

SWEARING-IN CEREMONY

SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

JANUARY 3, 2000

8:00 P.M.

Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr. called the meeting to order at 8:00 P.M. and requested that the Color Guards from American Legion Shaw-Sinon Post 73, American Legion Siedlicki Post #187, VFW Major Raoul Lufbery Post #591 and VFW Stanley Budleski Post #9965 come forward.

The Sheehan High School Brass Ensemble, led by Mr. Fred E. Rossomando, performed as the color guards took their positions.

INVOCATION – REV. CHARLES MCDONALD

Rev. Charles stated, this prayer is an adaptation of a prayer composed by Archbishop John Carroll on the occasion of the inauguration of George Washington in 1789. I thought it was fitting because I think our Mayor has dressed up as George Washington a couple of times, at least.

Let us pray, almighty and eternal God, you have revealed your glory to all nations. God of power and might, wisdom and justice; through you authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted and judgment is decreed. Assist with your spirit of counsel and fortitude the mayor of this town, William Dickinson, that his administration may be conducted in righteousness and be eminently useful to your people over whom he presides. May he encourage due respect for virtue and religion; may he execute the laws with justice and mercy; may he seek to restrain crime, vice and immorality. Let the light of your divine wisdom direct the deliberations of our Town Council and shine forth in all the proceedings and laws framed for our rule and government. May they seek to preserve peace, promote happiness and continue to bring us the blessings of liberty and equality. May they be enabled by your powerful protection to discharge their duties with honesty and ability. We likewise commend to your unbounded mercy all citizens of this Town of Wallingford that we may be blessed in the knowledge and sanctified in the observance of your holy law. May we be preserved in union and that peace which the world cannot give. And after enjoying the blessings of this life, be admitted to those which are eternal. We pray to you, our Lord and God forever and ever, amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Patricia Lizotte, Auxiliary President of VFW Post #591, led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Sheehan High School Brass ensemble performed the National Anthem.

SWEARING-IN OF MAYOR WILLIAM W. DICKINSON, JR.

Judge of Probate, Philip W. Wright, Jr. administered the Oath of Office to William W. Dickinson, Jr. as Mayor of the Town of Wallingford, Connecticut (Applause)

Judge Wright – “Do you, William W. Dickinson, Jr., solemnly swear that you will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Connecticut so long as you continue a citizen thereof and that you will faithfully discharge, according to law, the duties of the Office of Mayor of the Town of Wallingford to the best of your abilities so help you God?”

Mayor Dickinson: “I do.”

(Applause)

Judge Wright: Congratulations, Mr. Mayor

Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr. – “The program calls for some remarks so I will provide a few. Happy New Year to everyone. It is amazing the year 2000...it wasn't so long ago that I think I can remember thinking (that) 2000 was so far off that it was only in novels or science fiction essays; it just was not real. Here we are with the year 2000 beginning and notice that I don't say the beginning of the millennium and I don't say the twenty-first century because both of those seem to invite nothing but argument so we know that the last of the nineteen-hundreds have occurred, 1999, and the first of the twenty-hundreds, so that is what I will stick with. It is clear also, unless this is virtual reality, that we have survived Y2k so we have a lot to be thankful for. And I believe that we can report to our 1670 founders that Wallingford is alive and well and thriving. (applause) I welcome all of you to this evening's ceremony. I want to congratulate the Town Council members and the Board of Education members on their assumption of duties this evening. We have about an hour to an hour and one-half to feel good about things and then it is back to business. As I thought about the evaluation of Wallingford and what the turn of the

