

TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC SPEAKING MEETING

JUNE 15, 1999

6:30 P.M.

A meeting of the Wallingford Town Council held specifically for the purpose of offering the public an opportunity to speak on topics of concern to them was held on Tuesday, June 15, 1999 in the Robert Earley Auditorium of the Wallingford Town Hall and called to Order by Chairman Robert F. Parisi at 6:30 P.M. Councilors Centner, Farrell, Knight, Papale, Parisi, Renda, Rys, Zandri and Zappala answered present to the Roll called by Town Council Secretary Kathryn F. Zandri. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr. was absent from the meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given to the Flag.

Rick Hillegas, 3 Promontory Drive requested five minutes of time to address the Council.

Mr. Hillegas stated, approximately one month I attended the public speaking meeting facilitated by the Council. At that time my behavior was less than inappropriate. I engaged the Mayor in conversation at the same time Reginald Knight was making a presentation to the Council. To be honest, thinking about what Reginald Knight said the following week (at the Town Council Meeting of June 22, 1999) and having thought more and more on his comments he was absolutely right. It was unintentional, it was not meant to disrupt or be rude to him but I did interrupt his presentation at that time. I apologize, Mr. Knight.

Jack Agosta, 505 Church Street, Yalesville, requested thirty minutes of time to address the Council.

Mr. Agosta stated, I have written down a lot of things that have come to concern me over the past short period of time. It is more my feelings than criticism. In 1938 I came to this town with my family. In 1957 I transferred to Long Island with my company. In 1967 I transferred back to Connecticut. I decided I wanted to live in Wallingford. I went to live in Durham, Hamden, Cheshire and North Haven, but I decided to come back to live in Wallingford. I am still very happy here. A couple of things have happened recently and now that I am retired I have more time on my hands to get involved. I am not a grumpy old man like the newspaper have portrayed the public to be. The property that the Town tried to take by eminent domain; I don't think anyone's land should be taken away from them unless there is no use for it. Martin Luther King Day; I drove by here around 4:00 P.M. and I may be a sentimental person, but when I saw those trucks out there and I was really hurt. I

was really upset that we had to have a demonstration in this town, making us out to be perceived as a racist town. That really bothered me. That motivated me to start coming to the meetings to hear what goes on here and watch how the Council operates. I have my opinions on how things should be done but there are a lot of opinions out there. The more I talk to people around, more people come out with a very negative attitude about Martin Luther King Day. It doesn't sound right because if it goes out to the public, it is going to spread as the years go on. There should be a settlement made. With regards to the Tyler Mill property, this is the first time I can remember where the Town has hired a Realtor to buy a piece of land. Most people I have talked to, not everyone, but most think it was not the right thing to do. We did not have to spend that money. Port-o-potties; last week you O.K.'d the Board of Education to go to the State to get grant funds for their \$43-50 million project (school expansion project). But you would not allow a feasibility study to put permanent rest room facilities. I called up and asked Parks & Recreation, "are you going to have port-o-potties at the fields?" They responded, "yes". I said, "I don't think it would be very nice to have guys over sixty years of age going out to the woods, someone is going to turn them in and I don't think it is right." I don't understand, when they claim vandalism will occur, why can't they open up that facility? There is not going to be sixty year old men vandalizing rest rooms three hours a day on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. Another topic; No reviews of the top department heads. I was in management for over forty years. No matter how big you were and no matter how much money you were making, you got reviewed. There are certain things that you can improve on and if you had any kind of feelings, you improved on them at the time of review. There is no reason why reviews should not be given to the top employees. I wonder if the Assessor ever got reviewed?

Mr. Agosta directed the following comments to Chairman Parisi: You are being a nice guy most of the time and you never use a gavel. I believe that any person who comes to the microphone and makes fun of anyone up on the Council or any other speaker, should be told right then and there.

Mr. Parisi replied, I have been very outspoken. I don't know if we have had much of an issue of that lately but on the times that it happens, I come out pretty quick and stop it; I won't tolerate it. I agree with you.

Mr. Agosta stated, I am talking about the situation that came up here last week when Mr. Kapi spent twenty minutes talking about the electric division plant. There was an article in the paper, a letter to the editor, saying that Mr. Kapi made obscene gesture. I did not see any obscene gesture.

Mr. Parisi stated, I didn't see it either.

Mr. Agosta stated, that person who wrote that letter was not at that meeting even though they wrote in that article that "Mr. Kapi was seen making an obscene gesture". Mr. Kapi might have made some noises.....but what I am saying is, I know you try not to do that because it is an issue. But I don't think anyone on the Council should be insulted by any member of the audience and no one should insult a speaker.

Mr. Agosta stated, to the Council; There are a lot of things that need to be done in this town without a gap in between. Like a marriage, all nine people together....if this side recommends something, this side should have an open mind and vice versa. All these years I have lived in this town I have always thought it was a great town. It was good then, different regime, different people ran it, and I see a lot of what is going on here. I have heard and watched. I have heard it said, "it is all political; it is an election year that is why it is being brought up". I don't that should be brought up at all. I think you should be open-minded and work together.

Motion was made by Mr. Zappala to Adjourn the Meeting, seconded by Mr. Centner.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

At this time Reginald Knight, 21 Audette Drive stood in front of the Council bench and addressed Mr. Zandri with his comments that he thought it was unfair that he was not given a chance to speak at this meeting since he missed the deadline to sign up in the Town Hall by approximately one hour. He contends that the Council has set precedent in the past allowing other members of the public address the Council when they, in fact, did not sign up to do so.

Meeting recorded and transcribed by:


Kathryn F. Zandri
Town Council Secretary

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

7-20-99
Date

Rosemary A. Rascati
Rosemary A. Rascati, Town Clerk

7-20-99
Date