

TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT

*REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING*

Town Council Chambers

**September 25, 2012**

**RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES**

The Regular Meeting of the Wallingford Town Council was called to order at 6:32 P.M. A Moment of Silence was observed, and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance as follows: Vincent Cervoni, Nick Economopoulos, Thomas Laffin, John LeTourneau, Chairman Robert F. Parisi, Rosemary Rascati, John J. Sullivan and Jason Zandri. Councilor Fishbein had an excused absence from the meeting. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr, Town Attorney Gerald E. Farrell, Sr. and Comptroller James Bowes were also in attendance at the meeting.

**2.** Correspondence

*None*

Chairman Parisi wished Jewish residents a Happy New Year and wished the Town Clerk a happy birthday.

**3.** Consent Agenda

**3a.** Consider and Approve Tax Refunds (#164 - #205) totaling \$21,586.10  
Acct. # 001-1000-010-1170 - Tax Collector

**3b.** *Consider and Approve two (2) Merit Review Increases - Personnel  
Removed*

**3c.** Consider and Approve a Transfer in the Amount of \$700 FY 2011-2012 to  
Office Expenses & Supplies Acct # 100-12000-56100 from Salaries & Wages  
Acct # 100-12000-51000 - Personnel

**3d.** Acceptance of Donation and Appropriation in the Amount of \$230 *Youth and Social  
Services Special Fund to Donations* Acct # 2134002-47152 and to Expenditures  
Acct # 21340100-58830 – Youth and Social Services

**3e.** Consider and Approve a Transfer in the Amount of \$10,000 FY 2011-2012 to  
Purchased Services-Ambulance Revenue Recovery Acct # 10020150-56778 from  
Contingency Acct # 10019000-58820 – Fire Chief

**3f.** Consider and Approve an Appropriation in the Amount of \$1,200 to Civil Preparation-  
Emergency Relief Acct # 10010800- New Line and to State Grant Revenue-  
Miscellaneous Acct # 1009051- 45122 – Civil Preparedness

**3g.** Consider and Approve an Appropriation in the Amount of \$800 to Civil Preparation-  
Emergency Relief Acct # 10010800- New Line and to Contingency Acct # 10019000-  
58820 – Civil Preparedness

**3h.** Consider and Approve a Transfer in the Amount of \$1,500 to Regular Salaries  
& Wages Acct # 10010650-51000 from Office Expenses and Supplies Acct #  
10010650-56100 – Town Clerk

**3i.** Consider and Approve a five (5) year Lease Agreement between the Town  
of Wallingford and Comunidad Hispana de Wallingford, Inc. (SCOW)  
for use of 284 Washington Street – Mayor

- 3j. Consider and Approve a one (1) year Lease Agreement between the Town of Wallingford and Comunidad Hispana de Wallingford, Inc. (SCOW) to utilize the first floor of 280 Washington Street (the former Civil Preparedness Building) – Mayor
- 3k. Consider and Approve a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an Agreement with the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation for the purchase of alternative/clean fuel vehicle(s) and to execute any amendments, recisions and revisions thereto – State and Federal Program Administrator
- 3l. Consider and Approve a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute and file an agreement between the State Department of Education and the Town of Wallingford for a grant for FY 2012-2013 not to exceed \$30,000 for a Wallingford Youth Service Bureau and to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required by the Department, to execute a Grant Action request with the State of Connecticut for state financial assistance, if such agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, recisions and revisions thereto and to act as the authorized representative of the Town of Wallingford – Youth and Social Services
- 3m. Consider and Approve a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute and file an application between the State Department of Education and the Town of Wallingford for an enhancement grant for FY 2012-2013 not to exceed \$10,000 and to provide such additional information, to execute such other documents as may be required by the Department, to execute a Grant Action request with the State of Connecticut for state financial assistance, if such an agreement is offered, to execute any amendments, recisions and revisions thereto and to act as the authorizing representative of the Town of Wallingford – Youth and Social Services
- 3n. Consider and Approve a Lease Agreement between the Town of Wallingford and High Road Academy for use of Community Pool Parking Lot between September 2012 and no later than June 19, 2013 for a total rent of \$200 – Parks and Recreation Department
- 3o. Approve minutes of Regular Town Council meeting of September 11, 2012