century means, it occurred to me that there are some major contrasts in our world; on the one hand we have at this time tremendous prosperity and stability in a world economy. On the other hand out of one hundred ninety-three nations, one-third or 65 by one count, are embroiled in serious conflicts. That is twice the number of the cold war level. On the one hand we followed a New Year midnight celebration around the world live. On the other hand those celebrations were in stark contrast to the refugee camp and the silence in a community in Africa. On the one hand we have an internet and a world wide web that makes information readily accessible to nearly everyone. On the other (hand) a professor at a major university quizzed his communication students on the meaning of several words and found the following definitions: Alzheimer's – an imported beer; Apartheid – a building in Athens (Greece); Louis Armstrong – first man on the moon; Fidel Castro – a Palestinian leader whose wife bought a lot of shoes; ICBM – Intercontinental Business Machines; Vladimir Lenin – a concert pianist; Sandra Day O'Connor – none other than an actress on L.A. Law; and O.S.H.A. – a killer whale at Sea World. All of this means that additional human effort and understanding is needed in our world. Charles Shultz, for fifty years, has been entertaining us with Peanuts has announced that he is drawing his last cartoon strip. For fifty years he has illustrated the foibles and attitudes of human nature. One time he wrote that he had visited Vienna and while he was there he always carried pins representing each of his characters. He stopped by a cemetery where Beethoven is buried; he placed a Snoopy pin at the gravestone. A little Austrian girl and her mother were watching and the Austrian girl said something to her mother. Her mother, realizing that Charles Schultz was an American, said "she is asking why you placed Snoopy rather than Schroeder at the gravesite?" Of course, Peanuts fans know that Schroeder has a deep affection for Beethoven. Shultz excused himself, went back to his car, found a Schroeder pin and returned to place it at the grave. Mother, daughter and Charles Schultz all smiled. It is a moment that speaks of the universality of human emotion and caring and concern. Basics rarely ever change. Robert Fulton wrote a book named, "It Was on Fire When I Laid Down on It". When he explains the title he read a tabloid newspaper article and in the story an emergency squad responded to a house with smoke pouring from an upstairs window. The crew broke in and found a man in a smoldering bed. After his rescue the inevitable question was asked, "how did this happen?" He said, I don't know, it was on fire when I laid down on it. Fulton goes on to say that he had a colleague tell him that his lunch was always the same every day in his lunch sack. Fulton asked, "So who makes your lunch?" He said, "I do". We are responsible for so much; that is the basic. As elected officials that frequently feel that it is on fire when it is handed to you, it is on fire because basics deal with values and decision-making. As elected officials we resolve to make every effort to 1) make good decisions; 2) improve the health and safety of Wallingford residents; 3) provide the best public education possible; and 4) emphasize the importance of families and the nurturing of our young citizens. It is a time of great hope. It is also a time of great caring. We thank all of you for all of your efforts and contributions to the well-being of our community. We thank employees for the dedication

and performance of so many vital tasks. We are grateful for the presence of many business, civic and religious organizations and their vital participation in the fabric of our town. Yesterday the Jubilee 2000 committee and the Clergy Association sponsored an interfaith worship service expressing praise and thanksgiving. It was a wonderful service and in the course of it a hymn was sung and the words of one of the verses really struck me and I would like to give you those words. The title of the hymn was "God who stretched the spangled heavens"; "As each far horizon beckons may it challenge us anew. Children of creative purpose serving others honoring you. May our dreams prove rich with promise, each endeavor well-begun. Great Creator, give us guidance, 'til our goals and yours are one." "Happy New Year." (applause)

At this time Mayor Dickinson asked Probate Judge Philip A. Wright, Jr. to come forward to administer the Oath of Office to the Town Council.

SWEARING-IN OF TOWN COUNCIL

Judge of Probate Philip A. Wright, Jr. asked that the following individuals step forward collectively so that he may perform the Swearing-In Ceremony for the Wallingford Town Council:

Michael Brodinsky
Richard J. Centner, Jr.
Gerald E. Farrell, Jr.
Stephen W. Knight
Iris F. Papale
Robert F. Parisi
Raymond J. Rys, Sr.
James Vumbaco
G. Thomas Zappala

Judge Wright – instructed all Councilors to raise their right hand and asked, "Do you solemnly swear that you will faithfully discharge according to law your duties as members of the Town Council of Wallingford to the best of your ability so help you God?"

Town Council (collectively) "I do."

Judge Wright congratulated the newly sworn-in Councilors.

