
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 11, 2003

6:30 P.M.

AGENDA

Blessing

1. Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call
 2. Correspondence
 3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Consider and Approve Tax Refunds (#490-503) Totaling \$30,513.86 --
- Tax Collector
 - b. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$2,493 from Revenue Highway Safety Acct. #1010-050-5883 to Police Overtime Acct. #001-2005-101-1400 -- Dept. of Police Services
 - c. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$4,000 from Health Insurance Acct. #001-1602-800-8300 to Overtime Acct. #001-1600-101-1400 -- Personnel
 - d. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$1,300 from Folding Card Tables Acct. #001-4001-999-9912; \$500 from Continuing Education Acct. #001-4001-501-5700; \$1,000 from Forest Management Acct. #001-4001-901-9019 and \$500 from Salaries & Wages Acct. #001-4001-101-1000 of Which \$1,300 is Transferred to Capital Aquasaurus Acct. #001-4001-999-9964; \$500 is Transferred to Meetings, Seminars & Dues Acct. #001-4001-701-7990; \$1,000 is Transferred to Vehicle Maintenance Acct. #001-4001-550-5000 and \$500 is Transferred to Overtime Acct. #001-4001-101-1400 -- Parks & Recreation
 - e. Consider and Approve Merit Increases (3) Approved by the Mayor
 - f. Approve and Accept the Minutes of the January 28, 2003 Town Council Meeting
 - g. Approve and Accept the Minutes of the February 11, 2003 Town Council Meeting
 - h. Approve and Accept the Minutes of the February 25, 2003 Town Council Meeting
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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 \$30,000 from Contingency – General Purpose Acct. #001-7060-800-3190 to Overtime Acct. #001-5015-101-1400 – Public Works Dept.
 7. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$75,000 from Health Insurance Acct. #001-1602-800-8300 to Retirement Sick Leave Acct. #001-1602-101-1750 – Personnel
 8. Report Out by the Town Engineer in the form of a Presentation on a Transportation Enhancement Project Application which Includes the Extension of the Quinnipiac River Linear Trail to the Senior Center and the Expansion of the Streetscape Program Along Hall Avenue between U.S. Route 5 and River Road/Community Lake
 9. Consider and Approve a Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Submit an Application to the Council of Governments and Connecticut Department of Transportation for U.S. Federal Highway Administration Transportation Enhancement Funding for an East-West Pedestrian Links Project - Engineering
 10. Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-200(6)(D) of the CT. General Statutes with Respect to the Purchase, Sale and/or Leasing of Property – Mayor

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 11, 2003

6:30 P.M.

ADDENDUM TO AGENDA

11. Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$10,000 from Contingency General Purpose Acct. #001-7060-800-3190 to Contractual Clothing & Other Expenses Acct. #001-5015-401-4800 – Dept. of Public Works

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 11, 2003

6:30 P.M.

SUMMARY

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TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 11, 2003

6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting of the Wallingford Town Council was held on Tuesday, March 11, 2003 in the Robert Earley Auditorium of the Wallingford Town Hall and called to Order by Chairman Robert F. Parisi at 6:33 P.M. Answering present to the Roll called by Town Clerk Rosemary A. Rascati were councilors Doherty, Farrell, Knight, Parisi, Rys, Toman and Vumbaco. Councilor Brodinsky was absent due to illness; Councilor Papale arrived at 6:34 P.M. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr. and Deputy Comptroller Eva Lamothe were also in attendance. Asst. Town Attorney Gerald E. Farrell, Sr. arrived at 6:34 P.M. Chairman Robert F. Parisi left the meeting at 7:21 P.M. to attend a Veteran's Council meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given to the Flag.

In lieu of a blessing, Chairman Parisi offered inspirational thoughts in such unsettling times.

ITEM #2 Correspondence - No items were presented.

ITEM #3 Consent Agenda

ITEM #3a Consider and Approve Tax Refunds (#490-503) Totaling \$30,513.86 - Tax Collector

ITEM #3b Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$2,493 from Revenue Highway Safety Acct. #1010-050-5883 to Police Overtime Acct. #001-2005-101-1400 - Dept. of Police Services

ITEM #3c Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$4,000 from Health Insurance Acct. #001-1602-800-8300 to Overtime Acct. #001-1600-101-1400 - Personnel

ITEM #3d Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$1,300 from Folding Card Tables Acct. #001-4001-999-9912; \$500 from Continuing Education Acct. #001-4001-501-5700; \$1,000 from Forest Management Acct. #001-4001-901-9019 and \$500 from Salaries & Wages Acct. #001-4001-101-1000 of Which \$1,300 is Transferred to Capital Aquasaurus Acct. #001-4001-999-9964; \$500 is Transferred to Meetings, Seminars & Dues Acct. #001-4001-701-7990; \$1,000 is Transferred to Vehicle Maintenance Acct. #001-4001-550-5000 and \$500 is Transferred to Overtime Acct. #001-4001-101-1400 - Parks & Recreation

ITEM #3e Consider and Approve Merit Increases (3) Approved by the Mayor

ITEM #3f Approve and Accept the Minutes of the January 28, 2003 Town Council Meeting

ITEM #3g Approve and Accept the Minutes of the February 11, 2003 Town Council Meeting

ITEM #3h Approve and Accept the Minutes of the February 25, 2003 Town Council Meeting

Motion was made by Mr. Knight to Approve the Consent Agenda as Presented, seconded by Mr. Farrell.