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA 3a. and 3c. to 3 o.**

**MADE BY: CERVONI**

**SECONDED BY: RASCATI**

**VOTE: 8-AYE; 1-ABSENT (Councilor Fishbein)**

**MOTION PASSED.**

**4. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda**

**3b. Consider and Approve two (2) Merit Review Increases - Personnel**

Councilor Economopoulos was called upon to say why he removed this item from the Consent Agenda. He asked for an explanation from Councilors Laffin and Rascati who serve on the Merit Review Committee. Councilor Laffin stated that they are dedicated employees who are visible and have been doing a lot of extra work lately. He said that they are well respected and that they scored extremely high on all of the rankings with a lot of above average or exceeds expectations. He said that he felt it warranted the increase in their merit step. Councilor Rascati said that she has been on this Committee for a few years. This is a Merit Review rating that is given by the immediate department head; they are supervisors who are not really considered management and not falling under a contract of the union. She noted that it is quite a detailed merit review that is

given. General attitude, personal improvement, extra activities, job performance and points for improvement are judged. She also included things that are done outside their job description. She reported that the review is quite thorough, and when an immediate supervisor comes to them, the recommendations are filled out for the reviewers. She spoke about interviewing. She reported that this began under former Mayor Vumbaco to take care of these people who fall between the cracks.

Councilor Economopoulos asked who makes the evaluation of these people. Chairman Parisi and the Fire Chief reviewed the Fire Marshal. He said that the General Line Foreman was reviewed by his immediate supervisor. He added that the Councilors on the merit review board do ask questions of the people. It's not just automatic. We do ask questions. Councilor Economopoulos sees an \$11,000 jump for one and an almost \$9,000 jump for the other for two years and stated that these two people are eligible again in two more years, making this \$22,000 and almost \$18,000. He said this is mind boggling to him. He doesn't know how we have agreements that make this possible and that he wants to make public that he doesn't think that it is good business for us.

**MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE TWO MERIT REVIEW INCREASES AS DISCUSSED.**

**MADE BY: CERVONI**  
**SECONDED BY: RASCATI**

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**CERVONI: Yes      ECONOMOPOULOS: No      FISHBEIN: Absent**  
**LAFFIN: Yes      LETOURNEAU: Yes      RASCATI: Yes**  
**SULLIVAN: Yes      ZANDRI: Yes      CHAIRMAN PARISI: Yes**  
**7-AYE; 1 NAY; 1 ABSENT**

**THE MOTION PASSED.**

**5. PUBLIC QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD**

Geno Zandri, 9 Balsam Ridge Circle, continued his comments with regard to the police department reporting streetlamps that are out. He said that he is speaking about all over town, not one specific area.

Bill Comerford, 5 Broadview Drive, wanted to know about the square footage of the second floor of the SCOW building in that WCI might be interested in it. He said there are problems with Woodhouse Field #2. Mayor Dickinson stated that no one has reported a problem with the field since it was built.

**6. Discussion and Possible Action regarding the Local 1183 Contract Tentative Agreement - Personnel**

**MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE LOCAL 1183 CONTRACT AGREEMENT.**

**MADE BY: CERVONI**  
**SECONDED BY: RASCATI**

*In Attendance: Terence Sullivan Personnel Director*

Mr. Sullivan stated this agreement is a one-year wage reopener in the fifth year of the contract, which was ratified by the union, for a 1.75% wage increase beginning 7/1/12

and ending 6/30/13. This 135-member union represents Clerical, Sewer, Engineering and Public Works employees. No questions from the public.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**CERVONI: YES      ECONOMOPOULOS: YES      FISHBEIN: Absent**  
**LAFFIN: YES      LETOURNEAU: YES      RASCATI: YES**  
**SULLIVAN: YES      ZANDRI: YES      CHAIRMAN PARISI: YES**  
**8-AYE; 1 ABSENT**