(Applause)

Mayor Dickinson congratulated the new Councilors, called the meeting in session at 8:20 p.m. and asked for a Roll Call of the Town Council members at this time.

ROLL CALL OF TOWN COUNCIL

All Councilors answered present to the Roll called by Town Clerk Rosemary A. Rascati.

ELECTION AND SWEARING-IN OF TOWN COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

Mayor Dickinson stated, the floor is open for nominations for the position of Town Council Chairman.

Councilor Stephen Knight: "In following along with your introductory theme regarding Y2K, here we are on the third of January of the year 2000 and we survived. We all managed to avert the first media-enhanced techno disaster, Y2k. I think it is ironic and appropriate with the recent high-tech hoopla that is pretty much behind us that I have the honor of nominating Bob Parisi for Town Council Chairman. Bob is the person on this Council, the past Council, who most demonstrated every day that high technology, as wondrous as it is, is no substitute for those character elements that always define an effective public official. Bob Parisi's leadership for the past four years is evidence that what is most necessary to lead this body is not high tech but high ideals; not number-crunching but natural affinity for people and not e-commerce skills but energy; energy derived from the people he helps. Not that Bob is not a hip and happening high-tech guy...after all he owns a car that has more computing power than the Saturn 5 rocket that took man to the moon. But Bob's strength is the old-fashioned people kind. I have worked under him, beside him and behind him for four years now. I have seen him lead with a very finely tuned combination of Dutch uncle, friend, political ally, political opponent, even in his own party from time to time but he has always led with the political skills, and I mean politics in the very best sense of the word that few people in this town have ever mustered. This nomination was an easy choice for me and I say to my colleagues I believe that this is an easy choice for you as well. I urge you to join me in voting for a chairman with all the tools needed to make this Town Council a very, very productive one. Thank you."

Councilor Farrell: It is my pleasure to second the nomination of Bob Parisi for Council Chairman. One of the reasons that I feel so comfortable in seconding Bob's nomination is that I know that he is a good person who cares very deeply about the Town of Wallingford and its residents; someone who is going to go the extra mile to help someone either as their friend or elected representative. I actually learned this about Bob many years ago, long before I even thought of running for Council. The year was 1981 and I was a thirteen

year-old kid. Ronald Regan had just been elected President and was coming to Hartford to speak before the Knights of Columbus national convention. I wanted desperately to go to the convention and see and hear Regan. I bugged the heck out of my father to do something, anything to get to the event. My father called everywhere trying to get the tickets but, no luck, no tickets to be had. Finally, my father called Bob who was at that time district coordinator for Larry DeNardis. "Bob, my son wants tickets to go see Regan", my father told him. Bob said that he would do what he could and that he would get back to my father the next day. Apparently, as we learned, Bob was up most of that night calling around, trying as hard as he could to get tickets for this young thirteen year-old kid; the tickets I so desperately sought. The next morning the phone rings, it is Bob. Yes, he has the tickets. He is not sure they are the best seats but he has done what he could do. A day or two later my father, myself, my grandfather Ed Farrell and I, head up to Hartford for the speech. We present the tickets and we are directed ever forward towards the front of the Civic Center. Keep in mind that the Knights of Columbus is a Catholic organization. At their national convention, in the first few rows in the front of the podium, they put all the cardinals and archbishops dressed in their deep red outfits. There the usher directed us to the third row in front of the podium with cardinals on our left and cardinals on our right to just about the most perfect seats you could get to see and hear President Regan; all thanks to Bob Parisi. We could only guess that Bob had called in a favor from the Pope himself to get those tickets but that is the length that Bob Parisi will go to make a thirteen year-old kid happy; a kid, who at the time, he did not know from Adam. In lots of ways that story is very emblematic of other stories that I could tell about Bob Parisi. It is emblematic of what I have seen him do both inside this chamber and outside of it. He cares about people and he tries to help his fellow man or woman as best as he knows possible. I am honored to serve alongside Bob on the Council. I am glad he is willing to serve another term as our Chairman and I am very proud to second his nomination."