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

ITEM #4 Withdrawn

PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

Wes Lube, 15 Montowese Trail asked, with regards to Wallace Park, in the last budget there was an item for \$10,000 for Phase I, a wrought iron fence. Why did we take down the previous fence and now we've put in a wrought iron fence? Speaking of tight budgets, if you have seen the wrought iron that we got for \$10,000., don't blink twice.

Mayor Dickinson replied, the fence at the pillars on the westerly end was replaced, that was new fencing.

Mr. Lube was aware of the fence.

Chairman Parisi explained, in such an austere year for the budget, Mr. Lube is commenting about the cost.

Mayor Dickinson replied, it was part of our budget and it has been accomplished and the bill has been paid. It was installed weeks or months ago.

Mr. Lube informed the Mayor it was installed a year ago. He asked, this was listed in the budget as "Phase I." What did we have in mind for Phase II and is there a Phase III, IV and/or V?

Mayor Dickinson answered, I don't have knowledge of the other phases and, at this point, I don't believe there is any funding for other phases.

Mr. Lubee asked, why would we enter into a Phase I without any knowledge of whether or not there are any other phases?

Mayor Dickinson stated, the Recreation Department was in the process of putting together improvements to the park. At one point, plans were discussed. There was discussions with the Rotary (Club) as far as a joint project with Rotary. Since then there is a committee that is working with Recreation to design and propose improvements to several of our parks. I think when the wrought iron fence was presented, it was meant to be not an indication that this was all that would ever happen, but Phase I. To my knowledge there has been no finalization regarding other improvements. It was meant to signify that it is not just the wrought iron fence, that ultimately other improvements would be accomplished there.

Mr. Lubee asked, at the time they installed the wrought iron, there were two wrought iron flag poles that have never been used. Why did we spend money on flag poles that have no use or purpose?

Mayor Dickinson replied, they do have a purpose. Ultimately, there would be a desire to have flags of some type flying there, maybe just for special events. It is meant to be decorative and, as you know, when you get into decorative items some of it is in the eye of the beholder. Who thinks its nice; who doesn't think it is nice.

Mr. Lubee stated, the (flag) poles have been there for a year and we have had special events and we have never used them. They are not part of the wrought iron. They are set into the middle of the sidewalks, independently, and there are two of them. They have the halliards for raising and lowering flags, but no flags ever appear there. I wondered who ordered them;, why were they ordered; and what did the person have in mind that ordered them?

Mayor Dickinson replied, it is meant to be a decorative item at the park and, at the point that perhaps other improvements are made, then the flag poles would come in to more constant use.

Mr. Lubee stated, there is no question that that park is one of the parks in the downtown area that is utilized quite often, almost on a daily basis during the summer and it is unfortunate that we have spent \$10,000 on something that is purely decorative and appealing only to some people when there are so many other things that that could have used that \$10,000 in that park. It is not money well spent, sir.

Mayor Dickinson replied, I understand that but remember we also did the period lights and the sidewalk improvements all around the park as well. Some people like that; some people don't, but it is all meant to improve the appearance of that park and encourage people to enjoy themselves when they are there.

Mr. Lube asked, why are we talking about going to the federal government for more money for Hall Avenue when, on Quinnipiac Street, we still haven't finished that project? We have ten lights, old lights, at the higher elevation, that are still standing there how many years after that project was supposedly put to bed? We were sold the idea that we were going to have these nice, low elevation lights, and we were going to do away with the high lights. It hasn't happened. The ten street lights; the old-fashioned street lights are still there on the wood poles.

Mayor Dickinson asked, Town Engineer, John Thompson to respond to Mr. Lube's comments.

Mr. Thompson explained, the ornamental lights were exactly that, ornamental in nature. They were never intended to necessitate or warrant the removal of the overhead lights. We always envision that the lights that were on the wood poles were going to be retained for enhancement of the overall lighting characteristics of the street. There was never one or the other; it was a plan that the ornamental lights would be put in and the overhead cobra-type lights would be retained.

Mr. Lube thanked Mr. Thompson for his explanation but replied, that was not the way it (the project) was sold. We were told those poles would only remain there to the convenience of the abutting property owners on the north side of town while they connected to the underground but the streetlights could not stay there for the poles were ultimately going to go. That was the reason for the underground.

Chairman Parisi stated, alright, I think that's the answer. That's the answer he's given. Whether or not you agree with it, that's another thing.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville spoke about a general newspaper article, statewide, about parents and students pushing for cleaner air in schools. He wanted local, state and federal officials to work together on the issue.

Chairman Parisi stated, this is not the place for it.

Mr. Melillo was opposed to the proposed \$1 million tunnel for the Quinnipiac River Linear Trail. The money is tight and we could use that money for other things. What are we doing about it, he asked?

Chairman Parisi replied, I don't think there is a majority that is in agreement with you.

Mr. Melillo continued, there are senior citizens who could use that money bad.

Chairman Parisi stated that Mr. Melillo should tell those who are calling him to complain that they should call the Councilors, for the Councilors are not getting any calls about it.

Mr. Melillo stated, with regards to PP&L who are appealing their tax assessment; a couple of days ago they raised their dividends, therefore they must be doing good.

Chairman Parisi stated, they are lucky they can do that in these times. That has nothing to do with the issue.

Mr. Melillo asked, what is the status of the ball field issue?

Chairman Parisi, nothing has been reported.

Mr. Melillo replied, that is amazing.

Ted Curran, 116 Knollwood Drive asked, if the audit report has been received yet and, as a citizen am I allowed to get a copy of it?