**THE MOTION PASSED.**

7. Consider and Approve a Transfer for FY 2011-2012 in the Amount of \$100,000 to Workers' Compensation Acct # 10012100-52120 from –  
Health Insurance \$45,000 Acct # 10012100-55955  
Property Casualty Insurance- Board of Education \$21,000 Acct # 10012150-55945  
Property Casualty Insurance- General Government \$34,000 Acct # 10012150-55950  
- Personnel

**MOTION TO APPROVE A TRANSFER FOR FY 2011-2012 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$100,000 TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACCT # 10012100-52120 FROM: Health Insurance \$45,000 Acct # 10012100-55955 Property Casualty Insurance- Board of Education \$21,000 Acct # 10012150-55945 Property Casualty Insurance- General Government \$34,000 Acct # 10012150-55950**  
**MADE BY:              CERVONI**  
**SECONDED BY:        RASCATI**

*In Attendance: Terence Sullivan Personnel Director  
Kurt Treiber, Risk Manager*

Mr. Sullivan explained each year in August to September as they look to closing the books, they review to see what monies might be available to replenish the Workers' Compensation Reserve Fund. This fund is used for settlements of long term Workers' Compensation issues. They can't intelligently negotiate settlements without funds in this reserve account. He said from time to time they come to the Town Council to make these settlements. This is an annual event. Councilor Economopoulos confirmed that the health and two insurance accounts had funds available. Mr. Sullivan stated that the three accounts are within their own budget so they look within their own department budget since Personnel handles all of the fringe benefits. He said that he likes to keep things in the same area, so it made sense to transfer from one benefit line to another benefit related fund. They was discussion with regard to closing of the old year. This transfer is for FY 2011-2012. Mr. Bowes said that he would total up transfers from the old year.

Mr. Sullivan reported that they budget for Workers' Comp based upon analysis of claims and previous experience. Mr. Treiber added that the Third Party Administrator performs a workers' compensation forecast using actuarial data of the previous history of claims, and then they project the future payouts of claims. It was clarified that this transfer is not related to operational expenses but that this is a reserve account for settlements.

Mr. Bowes added that this transfer gives the Council flexibility to make lump sum payments on a workers' comp claims that saves money for the town over time. The

intention is to provide flexibility. Mr. Bowes agreed to provide Councilor Economopoulos with a sum total of all transfers from the FT 2011-2012.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**CERVONI: YES      ECONOMOPOULOS: YES      FISHBEIN: Absent**  
**LAFFIN: YES      LETOURNEAU: YES      RASCATI: YES**  
**SULLIVAN: YES      ZANDRI: YES      CHAIRMAN PARISI: YES**  
**8-AYE; 1 ABSENT**

**THE MOTION PASSED.**

8. Consider and Approve a Bid Waiver Request for Pension Experience Study by Hooker and Holcombe, Inc. for a proposed fee of \$16,000 – Personnel

**MOTION TO APPROVE A BID WAIVER REQUEST FOR PENSION EXPERIENCE STUDY BY HOOKER AND HOLCOMBE, IND FOR A PROPOSED FEE OF \$16,000**