Mayor Dickinson asked if there were further nominations? Hearing none, he called for a motion to close nominations.

Mr. Farrell moved that nominations be closed, seconded by Mr. Knight.

VOTE TO CLOSE NOMINATIONS: All ayes; motion duly carried.

VOTE ON ELECTING TOWN COUNCIL CHAIRMAN: A vote of 9-0 in favor of Robert Parisi was recorded.

(Applause)

Robert F. Parisi: "First off let me thank Steve (Knight) for his fine nomination and Jerry (Farrell) for telling that story. I had forgotten about it but I am sure it will come in handy in the next two years....you know what I mean. Good evening and Happy New Year and let me first off congratulate the Board of Education members on their election and let me wish you (Board) every success in the coming two years. I believe this is the twelfth time I have had the privilege of being sworn in as a Town Councilor and after more than twenty years of service, I am sure that it would be no surprise to some of you if I view this event matter-of-factly, however the contrary is true. Instead I believe that the job before us, as elected officials, is no less exciting or challenging or vital than at any prior time in my experience and very probably since Wallingford's Mayor/Council form of government was established in the fifties. In fact, despite the strength of our community and the stability of the times, the issues and challenges may be greater than we now realize or that we are prepared to manage without first taking stock of where we have been and, most important, where we are going. I will speak to that point further in just a minute but first I want to congratulate and welcome the newly-elected Councilors....and in doing so invite them to join in what I hope they will see as a collegial and collaborative legislative process. The campaign is over, the people's work now begins and there is a great deal to accomplish. That work does not always conveniently start and begin with the election cycle. Indeed, much of what we need to do was started long before this evening. It remains to be finalized, effectively managed and, in some cases, built upon. High on our agenda should be the continued economic stability of our community and the cost of government. This means continuing the prudent administration of town government so as to control taxes without reducing or eliminating services. This means prudent decision-making; this means a sound and responsible budget. Quite frankly, we have the gentleman just to do that, too, if I might say that. Also, on our agenda is the new senior center, the Community Lake project, the power plant, preservation of open space, advancement of the Wooding/Caplan partnership and last, but not least, the school renovation building project. All of these are key initiatives that will command our attention, require our action and involve our oversight. But as important as these initiatives are, there is one issue that is greater than all others, the future. I cannot begin to express the depth of feeling I have as a result of having both the privilege and responsibility of serving this community as we commence not just another term or another decade or even another century but rather as we enter the second millennium and a new historical era. The months and years and decades to come will bring change that will certainly impact every dimension of community life and every person who resides in this town. And so as we take office, we do so with the sheer knowledge that we bear the obligation of assuming leadership and the management of that certain change; of assuring that we keep pace with the good and have the strength to withstand the adverse of maintaining progress with stability; of seeing that Wallingford as amenable and supportive of our children's children as it has been for us. In the past, as the Council weighed issues and made decisions, the future impact of our deliberations was certainly a factor in our judgments. But as we begin this new millennium, we must

consider always that what we do and how we perform will form the foundation of what Wallingford will be far into the future. The future then must be more than just a factor in our thinking process; it must be the spirit that guides us as we act. The future is ours for the making. It is up to us to make it as bright and successful as humanly possible. That will be my purpose as I take office and I invite my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in that purpose. With God's guidance, together we will build a foundation for now and for generations to come, thank you."

(Applause)

ELECTION AND SWEARING-IN OF TOWN COUNCIL VICE CHAIRMAN

At this time Chairman Parisi called for nominations for the position of Vice Chairman.