Mayor Dickinson answered, yes, the Town has received the audit report. The Town Clerk has one and we don't have the (extra) books in as of yet. At the point we have the books, you can have a book. We received a few copies but they are going to be sending multiple copies. They were supposed to be here today so, hopefully, by the end of this week we will have all of them.

Mr. Curran asked, so sometime by the middle of next week I will be entitled to receive a copy of it?

Mayor Dickinson repeated, you can see a copy of it now. The Town Clerk has a copy but you can have a copy once we receive the others.

Public Question and Answer Period was closed at this time.

ITEM #6 Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$30,000 from Contingency – General Purpose Acct. #001-7060-800-3190 to Overtime Acct. #001-5015-101-1400 – Public Works Dept.

Motion was made by Mr. Knight to Approve the Transfer, seconded by Mr. Farrell.

The snow on Saturday evening, March 1st, has depleted the department's overtime account and the department is over-expended by \$2,026. The overtime so far this winter is as follows:

Overtime to start:	\$ 180,000
Transfer on 1/6/03	25,000
Transfer on 2/10/03	50,000
Total Amended Overtime	\$ 255,000

Expenditures prior to winter were \$43,000., making the total winter expenditures \$214,026.

Henry McCully, Director of Public Works explained, I always base my overtime on a five year basis; \$185,000 is the average. So far this year we spent \$238,000. and, if we take into consideration the last five years for budgetary purposes this year, the number would only go up by \$5,000. Our last big year was 2000-01 at which time we expended \$265,000. That was a bad winter.

Chairman Parisi felt it was very obvious the department would find itself in this position considering the number of storms that we have experienced and the severity and timing of them, coming on the weekends and holiday. We express our thanks. Please relay it to your department and tell them how many fine comments we have had about their performance during this adverse weather.

Mr. Melillo stated, the Public Works Department did an excellent job. He stated that he helped out by clearing three of his own street's catch basins and urged people to do the same when faced with such large storms where the Public Work's crews cannot do everything at once.

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

Motion was made by Mr. Knight to Move Agenda Item #11 Up to the Next Order of Business, seconded by Mr. Farrell.

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

ADDENDUM ITEM #11 Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$10,000 from Contingency General Purpose Acct. #001-7060-800-3190 to Contractual Clothing & Other Expenses Acct. #001-5015-401-4800 Dept. of Public Works

Motion was made by Mr. Knight to Approve the Transfer, seconded by Mr. Farrell.

This transfer is being requested to fulfill contractual obligations one of which is attributable to the aforementioned overtime situation, specifically meal allowances, another is for clothing allowance. Also included in this transfer are funds to cover expenses booked against the two accounts resulting from any further snowstorms and miscellaneous work (meal allowances) for the balance of the fiscal year.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, is this all for meal allowances?

Mr. McCully answered, you have to understand. There are several other items in this account, clothing allowance, etc. The meal allowances are paid on a monthly basis. The meal allowances for February were very high and went over the amount that was budgeted in that account, as part of that account.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, is the \$10,000 to cover the meal allowance overage or is it to cover various other...

Mr. McCully answered, only the meal allowance overage, yes.

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

ITEM #7 Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$75,000 from Health Insurance Acct. #001-1602-800-8300 to Retirement Sick Leave Acct. #001-1602-101-1750 – Personnel

Motion was made by Mr. Knight to Approve the Transfer, seconded by Ms. Doherty.

Correspondence from Terence Sullivan, Personnel Director explains, the transfer is needed to cover higher than anticipated costs associated with the fourteen (14) retirements this fiscal year. The payment is a contractual obligation and is often difficult to plan for accurately. In some years we have spent only a portion of our budget while other years we require transfers.

Mr. Vumbaco, why is the \$75,000 available from the Health Insurance Account?

Mr. Sullivan first introduced the Town's new Assistant Personnel Director, James Hutt. Mr. Sullivan explained, Mr. Hutt has fifteen years government experience and brings a lot of experience to the town in Personnel administration and started working here approximately three weeks ago.

In response to Mr. Vumbaco's question, Mr. Sullivan stated, we typically budget between six and eight vacancies at the family rate. Going into this budget I anticipated approximately \$84,000 that we may or may not spend due to vacancies. We have had a higher number of vacancies this year than we have had in previous years. At any given time this last year, we have had about 20-25 vacancies which is incredible. It has caused us to go over in other accounts. Last time I was here we were talking about transferring from office supplies for advertising. It is kind of a vicious circle. The money is there and we always budget a little extra just in case of vacancies being filled.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, this is just a favorable variance, for lack of filling positions?

Mr. Sullivan answered, yes, for every position we don't fill for that contract month, we have that money available.

VOTE: Brodinsky & Parisi were absent; Parisi was absent from his seat and therefore did not cast a vote; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

Chairman Parisi left the meeting at 7:21 P.M. to attend a Veteran's Council meeting.

