. Community Gardens was discussed with regard to the need for a new perimeter, chain-link fence to maintain the integrity of the gardens inside but also for aesthetics in general. In discussing contributions, Ms. Bjorkman stated that she does not believe that they have increased at all over the years.

With regard to contributions, Councilor Fishbein asked about Line 58810-Dues & Fees, which are used for professional memberships. Councilor Fishbein wanted to know if Parks & Recreation asked the various entities if they have reserve funds. Ms. Bjorkman remarked that they get their budgets at budget time.

Councilor Russo, a former Wallingford Little League President, stated that funds have stayed the same for a long time and what is there is used as seed money to start the year.

#### PUBLIC WORKS

*In attendance: Henry McCully, Director, Public Works  
Steve Palermo, Supervisor  
Kathy Johns, Executive Secretary*

Mr. McCully said that it has been a very rough winter. He said that they are not requesting a new snow plow truck. They have two snow blowers and are replacing the bodies on three trucks. They are taking on a huge challenge of combining Recycling and Resident Drop-off to realize a \$40,000 savings. He said this merge will allow for compost expansion. With regard to the cost to residents, he said that currently residents pay \$2.40 per bag but on July 1, 2015, the cost will rise to \$3.60 per bag.

Councilor Laffin asked about road condition. Mr. Palermo stated that they are using hot patches and as long as there is no rain, they have a truck out every day.

Councilor Fishbein was happy to hear of the recycle changes. He asked about frost heaves. Mr. Palermo said some of them have to be cut out. Councilor Fishbein noted the increase in the materials & supplies line (56140), which Mr. McCully reported is due largely to the cost of salt. Mr. McCully reported that the bids for custodial have come back higher due to the rise in the minimum wage.

In response to Councilor Mansfield's question as to whether the overtime was given consideration during budgeting, Mr. McCully responded that it is based on seven (7) to nine (9) storms per winter season. He said that we can't skimp on public safety and that every year is difficult to budget. He commented that he doesn't over-budget, preferring to see what the winter brings.

Councilor Letourneau returned to recycling and garbage saying that it's crowded on Saturdays. He asked about the cost of the senior coupon, which is five (\$5) dollars for two bags per week for the year. Regarding regular cost to a resident, Mr. McCully added that it is cheaper to have a hauler than take things to the

dump. He also said that there is no single stream according to the contract the Town has.

Councilor Sullivan asked if the department is fully staffed at forty-six (46) employees. He said that due to three deaths and three retirees this year that they are not fully staffed and had difficulty finding enough snow plow drivers this last year. Councilor Sullivan inquired about snow blowers, which Mr. McCully said are a great help in the downtown area. Councilor Sullivan reported that WCI may run short of funds for new park benches and asked if Public Works could help with that. Mr. McCully stated that he and the Mayor have discussed the subject. When asked about grooming machines, Mr. McCully reported that they had just purchased a new grooming machine.

ENGINEERING      *No questions.*

CAPITAL & NON-RECURRING

*In attendance: John Thompson, Town Engineer  
Henry McCully, Director, Public Works  
Steve Palermo, Supervisor, Public Works*

Councilor Fishbein inquired about the grant for Northfield Road Bridge project. Mr. Thompson stated that they are waiting for authorization from the state in order to advertise for bids.

CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS      *No questions.*

SIX-YEAR CAPITAL

*In attendance: John Thompson, Town Engineer  
Henry McCully, Director, Public Works  
Steve Palermo, Supervisor, Public Works*

Councilor Fishbein wanted to know if the Town is committed to the 2015-2016 projects. Mayor Dickinson affirmed that we are committed to the projects. He continued stating beyond that there are priorities and other factors need to come into play, such as grants and other projects that pop up as well as emergencies.

Councilor Russo asked about Pat Wall Field Project and its cost. The project will now go out to bid and not be accomplished by Public Works. The wetland flagging now underway has been approved by Zoning Board of Appeals.

Councilor Sullivan was interested in sidewalk installations. Mr. Thompson said installations are going on in Zone 10 (Cook Hill area) and then Zone 11 (Hornish Lane and into the Ridges) and are moving slower than anticipated.

Councilor Letourneau noted \$40,000 for downtown bricks and asked when is he going to get going? Mr. Thompson said they are waiting for the trees to be done.

Councilor Sullivan noted that the trees are blooming right now and asked when they will be cut down. Mr. McCully said in about ten days, they will cut down the trees and replant. Mr. Letourneau asked Mr. McCully to not let the stump-grinder contractor do his job when children are walking to or from school.

BUILDING    *No questions.*

MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY COUNCILOR PARISI AND  
SECONDED BY COUNCILOR FISHBEIN.

VOTE:            8-AYE;1-ABSENT (PARISI AND RUSSO)

MOTION PASSED.

The Council adjourned the meeting at 8:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Weekes  
Secretary to the Town Council  
From notes taken by the Town Clerk  
Meeting digitally recorded.

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Chairman Vincent Cervoni

Date

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Town Clerk, Barbara Thompson

Date