Councilor Farrell: Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to put into nomination the name of Raymond Rys for the position of Vice Chairman. I was sitting and thinking this afternoon about the position of Vice Chairman and it occurred to me that the position of Town Council Vice Chairman is a lot like being Vice President of the United States. Both positions require what I would describe as a quiet competence; an ability to stand in the background; to help out when called upon but to never truly come out of the shadows and let one's ability shine. In essence, it is hard to play second fiddle no matter how ably and how harmoniously one follows the tune set by the first violin. You simply don't get the credit that you deserve from your colleagues and from the public and your abilities are often under-estimated. I think that in many ways Ray Rys has, over the past four years as the Council's Vice Chairman, worked very hard within that idiom, outside the limelight, outside what the public is able to see on the television or what the audience gleans from their seats. Those of us who have served on the Council know how hard Ray has worked to foster good rapport between the individual councilors. I know that when the phone rings at my house at eight o'clock at night that there is a very good chance that it is Ray calling wanting to make sure that I knew of something that is going on, updating me on things that he and Bob have done or are about to do. He works very hard to make us all feel included; all feel that our opinions matter; all feel that we are on the same page. If people want to know what the magic of our working as a team is, both republicans and democrats, a large part of it can be ascribed to good communication and Ray has certainly been a critical part of that. Again, something that the public is less apt to catch on television has been the way in which Ray assists Bob. There is no doubt that Bob is a great chairman but no meeting is ever 100% easy to run and part of Bob's greatness has been Ray's attention to detail; Ray's desire to keep the meeting focused. At home on your television sets you simply do not get to see the effort that Ray puts in before every meeting to learn every aspect of the agenda, to know what the motions are that will need to be

made at the meeting and to anticipate how to steer the meeting in such a way that everyone gets their say but things move along. Ray's efforts have gone a long way to help our meetings run smoothly. Even though the job requires a quiet competence, it doesn't earn you a lot of praise. Ray deserves praise and deserves re-election as our Vice Chairman for having done so much outside of the limelight; outside the light of the television cameras for the benefit of those of us sitting here and for the benefit of the Town. It is my pleasure to put his name into nomination."

Councilor Knight: "I certainly would have to concur in everything that Jerry said with the exception of Ray standing in the background, staying in the background or standing in the shadows. I have sat next to Ray or stood next to Ray in many outdoor events and I guarantee you that I am fifteen degrees cooler than anybody else if he stands between the sun and my seat (Applause). Nevertheless I would like to underscore what Jerry so eloquently said about the quiet competence that Ray has demonstrated over the past two years. I have served with him now for six years and I must confess to you that I hardly knew the man when we first started together on the Town Council and I had no idea what it was going to be like. I am delighted to tell you that he has become a close friend of mine and, in more than one occasion, I publicly have used the phrase of describing somebody who you would want to share a foxhole with. I wasn't in the service but I certainly understand the message intended by the phrase of a person with honor and integrity that would stand with you and stand with his principles through thick and through thin and that is the man that I have gotten to know by the name of Raymond J. Rys, Sr. and I am honored to second his nomination."

Chairman Parisi called for further nominations for Vice Chairman at this time. Hearing none he called for a motion to close nominations.

Mr. Farrell moved that nominations be closed, seconded by Mr. Knight.

Chairman Parisi called for a Roll Call Vote: Centner, present; Brodinsky, Farrell, Knight, Papale, Rys, Vumbaco, Zappala and Parisi voted for Rys.

An 8-0 vote in favor of Raymond J. Rys, Sr. for Vice Chairman was recorded.

Chairman Parisi stated that nominations were not formally closed for Vice Chairman and asked that someone make a motion to close nominations.

Councilor Knight moved to Close Nominations, seconded by Mr. Farrell.

VOTE TO CLOSE NOMINATIONS FOR VICE CHAIRMAN: All ayes; motion duly carried.

Chairman Parisi congratulated Vice Chairman Rys at this time.

(Applause)

Mr. Rys: "I would like to thank Jerry Farrell for that wonderful nomination and Mr. Knight, my colleague. I plan to work with all the councilors and I hope that the next two years are our best years. Thank you."