ITEM #8 Report Out by the Town Engineer in the form of a Presentation on a Transportation Enhancement Project Application which Includes the Extension of the Quinnipiac River Linear Trail to the Senior Center and the Expansion of the Streetscape Program Along Hall Avenue between U.S. Route 5 and River Road/Community Lake

Town Engineer, John Thompson, explained, I am here to provide you with an update of where we are in the application process for the next enhancement application. The project entails two components; the streetscape element on Hall Avenue between Route 5 and Community Lake Park. That project in all intents and purposes will follow exactly the same kind of framework that we had followed for the Quinnipiac Street Corridor Project. It will involve new concrete sidewalk, brick sidewalk bands between the area of Route 5 and Washington. It involves street trees, ornamental lights, new catch basin tops and a roadway overlay so that we have a smoother travel surface when the project is done. Essentially, if you drove down Hall Avenue in the future, you would see an identical situation to what you currently see on Quinnipiac Street. The second element of the project is the so-called Senior Center connection which is an extension of the Quinnipiac River Linear Trail originating at Community Lake Park and extended around the future lake bed and connecting to the senior center. Those two projects are part of our application for the enhancement application. We will be making presentation tomorrow to the Council of Governments for this project. The project will be funded 80% by the federal government and 20% by the Town of Wallingford with local monies. That's the update on the project. The graphic you see on display tonight depicts the two areas that we are working on. It is the same graphic that was part of the Council's packet with the outline. The second part of the action tonight is a request from the Mayor's Office through the Engineering Department for your authorization for the Mayor to make application to the Council of Governments and subsequently to the Department of Transportation for the commitment of Town resources and an indication that the Town Council is in support of the project and will authorize the Mayor to make application on behalf of the Town of Wallingford.

Chairman Parisi stated that he was able to attend the public presentation that Mr. Thompson facilitated and thought it was very well done.

Ms. Papale stated, last week she received the Wallingford Voice publication. From the news printed about this item, she got the impression...that Simpson Court was going to have some work done.

Mr. Thompson replied, you can't believe everything that you read in the (news)paper.

Ms. Papale stated, the picture was there.

Mr. Thompson answered, Simpson Court is not part of the application. It is only Hall Avenue and the senior center connection. There is no proposed work, as part of this enhancement application for Simpson Court. Simpson Court is done.

Ms. Papale stated, approximately a half-dozen people questioned me after reading the same article and I just wanted to clear that up.

Mr. Thompson stated, the picture was misleading.

Mr. Farrell asked, you stated that it would be the identical situation as Quinnipiac Street. Do I take that to mean that the overhead electrical wires and poles are not going to be removed and we are going to see them side by side with gas lights?

Mr. Thompson answered, as part of the project we are proposing the undergrounding of utilities on Hall Avenue from Route 5 to Cherry Street, the same undergrounding that we had followed with the Quinnipiac Street Corridor project. The overhead utilities on the rest of the project will remain exactly as they are today. The cost of undergrounding those utilities is phenomenal and would drive the cost of the project beyond the ability for the Town to fund it.

Mr. Farrell asked, why did we do them elsewhere but not on Quinnipiac Street and not on Hall Avenue? If you look back, there were certain sections of Center Street where they were taken down; there were certain sections of South Main and North Main where undergrounding was done, maybe not 100% but some of it had been done back in the 1960s but there was some undergrounding that was done in all of the other phases of the beautification that have occurred other than Quinnipiac Street and what is being proposed.

Mr. Thompson stated, I cannot answer. Perhaps the Mayor would like to expand on what was done previously. All I can speak to is what is currently being proposed and what we did on the Quinnipiac Street Corridor project, in terms of trying to retain the same treatment so there is a consistency between the two spokes coming into the downtown.

Mr. Farrell stated, I just regret having voted for the Quinnipiac Street project. I go back to the comments that Lucille Trczinsky made that night; in the end it looks sort of strange to see the ornamental lights with the overhead electrical wires running above them. It takes away from the effect.

Mr. Thompson replied, you and I have shared this discussion. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder and the cost was a major consideration and continues to be a major consideration.

Mr. Farrell asked, I am correct, the conversion of the American Legion Building into a visitor's center would have been an eligible project under this particular grant program? I

read quite a few circulars from the D.O.T. that said, visitor centers were eligible for enhancement funding under the T21.

Mr. Thompson answered, one could have made an application for funding; it was one of the elements of the overall enhancement application. It wasn't a consideration. We considered jointly with the Council of Governments where we had the highest probability of success in making an application and that's, essentially, how we got to the streetscape and the trail. It was an expansion of two existing town facilities that were transportation oriented. Through the Mayor, the Council of governments, and my department, we had to make a decision where we had the highest probability of success in getting the money. That is how we arrived at the decision for these particular elements.

Mr. Farrell replied, it seems odd that the mailings that I got from the D.O.T. were joint with the Council of Governments saying that the Town should apply to its local Council of Governments for funding for a visitor's center. It wasn't specific to Wallingford; it was generic to all of Connecticut. Was there any discussion of that as a potential project?

Mr. Thompson answered, not that I was a party to.

Mayor Dickinson stated, this is a particular program, this is enhancement funds. It's supposed to be of a nature of what we are applying for. I am not aware of any other town applying for a specific rehabilitation of a building.

Mr. Thompson added, it could be considered as an eligible cost but it was stretching it. You're right, nobody's done it yet so that was one of the things that would make it highly problematic in terms of...

Mayor Dickinson interjected, all of the projects I am aware of deal with actual transportation; trails, highways, all of those features and D.O.T. is the one that sets the priority on this and we're competing with some other towns that also have existing projects such as the canal and they have been able to receive quite a bit of money in the past and will be stiff competition when it comes to deciding who is going to get the money.

Mr. Farrell replied, no offense but, when we had the debate back this summer over the American Legion, I did mention as a possibility and subsequently there was all sorts of advertising out of D.O.T., the Council of Governments, the National Trust for Historic Preservation that there was a big push on that this was now an eligible activity under the enhancement funding. I guess I am sort of surprised that, given that we have had this big debate over there being no town funds for the American Legion, that we passed up the opportunity for some federal funding.

Mayor Dickinson answered, remember, this is 80% federally funded, 20% local and certainly my position has been, we do not need that building and should not put local money into it.