**MADE BY:              CERVONI**  
**SECONDED BY:      RASCATI**

*In Attendance: Terence Sullivan Personnel Director*

Mr. Sullivan stated that the bid waiver is for a firm evaluates our pension needs and is based upon a recommendation by the town's actuary to conduct an experience study. It is an opportunity to have a fresh look at the assumptions that go into an actuarial review. There are many factors that should be looked at and are recommended be performed every three (3) to seven (7) years. He said that he thinks that it has not ever been done. It is a review of the assumptions used for wage assumptions, mortality tables, survivorship, investments, turn-over rates and analysis of automatic cost-of-living adjustment. He reported that they can have the report in a month or so. This work is not included in the current, annual bid that we have with them. The firm has the assumptions that they have used all these years and the assumptions that they have picked up from the prior actuarial firm. Mr. Sullivan indicated that this is a good time given the fact that alternative pension arrangements are being studied. He said that this not a audit but rather a study of the assumptions. There was some concern that this study is being done by the town's own actuarial firm, Hooker and Holcombe, Inc. Mr. Sullivan said that this is a common practice. The town can tell them what assumptions to use. This study goes out thirty (30) to forty (40) years.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**CERVONI: YES      ECONOMOPOULOS: YES      FISHBEIN: Absent**  
**LAFFIN: YES      LETOURNEAU: YES      RASCATI: YES**  
**SULLIVAN: YES      ZANDRI: YES      CHAIRMAN PARISI: YES**  
**8-AYE; 1 ABSENT**

**THE MOTION PASSED.**

**MOTION MADE TO GO OUT OF ORDER ON THE AGENDA TO TAKE UP ITEM 11 (Addendum Item).**

**MADE BY:              CERVONI**  
**SECONDED BY:      LAFFIN**  
**VOTE:                  7-AYE; 1 NAY (Economopoulos); 1 ABSENT**  
**MOTION PASSED.**

## **ADDENDUM**

11. Consider and Approve a Resolution of the Wallingford Town Council approving the improvement of public parking in the Simpson Court parking lot located between Center Street and Church Street.

**MOTION MADE TO APPROVE A RESOLUTION OF THE  
WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL APPROVING THE IMPROVEMENT  
OF PUBLIC PARKING IN THE SIMPSON COURT PARKING LOT  
LOCATED BETWEEN CENTER STREET AND CHURCH,**

**MADE BY: CERVONI**

**SECONDED BY: RASCATI**

Chairman Parisi called upon the public for comments on the item.

Geno Zandri, 9 Balsam Ridge Circle, asked about points in this Resolution. He also reminded the Council that this project was recently rejected by the public in a referendum.

Joe Mirra, Chairman, Economic Development Commission (EDC), stated that the mission of the EDC is to enhance the economy of Wallingford. He reported that the Commission is strongly in favor of the improvement project for the rear of Simpson Court. He commented on confusion that existed around the referendum. He called the parking lot a community resource for businesses that come to town, for visitors from Choate, for the business owners that lease space in the Simpson Court, for the young adults who are employed by those businesses, for keeping flow of traffic. He noted that improving the parking lot makes a statement to everyone who comes into town. The EDC looks forward to the Council approving this Resolution.

Debbie Gross, 114 Long Hill Road, asked what does the Resolution mean if the grant is not approved. Mayor Dickinson stated that the Resolution is an indication to the state that there is approval of the project by the Town Council along with the adoption of the Resolution to apply. Ms. Gross strongly requested adding a contingency to the Resolution so that if the grant is not approved by the State of Connecticut, it can't go back and do this with our town, public funds. The Mayor stated that the Resolution is conceptual and that no money is attached to it. He said that money would need to be appropriated whether we receive the grant or not. This does not allow any action to be taken without further action by the Council. Ms. Gross again asked for this Resolution to be contingent upon the approval of the grant and that no work or anything will be done without the award of the grant to the town. Mayor Dickinson said that the language has no meaning because no work can be done without the appropriation of funds. Ms. Gross said that it is important to add that to this language. She stated that with regard to the grant, the Wooding Caplan property, which would add parking to the town, needs to be taken into consideration.

In response to Ms. Gross, Mayor Dickinson stated that the elements of the plan include the following: wall repair, reconstruction of the parking area, subsurface drainage, fence replacement and relocation, parking area that is now leased by the town, the sixty (60) feet wide with an additional area that approaches much closer to the rear of all of the buildings. The present concrete walls would be gone at the conclusion of the

construction. He said the project also includes lighting in the area and having the appropriate wiring for that setting. He said that a place for dumpsters will be provided and reconstruction of the public sidewalks between the buildings.