Chairman Parisi stated: "Mayor, with your indulgence, I have put in one item here that I would like to get done tonight. We normally would wait to do it but I would rather do it tonight. I have the prerogative, as most people know, of appointing a Minority Leader, and it has been done by the chairman for as long as I can remember and that goes back a fair piece, as they say, and it has been an appointment by either a republican chairman or a democratic chairman so it isn't anything new. This evening it is a privilege for me to appoint my not only dear friend but my colleague Councilwoman Iris Papale as the Minority Leader. (Applause)

SWEARING-IN OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

At this time Chairman Parisi asked that the following individuals step forward to be sworn in by Judge Wright as members of the Board of Education:

Carmen J. Arisco, Jr.
Patricia L. Corsetti
Phyllis DeChello
Karen A. Hlavac
Andre P. Loubier
Pamela F. Mangini
Valerie A. Nolan-Ford
Michael Spiteri
Michael Votto

Judge Wright administered the Oath of Office: "Do you solemnly swear that you will faithfully discharge, according to law, your duties as members of the Board of Education to the best of your ability, so help you God?"

A collective "I do" was the response given.

(Applause)

APPOINTMENT AND SWEARING-IN OF TOWN CLERK

Chairman Parisi called for nominations for the position of Town Clerk.

Councilor Farrell: "I am pleased to put into nomination for Town Clerk the name of Rosemary Rascati. Rosemary has served many terms as our Town Clerk. I get the opportunity to travel the state and check out other municipality's Town Clerk's Offices and I can report that none of them are in as good a shape as ours is and that is very much due to the efforts of Rosemary. I am glad that she will continue as our Town Clerk and make that office an accessible and friendly one for the people of Wallingford as she has in the past."

Councilor Knight: "I would like to second the nomination. Certainly Jerry (Farrell) has more first hand experience about the kind of professional work that Rosemary does but I don't think that there is anybody up here (Council) or in this audience that does not understand what a wonderful human being we have occupying this position and I am very proud to second that nomination."

Chairman Parisi called for further nominations. Hearing none he asked that nominations be closed.

Mr. Farrell moved that Nominations be close, seconded by Mr. Rys.

VOTE TO CLOSE NOMINATIONS FOR TOWN CLERK: All ayes; motion duly carried.

VOTE FOR TOWN CLERK: A vote of 9-0 was cast in favor of Rosemary Rascati for Town Clerk.

(Applause)

Judge Wright administered the Oath of Office: "Do you solemnly swear that you will faithfully discharge according to law your duties as the Town Clerk of Wallingford to the best of your ability, so help your God?"

Mrs. Rascati: "I do."

(Applause)

BENEDICTION REV. ERIC FJEIDAL

Let us pray, and now gracious God as we prepare to leave this place, keep us ever mindful of the hopes and dreams that were expressed this night. Help us to remember that these hopes and dreams are not just for us but for all whose lives are impacted by our choices and decisions. Remind us too that we will not always know who will be impacted by what we do so keep us focused, diligent and vigilant. Guide us so that at all times and in all places we may be faithful to you. We ask this of both our elected officials and for us, the residents of this community, that we may all continue to live responsible lives before you and one another. May we strive to serve and be present with all we meet, welcoming and embracing all your children. Empower us with your grace, your wisdom and humility that the prayers of our lips, the works of our hands and the path of our feet may proclaim your hope and offer healing to those who need it most. Unite us in faithfulness and service, we ask, in your name, amen.

The Sheehan High School Brass Ensemble, led by Mr. Fred E. Rossomando, performed God Bless America a this time.

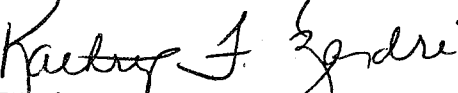
(Applause)

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

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

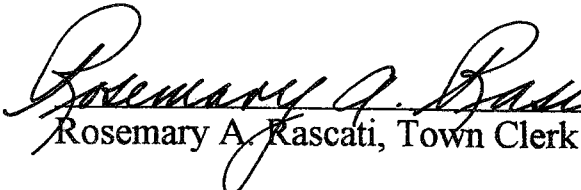
Meeting recorded and transcribed by:


Kathryn F. Zandri
Town Council Secretary

Approved by:


Robert F. Parisi, Chairman


Date


Rosemary A. Rascati, Town Clerk


Date