Mr. Farrell commented, but we never even had a discussion about what the appropriate item to apply for was.

Mr. Knight stated, with regards to North Cherry Street, the sidewalk that abuts Hall Avenue is a mess; has been a mess for years. I can't imagine that we are going to invest a couple of million dollars in streetscape improvements and not perhaps move up this sidewalk repair as part of it, even if it is part of our local sidewalk program. The contrast between a \$2 million investment on Hall Avenue and the decrepit condition of the sidewalk on North Cherry Street would be very obvious and I would hope that you would take this opportunity to use this as a rationale for repairing that sidewalk, which I have been asking for, for years.

Mr. Thompson replied, you have. The answer is, as Mr. Parisi has said to me on sidewalk issues a number of times, projects have to begin and end at some point and regrettably, we just can't expand every single project to include everything that we would like it to cover. The rationale for this particular application was, that we are treating the spine or spoke of the wheel coming into the downtown. How we do North Cherry Street or Washington or any of the other streets off of it, we will have to deal with as a separate matter on a case by case basis. If we get lucky in terms of getting good prices on this and the funds are available, it is certainly something we can consider but, at the present time, it is not part of the job.

Chairman Parisi asked, why can't this be coordinated with our regular sidewalk program? I think that is what he is referring to. I would think this would be the ideal time to coordinate this. It's long enough; I know they don't like to do short walks. They could have a ball with this one.

Mr. Thompson replied, in terms of the sidewalk rehabilitation program, which is a separately funded item above and beyond the enhancement monies that we are talking about here, we also have a definitive program, a schedule of where we are going, street by street, season by season for the next several years. Then we have to follow that, otherwise we would jump around and we would never make any meaningful progress in terms of going after the areas. We have broken the town into quadrants and we are trying to follow...

Chairman Parisi interjected, that is very credible, but here you are going to disrupt the whole place anyway, so why not, at the time you are going to cause this major disruption, take care of the sidewalk, too. I understand schedules and everything, but there isn't a schedule that wasn't meant to be altered or was built with a little bit of flexibility in it, too. It is something you might think about.

Mr. Knight stated, what I am asking for is not just a deviation from a schedule you've set, which makes a lot of sense, but here's a rationale for a deviation; a very good rationale, John. There is \$2 million that is going to be put into this neighborhood and we are going to leave this decrepit sidewalk with two-thirds of the panels broken and cracked adjacent to it. That doesn't make any sense; not to me.

Mayor Dickinson explained, you couldn't just choose Cherry. Then every one of the streets along there would also have to be part of a program because wherever there is poor sidewalk would require treatment. How do you determine that just Cherry should receive that as an intersecting road. There is also Washington (St.), Bull Avenue and I don't know how many others.

Chairman Parisi replied, that is not necessarily true because you are going to disrupt that area anyway with the program that is going on so why not do it all at once instead of doing it all at once and then when the cycle comes around and we have to do Cherry Street then, then it is a second interruption for the people.

Mayor Dickinson answered, we have to look at whether the money we have would handle all of those streets, number one,; and, number two; you would have to suspend the rest of the program wherever they were supposed to go, those people will have to wait and the people in that area would receive the sidewalks.

Ms. Papale stated, I also agree that, many times, exceptions have to be made. I don't know the last time that you have been in the area. I know that you have been down there or your crew has been down there and checked it out because we talk to people that work for you. Before we make any kind of a decision, I would hope that you take the time after the winter and look at Cherry Street and compare it with some of the other streets that may be in between Quinpiac Street and Hall Avenue. You won't find one as bad as Cherry Street and maybe that's where the exception can be made before something happens there. It is not a good site, John. Just say that you'll go down and look.

Mr. Thompson replied, without making a commitment...

Ms. Papale responded, no, I'm not asking for a commitment but if you look at it I think you are going to see where we are coming from.

Chairman Parisi stated, I thought at one time it was based on need, too, not only on the schedule but the severity of the condition that exists. I think that at least four of us might be very concerned about the situation there. I would hope that perhaps your department might see it as we do.

Ms. Papale continued, we are always looking at how we can be saving money or looking to see where the money is going. It just makes a lot of sense to me and I think that money

would be saved to be working in that area and just to go on and do Cherry Street. Maybe there is a part of Washington Street that is bad but there's going to be all kinds of materials and trucks. It just doesn't make sense why you would leave such a bad street alone and have to come back a year or three years from now or whenever it is on the schedule. That is all I have to say.

Ms. Doherty asked, this is being presented to the Council tonight for our approval or disapproval of a resolution for submitting an application. It is my understanding that there are four other applicants?

Mr. Thompson answered, there are four, in total. There are three other applicants besides the Town.

Ms. Doherty asked, if we do get it, what kind of timeline is there as far as approval because we are dealing with the Department of Transportation, correct?

Mr. Thompson replied, and as you have learned through your experience on Phase II that the process is slow. The enhancement program that we are applying for this money on is exactly the same process that we are going through on Phase II. The question was raised at the public information meeting, how soon can this happen? We are talking about a program that, if we are successful in getting funding, would probably take well over a year to design. We are now going into the summer, 2003 construction schedule. It is highly unlikely that this construction that we are talking about tonight would occur before 2004-05 so we are out a few years. I hear what you are saying about Cherry Street, about Washington and you have my commitment above and beyond what we are talking about for enhancement that if an opportunity presents itself with respect to our department sidewalk program, we will re-evaluate it based on need and schedule of commitments that we have already. Beyond that, I hesitate to deviate because we are going to get into a situation of why did we stop, if we are working on North Elm Street, currently, just north of Center Street and you look to the other side of Elm Street, the people are going to say, but you were right there, why didn't you go across the street. It is the same rationale that you are using and I don't mean to get away from your question, but there was an opportunity to rationalize. There is a logic to what we do, it doesn't always seem apparent and sidewalks are one of the most visible things that we deal with, but we do try to follow a systematic program in going after these areas, one area after another. But I assure you, I've told you that I will go and look at it again, as soon as the snow goes away. If there is an opportunity to do something, whether it is through a slight expansion of the enhancement or our sidewalk program, we will certainly look at it.