Shauna Glidden, 119 Southwind Drive, supports this project and stated that it is important.

Steve Knight, 289 Ivy Street, representing Wallingford Center, Inc. (WCI), reported that WCI is a strong proponent of this project, since WCI promotes downtown Wallingford. One of the elements of an important and thriving downtown Wallingford is an ability to find a parking space close to the businesses where one wants to go.

Bill Comerford, 5 Broadview Drive, commented on the Plans of Development for 1984, 1994 and 2005 and whether the Council had received them.

Wes Lube, Montowese Trail, made comments with regard to 'uptown' and 'downtown'; public parking on one-way streets; how the character of the town has changed; that stores have become restaurants. He spoke about written commitments for money from the property owners on Simpson Court. Mayor Dickinson explained that if the town receives the award, then that will be the time to get letters of commitment. He said that is when negotiation takes place.

Mary Beth Applegate, 1 Perkins Drive, made comments on the parking lot.

Dick Caplan, Long Hill Road, talked about parking lots down Center Street that need safe parking lots. The town has many lots that need care. He said take a look to see if this grant will be available next year. The Mayor explained again that the Simpson Court project is ready to go but that other lots in town share parking with the town and private property owners.

Cheryl Christie Collett, wanted to know if the award is made to the town but is not sufficient to cover the costs of the project, then what covers the rest of the project? Mayor Dickinson said in that case, the project would not go forward. It won't begin. There was some concern by Ms. Collett as to whether there might be unallowable parts of the Project. Don Roe, Program Planning, stated that maintenance is not allowable.

David Gessert, supports the parking lot improvements. He said that he uses the lot for various reasons.

Mayor Dickinson responded to a question about the project timeline, and he listed a number of items that would need to take place before started the project, for example, discussions and negotiations with the property owners; entering into 30 year leases; public bid for construction; opening of bids; approval of leases; appropriation of funds. He said it may be a reimbursement grant. It was also discussed that the cost estimates include a contingency fund. He said that the entire proposal is covered by the grant.

Robert Gross, 114 Long Hill Road, and Gerald E. Farrell, Sr., Town Attorney, discussed referendum and referendum time line, file now or file if grant is awarded, and when the paperwork would be ready. Attorney Farrell asked if Mr. Gross was asking tonight for the paperwork. He added that if in fact a referendum overturned the voting tonight, then that would cease it. It was confirmed that there are 30 days to gather signatures.

Mayor Dickinson said the flow of funds would need to be determined.

Candace Brashears, 90 North Airline Road, presented a scenario that if the town makes the improvements, has insurance liability, provides maintenance for 30 years and snow plows for thirty years and has paid for all of that with taxpayer money, then why not negotiate that the town own the land at the end of the 30 years?

Councilor LeTourneau spoke about the hours of research he has performed. He said that the New Haven Green is private property, yet the City of New Haven provides the care for the land, as an example of partnership between two entities. He said that if we do nothing, then we will have nothing.

Councilor Zandri also spoke about the amount of time he has researched this parking lot that has included the 2004 parking study. He and Mayor Dickinson discussed type of grant; STEAP grants; that it is a complete reconstruction of the lot; Holy Trinity School financial contribution amount; among other things. Councilor Zandri stated that he would like education about our lots and a parking lot clean up.

Councilor Laffin called the lot the most central in town.

Councilor Economopoulos stated that there is no parking lot plan and that old plans have not been enacted. He said that he had difficulty getting a copy of the grant when he asked. He made comments with regard to the referendum and talked about 'uptown' and 'downtown'. He declared that people do not want their tax dollars spent on private property.

Councilor Cervoni said he felt informed to make a decision to take advantage of the funds that are available, to take the opportunity. He noted that we do not have quality parking lots and that we owe it to patrons of our town to have safe, well-lit parking. He remarked that it is an easy opportunity that will resolve many issues.

Councilor Rascati stated that we all benefit from our tax dollars in different ways. She said that this is a good thing that will benefit the whole town.