Ms. Doherty asked, if the application is approved, where does it go from there?

Mr. Thompson answered, tomorrow I make a presentation to the Council of Governments in a competitive environment with the three other towns. The Council may elect to prioritize the applications, 1, 2, 3, 4 or they may elect to pass on all four projects at a

uniform ranking to a full meeting of the Council of Governments on March 26th. After that, the submission of the four projects, either prioritized or as uniformly ranked, would go to the Department of Transportation and they would then take all the projects from the eight regions and then try to come up with some prioritized ranking for those projects. There is a limited amount of dollars that are coming out of the federal government for this program and the state is going to have to make some decision as to which projects within which regions are going to be funded. I believe we are in a very strong position to move ahead on these. We have not received any enhancement monies in the past through the program. We received a high priority designation. They are expansions of existing projects, we have the monies in place, we have done the public information meeting with the hopeful endorsement of the Council this evening, we can go to the Council of Governments tomorrow and satisfy all of the elements for a successful application. I feel fairly confident that what we are proposing meets the criteria and that we have done all the things necessary to satisfy a high priority through the region.

Chairman Parisi stated, I want to clarify that I was not criticizing what you are attempting to do. Quite frankly, I think it is the right thing to do, to have an orderly approach to the problem of dealing with sidewalks. You and I have had many conversations about the procedure. My point was, there are times when, due to safety factors or whatever, that schedules can't always be adhered to, that something more important presents itself. That was where I was coming from, in no way was I criticizing what you did because I think it does make a lot of sense but there is always that special situation and I think that many of us feel that exists right here.

Chairman Parisi stated, I apologize. I have to attend a Veteran's Council Meeting. Mr. Knight will Chair the rest of the meeting.

Mr. Toman stated, you mentioned that there are eight regions and there could be as many as thirty or forty projects; we don't know.

Mr. Thompson answered, I don't know.

Mr. Toman continued, you are telling us that all of these projects are going to the state who is going to prioritize them in a certain way. Does it help to bring in the influence of our state representatives or state senator? We have two senior state representatives. Has that been done or it is going to help us get our priority a little higher?

Mr. Thompson answered, I can't answer whether political pressure at the state legislative level might have a bearing on a decision. I suspect in all candor there probably would be an opportunity but I just don't know how you deal with multiple regions and multiple projects within those regions and each of them trying to exert legislative influence on the selection process.

Mr. Toman replied, we have such senior representatives, they have been around for decades in office. I am wondering if they have been brought in on this to help our cause?

Mr. Thompson answered, we have been meeting regularly and, as you know, Mary Mushinsky is Co-Chair of the Quinnipiac River Linear Trail and is aware of this application. (State Senator) Len Fasano has been very active and very aggressive in supporting the Quinnipiac River Linear Trail at the D.O.T. level and at the state enhancement level. I think they are playing a role in supporting the Town of Wallingford, I just don't know whether exerting political pressure is even feasible at this particular stage of the application process. I can't answer that.

Mayor Dickinson commented, it probably is not the best way to go at this point given that any major city has far more voices supporting its interests in Wallingford. Whether it is the capital region or New Haven region or Bridgeport, the major cities have far more legislators and many of them are in key positions regarding finance and everything else.

Mr. Toman asked, don't we have legislators who are in key positions?

Mayor Dickinson replied, not in the numbers that you have with these major...most of the money through COG (Council of Governments) goes to urban areas, that is just a fact of life; it has always been and probably always will be for a variety of reasons. I am just not convinced that this type of issue would be one that we would benefit by, by creating more voices calling and debating the issue behind the scenes.

Mr. Toman responded, I guess I'll just wonder when I read campaign literature next time around and I hear people telling me that they have been in office for 2 ½ or 3 decades and they can do so much for us.

Mayor Dickinson replied, and they do. I am not at all downplaying the importance of the legislators but there is an administrative process that takes place and the administrative process is not necessarily directly tied to the legislative process. This is federal money that is coming in and the commissioner certainly plays a role and there are aspects to it that I don't think we are necessarily at an advantage when you start dealing with the inner workings of the D.O.T. It operates on a different scale. If we are able to get the approval of C.O.G. and I am hopeful that will occur, then there may be a time when it is appropriate to be calling everyone and call but I know sometimes that can be a hindrance because there are people in state offices who don't want to be lobbied. It's a judgment call that, certainly at this point, I don't think we want to necessarily call in all of the avenues of support that possibly could be called upon for fear that it may end up working in another direction.

Mr. Toman answered, I hope the momentum is timed well when you do make that decision. Because if we are behind the eight ball because we are not a large city, it seems to me that we need all the help we can get.

Mayor Dickinson commented, but picture all legislators, all calling D.O.T. If we do it, everyone else is going to do it. Now how do they sort it out? It only confuses the issue, it doesn't make it clearer because there is far more pressure that can be brought to bear by some of the others than by us because they have more people representing them. It is not an even playing field. Sometimes it certainly helps but sometimes it hurts and I know of instances for both. I just don't think this issue is the type that is at a scale or level that we should be seeking everyone to be lobbying and, in a sense, politicizing it in a way that, right now, I am not sure is appropriate.

Mr. Vumbaco asked Mr. Thompson, in your letter under funding you say, "20% of the Town's total... would be \$460,000.; federal share at 80%... would be \$1.8 million." But if I go over to the resolution that the Council is going to be asked to approve in a few minutes, it says that the Town is going to put up \$615,000. What is the right number?

Mr. Thompson answered, the numbers don't always balance out the way that they appear to. Without getting this any more complicated than it already be with the numbers, in paragraph two in the draft resolution, you see a number, "\$2.126 million" which is the estimated construction cost exclusive of the non-participating cost which is the utility relocation cost. If you take 20% of that \$2.126 million, it comes out to \$425,000. If you then take the total project cost which is the number in the second to last paragraph in the resolution of the \$2.386 million and the Town's share being \$615,000., that \$615,000 is broken up as follows; \$425,000 which is 20% of the eligible construction costs; there is a \$60,000 component for telephone relocation and a \$5,000 cost for the AT&T which is the cable cost. That adds up to approximately \$490,000. On top of that is \$125,000 for the relocation of the Wallingford electric facilities that are within that cost. That is a non-participating town cost. If you add all of those up it comes to the \$615,000.

Mr. Vumbaco stated, the Town is kicking in more than just 20% of the project, then.

Mr. Thompson answered, Wallingford Electric Division is making a contribution to the project.

Mr. Vumbaco replied, it still comes out of taxpayer's money so. I just wanted to be assured that it is not; is in excess of 20% total.

Mr. Thompson answered, with their contribution, that's correct.

Mr. Vumbaco pointed out, with regards to the resolution verbiage, the Council is referred to as a "City Council" and should be changed to read, "Town Council." I know it is a minor thing but in the second to the last paragraph it reads, "The Town of Wallingford, by action of the City Council intends to make \$615,000...". We are a Town Council and not a City Council.

Mr. Knight asked, can we make that change, Mayor, without a motion?

Mayor Dickinson replied, it can be changed. It is not a problem. A question for John (Thompson), has the Electric Division indicated that they can do that? The last I heard they were not able to do it.

Mr. Thompson answered, I spoke to Ray (Smith, Director of Public Utilities?) right before the meeting this evening and he indicated that it was not in his budget but it was certainly something at the time that when construction came about it was something they could consider in conjunction with your office.

Mayor Dickinson replied, it wasn't the financial aspect, it was the actual routing of the electricity that was the problem.

Mr. Thompson explained, there are issues that are not yet resolved.

Mayor Dickinson stated, I just want to make it clear, there's been no real, unless he has done it, there has been no real analysis as to the capability of dealing with this, the electric routing.

Mr. Thompson stated, there are serious issues still outstanding.

Mayor Dickinson continued, so that is not a given part of this at this point. Last I heard, like I said, there were some serious problems as to how to route the electricity and there are some major junctions on Cherry Street.

Mr. Knight stated, there is probably a lot of sentiment on this Council that the utility undergrounding that has been discussed tonight is something that we would like. How are we going to make our...

Mayor Dickinson replied, it will require further analysis. The last I was aware of this as part of this was the problems regarding rights-of-way and it would require, I believe, rights-of-way across several properties in order to provide power to those properties. It depends upon the willingness of property owners to allow those rights-of-way. Right now they are either aerial or they are off the street and, as far as I know, there are some significant issues regarding electricity.

Mr. Thompson stated, that is putting it mildly but, those issues; we have met with Wallingford Electric in the field, we've met with AT&T, we have met with SNET and, as the Mayor indicated, there are very serious issues in terms of undergrounding the utilities but until we move ahead into an actual design phase about getting into the details of where we might need easements, whether it is on Johanna Fishbein Park or whether it is a relocation of aerial wires, it is really a design detail that needs to be resolved. At this point other than saying it is very serious and it is complicated, I can't say whether it is not doable or unachievable or achievable. It is one element that we would like to see as part of

the project but it is an element that requires considerable analysis to make a final decision whether it is viable.

Mr. Knight asked, what is the next step in terms of this body once this application has been made? Is it whether or not it is acted upon and granted?

Mr. Thompson answered, the next action by the Town Council would be a recognition of requests in the department of Public Works and Engineering six year capital where we are showing a funding request for the first year of the project. If we are successful, and I believe we have every reason to be confident with the action by the Council of Governments, then we will be back before you to request that money for the first year. The subsequent action would be a request for future years for the construction because these are reimbursement projects. We front the money and then we get reimbursed when the project is complete. The Council would be clearly involved in subsequent actions.

Mr. Knight asked, if the Council then, if we pass this resolution, we are making our statement that the project should include the undergrounding and that will continue to go forward.

Mr. Thompson answered, that is part of the current application and as you can see on the plan, it is identified as one of the goals of the project.

Mr. Knight stated, I wanted to make sure that despite I understand the warning that there may be some complications, it still is going to be, as we see it tonight, part of the project.

Mr. Thompson answered, that is correct.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, what is the maximum amount of money that we are looking for from the federal government? Is it the \$1.840 million? Or is it 80% of the \$2.386 million or 80% of the \$2.126 million?