Councilor Sullivan commented on growing up in town; he reviewed his research; he is in favor of this parking project. He noted the differences, namely the grant availability and the fact that the land owners will be making a monetary contribution to the plan. He said that he would not vote to 'fix up' the wall but is fine with it using a taxpayer funded grant in the context of the whole project.

Councilor Sullivan and Mayor Dickinson discussed parking lots moving down the hill to keep the town vibrant.

Chairman Parisi thanked the EDC and WCI for their comments and for attending the meeting. He thanked the Mayor for this new approach to the lot and said that this could bring the whole town together. Chairman Parisi affirmed that he supports the project.

Geno Zandri, Joe Mirra, Debbie Gross, Dick Caplan, all spoke again with regard to their position on the issue. Bob Gross requested that Town Council meetings not be held on High Holy Days in the Jewish calendar and that other segments of our population be considered as well.

**MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION.**

*Wallingford Town Hall, 45 South Main Street*



**MADE BY: LETOURNEAU**  
**SECONDED BY: RASCATI**

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**CERVONI: YES      ECONOMOPOULOS: NO      FISHBEIN: ABSENT**  
**LAFFIN: YES      LETOURNEAU: YES      RASCATI: YES**  
**SULLIVAN: YES      ZANDRI: NO      CHAIRMAN PARISI: YES**  
**6-AYE; 2- NAY; 1 ABSENT**

**THE MOTION PASSED.**

The motion was re-read twice for the Town Council.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**CERVONI: YES      ECONOMOPOULOS: NO      FISHBEIN: ABSENT**  
**LAFFIN: YES      LETOURNEAU: YES      RASCATI: YES**  
**SULLIVAN: YES      ZANDRI: NO      CHAIRMAN PARISI: YES**  
**6-AYE; 2- NAY; 1 ABSENT**

**THE MOTION PASSED.**

**ADDENDUM**

- 12.** Consider and Approve a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to submit a grant application to the Office of Policy Management of the State of Connecticut for the Simpson Court Rear Parking Lot Improvement Project under the Main Street Investment Fund Program and authorize the Mayor to sign the Main Street Investment Fund application and to administer the Project - Mayor

**MOTION TO Approve a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to submit a grant application to the Office of Policy Management of the State of Connecticut for the Simpson Court Rear Parking Lot Improvement Project under the Main Street Investment Fund Program and authorize the Mayor to sign the Main Street Investment Fund application and to administer the Project.**

**MADE BY: CERVONI**  
**SECONDED BY: RASCATI**

Mr. Gross asked the Town Attorney if he could have the paperwork ready for a referendum. Attorney Farrell asked Mr. Gross if he was stating that he wants the paperwork ready. Mr. Gross answered yes

John Weir, 14 Russell Street; Geno Zandri; Wes Lubee and Robert Gross all made comments.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**CERVONI: YES      ECONOMOPOULOS: NO      FISHBEIN: ABSENT**  
**LAFFIN: YES      LETOURNEAU: YES      RASCATI: YES**  
**SULLIVAN: YES      ZANDRI: NO      CHAIRMAN PARISI: YES**  
**6-AYE; 2- NAY; 1 ABSENT**

**THE MOTION PASSED.**

- 9.** Discussion and Possible Action for Appointing a Town Parking Authority  
– Councilor Economopoulos

*Withdrawn*

- 10.** Executive Session pursuant to §1-200 (6)(D) of the Connecticut General Statutes with respect to the purchase, sale and/or leasing of property – Mayor

*Withdrawn*

**MOTION WAS MADE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

**MADE BY: CERVONI**

**SECONDED BY: RASCATI**

**VOTE: 8 AYE; 1 ABSENT (Councilor Fishbein)**

**MOTION PASSED.**

**THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:43 P.M.**

Most respectfully submitted,

Sandra Weekes  
Town Council Secretary  
Meeting digitally recorded

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Robert Parisi, Chairman

Date

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Barbara Thompson, Town Clerk

Date