Mr. Thompson replied, 80% of the \$2.126 million.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, if the project total cost is \$2.386 million and the \$125,000 you talked about with the Electric Division issue and we still want to do the undergrounding and it is feasible but it costs \$250,000., that means the Town is absorbing more so that if we are capping, through this resolution, 80% of the \$2.126 million and the project were to go forward and, hypothetically, it becomes a \$3 million project and the Town has to pick up everything over and above the 80% of the \$2.126 million if it is decided to go forward with the project? Right now you say we don't have a design phase going and we don't really know what true costs are going to be, so we are estimating that it is going to be approximately this amount of money, right? It could go over.

Mr. Thompson answered, it could go higher, it could go lower.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, the most that we are going for with this to the Council of Governments on is 80% of the \$2.126 million; estimate total cost of \$2.386 million?

Mr. Thompson answered, that is correct.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, if we go forward and it is going to be anything more, obviously you have to come back in front of the Council?

Mr. Thompson answered, right.

Mayor Dickinson added, these projects, as has been the case in several other communities do go over budget and then they seek more money from the federal government. We have tried to stay within budgets and I think we did so on the Quinnipiac (project) but that has not often been the case with other communities and then they start absorbing funds from another year and that is happening in the 2004 year; funds are being absorbed for existing projects. It is always possible to go back and ask for more. Whether there will be funds there is an open question, given the constraints the federal government is coming down with.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville stated, with regards to the extension of the linear trail to the senior center, he felt it was a luxury item and was not practical, necessary or needed at this time and should not be included in the request at this time. The monies could be better used for the benefit of the senior citizens who need it desperately, he stated.

No Action Taken

ITEM #9 Consider and Approve a Resolution Authorizing the Mayor to Submit an Application to the Council of Governments and Connecticut Department of Transportation for U.S. Federal Highway Administration Transportation Enhancement Funding for an East-West Pedestrian Links Project - Engineering

Motion was made by Mr. Farrell to Approve the Resolution, seconded by Ms. Doherty.

Motion was Amended to Incorporate the Resolution into the Minutes of the Meeting and to Append a Copy to the Minutes, seconded by Ms. Papale.

Ms. Doherty read the resolution into the record at this time.

*Town Council
Town of Wallingford*

Whereas: The Connecticut Department of Transportation periodically offers municipalities an opportunity to submit applications for U.S. Federal Highway Administration transportation enhancement support provided by *TEA-21* (the *Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century*) (or its successor); and

Whereas: The Town of Wallingford wishes to submit an application per the Connecticut Department of Transportation's June 12, 2002 transportation enhancement solicitation (June 12, 2002 memo from Charles S. Barone to Regional Planning Organization Directors and enclosed "Application Form Instructions: Transportation Enhancement Program" and "Program Guide: 2002") relative to an estimated \$2,126,000 (design and construction) "East-West Pedestrian Links" improvement described in "Application for Transportation Enhancement Funds", attached ; and

Whereas: The Connecticut Department of Transportation's June 12, 2002 memo, "Application Form" and "Program Guide" require that an expression from the Town Council relative to: (1) local share (20 percent of all costs in which the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), administering U.S. Federal Highway Administration funds, will participate and 100 percent of those costs deemed "non-participating" by ConnDOT) and: (2) continued maintenance of improvements accompany said application; and

Whereas: The Town of Wallingford has held a project meeting describing the proposed improvement per the Connecticut Department of Transportation's project application-project selection process after notifying abutting property owners of the meeting by mail and notifying the general public by a legal advertisement published in the *Meriden Record-Journal* and the *New Haven Register* and

Whereas: Comments offered by the public and abutting property owners at the above public meeting and made available to the Town Council were generally favorable.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved By the Town of Wallingford

That the Mayor of Wallingford, William W. Dickinson, Jr. is authorized to submit an "East-West Pedestrian Links" application to the Connecticut Department of Transportation as described above.

That, if the "East-West Pedestrian Links" application is selected for funding by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the Town of Wallingford, by action of the ~~City~~ Council, intends to make \$615,000 available as the non-federal share of the subject \$2,386,000 project per a design-construction schedule to be established together with the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

That, if the "East-West Pedestrian Links" application is selected for funding by the Connecticut Department of Transportation and constructed by the Town of Wallingford, the Town of Wallingford will maintain subject improvements.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION : Brodinsky and Parisi were absent; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

VOTE ON RESOLUTION: Brodinsky and Parisi were absent; Farrell, nay; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

ITEM #10 Executive Session Pursuant to Section 1-200(6)(D) of the CT. General Statutes with Respect to the Purchase, Sale and/or Leasing of Property – Mayor

Motion was made by Mr. Farrell to Enter Into Executive Session, seconded by Ms. Papale.

VOTE: Brodinsky and Parisi were absent; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

The Council entered executive session at 7:45 P.M.

Present in executive session were all councilors (with the exception of Brodinsky & Parisi), Mayor Dickinson and Asst. Town Atty. Farrell, Sr.

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

VOTE: Brodinsky and Parisi were absent; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

The Council exited executive session at 7:52 P.M.

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

VOTE: Brodinsky and Parisi were absent; all others, aye; motion duly carried.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:53 P.M.

Meeting recorded and transcribed by:

Kathryn F. Zandri
Kathryn F. Zandri
Town Council Secretary

RECEIVED FOR RECORD March 20, 2003
AT 3:19 P. M. AND RECORDED BY
Dominy A. Pascale TOWN CLERK

Approved by: Robert F. Parisi (by RR)
Robert F. Parisi, Chairman

3-25-03
Date

Rosemary A. Rascati
Rosemary A. Rascati, Town Clerk

3-25-03
Date