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TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT
SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

**HELD REMOTELY
at GoToMeeting.com**

THURSDAY
MAY 14, 2020
6:30 P.M.
FY 2020-2021 BUDGET

RECORD OF VOTES & MINUTES

The Special Town Council Meeting on Thursday, May 14, 2020 was called to order at 6:31 p.m. There was a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance was said. Councilors in attendance were Craig C. Fishbein, Thomas Laffin, Joseph A. Marrone, III, Gina Morgenstein, Christopher K. Shortell, Christina Tatta, Vincent F. Testa, Jason Zandri and Chairman Vincent Cervoni. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr., and Comptroller James Bowes were also present (BY TELECONFERENCE).

WALLINGFORD CENTER INC. / WCI CAPITAL/FACADE

*In Attendance: Liz Landow, Executive Director
Stephen Knight, Member
Joan Parisi, Member*

Ms. Landow stated we had a very good year, we requested \$99,000 and the Mayor approved \$95,000. She said she is thinking of retiring and wants to train someone to take her place.

Councilor Fishbein said the street scape is improving. He asked Ms. Landow if anything was spent last year. Ms. Landow said they bought new flags and planters and they used the \$10,000. She went on to say they replaced four benches and have not done the planters yet but they will be done by June. She noted they have not submitted their final bill this year.

Councilor Fishbein asked are you going to spend the \$10,000 for the streetscape now and then get another \$10,000 in July for more streetscape work. Ms. Landow answered yes and stated they will use it summer, fall and winter.

Councilor Fishbein asked Ms. Landow if the Mayor didn't cut the \$20,000 to \$10,000 in the Facade line what she would do with the \$20,000. Ms. Landow said this was pre-pandemic and she's not sure now if they will need more since businesses right now are struggling.

Councilor Morgenstein noted smaller Façade projects are a 50/50 share and asked what the average cost is. Ms. Landow replied a small one is \$3,000 - \$5,000 for a new awning, windows or a blade sign.

Councilor Morgenstein asked Ms. Landow if she is already training someone. Ms. Landow indicated she has an assistant and was hoping her assistant would do more in the summer so she could be more part-time.

Mr. Knight stated we are looking to have someone transition over to help her. He remarked that Ms. Landow is very talented and a great worker.

SENIOR CENTER

In Attendance: William Viola, Executive Director

Mr. Viola remarked they had a great year at the Senior Center. He talked about how they had some young seniors and a big increase in some frail seniors. He stated there are more seniors living at home and with our buses they are able to come by bus to the Senior Center. He said they use the wheelchair lift a lot.

Mr. Viola explained the Center is currently closed and they are running services online through Zoom and Facebook. He stated he asked for an additional \$36,000 but he did not get it, staff will not get a raise and he noted they will have to absorb the healthcare cost increase. Mr. Viola said he is grateful to the town for all their support.

Councilor Tatta asked if the health insurance increase will stay at 25.3%. Mr. Viola said it went up to 26.3%. Councilor Tatta then asked Mr. Viola if he will realize any savings due to the pandemic. Mr. Viola said yes and no and explained they should save some money and lose some revenue but the savings will not be that significant.

Councilor Shortell asked why the Senior Center is getting hit with a bigger health insurance increase. Mr. Bowes replied it's a sub group not a union member group so it's a different sub group category.

Councilor Shortell asked Mr. Viola if he had a sense of when the Senior Center will reopen. Mr. Viola stated they have been following the state mandates and he will discuss with his Board about maybe reopening June 20th. Mr. Viola commented they do have the most frail population. Mr. Viola said in his heart he feels we are a phase three early to mid-July.

Bill Comerford, 5 Broadview Drive, stated you are not an entity of the town. Mr. Viola said we are not a town department – Quasi Agency. Mr. Comerford said he is confused and asked do you get your benefits from the town. Mr. Viola replied yes and stated we participate in the town's insurance.

HISTORIC PROGRAM MATCH

In Attendance: Gerald Farrell, Jr.

No questions.

CENTER STREET CEMETERY

*In Attendance: Bob Gross, President, Center Street Cemetery Association
Bob Beaumont, Vice President, Center Street Cemetery Association*

Mr. Gross indicated they are asking for the same amount again this year.

Councilor Shortell remarked I used to know how many burials you had and asked how many did you have last year. Mr. Gross replied 16 last year and we are running ahead this year unfortunately. Councilor Shortell asked if there is a budget and if we can get one. Mr. Gross said no we don't have one and we are still working on it. Councilor Shortell asked what the capacity is and Mr. Gross said he didn't know the exact number but it will outlive us and your children.

Councilor Tatta asked if we could get a budget as soon as possible before the vote on this. She stated she has no idea where the money goes. Mr. Gross said he is not sure he will discuss with the Board.

Paul Ciardullo, Bayberry Drive, stated he thought Chairman Cervoni said we have hard copy budgets for all these social service departments. Chairman Cervoni said he missed that they did not submit one.

Councilor Fishbein stated to Mr. Gross you represent you do not have a budget and then say your Council advises you not to release it. Mr. Gross stated we do not have a budget.

Mr. Comerford remarked to Mr. Gross that his request is the same as last year. Mr. Gross stated we asked for a small increase and the Mayor said stay the same as last year.

PUBLIC CELEBRATIONS

In Attendance: Roz Gallagher, Chairperson

Ms. Gallagher stated we prepared our budget based on last year's costs. She said attendance at our events has increased nicely over the past few years. She went on to say the Memorial Day Parade has been cancelled but they are working with Gov/TV for a program placing wreaths at the grave sites to be televised.

COLUMBUS HOUSE

In Attendance: Ava Goulush

Ms. Goulush talked about some of the demographics from July to April 30th. She indicated there are 15 families at the emergency shelter and 22 individuals. They moved everyone to the Red Roof Inn in Meriden. She stated they moved some homeless and have discharged 17 families that have become independent. The town contributes \$25,000 for a budget of \$265,000 and she stated we have not stopped services in this crisis.

SCOW

*In Attendance: Adrianna Rodriguez, Executive Director
Jeffrey Necio, Board Chair
Stephen Knight, Board Treasurer*

Ms. Rodriguez stated as of March 23rd they started virtual business with their clients and it's been difficult. She remarked the community needs our services right now. She went on to state the future is very uncertain for SCOW and the annual fundraiser in the fall is up in the air right now.

Mr. Knight stated the COVID pandemic has really been felt in the Spanish community and our funding going forward is questionable.

WALLINGFORD 2020

In Attendance: Christine Mansfield

Councilor Fishbein asked Mr. Bowes why there is no money in this budget. Mr. Bowes replied the group did not request any. Councilor Fishbein asked if the group represented that they had raised all their money.

Ms. Mansfield said they are meeting to see if they can even hold this event this year. There have been no requests for this fiscal year. She feels it's premature to talk about what is going to happen in September.

Councilor Shortell asked if there is a date where you know you'll make a decision on September. Ms. Mansfield said probably the first week in June.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Moss
Council Staff
Meeting digitally recorded

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 5-19-2020
AT 2:00 AND RECEIVED BY
Barbara Thompson TOWN CLERK

Vincent Cervoni/BT
Vincent Cervoni, Chairman

6/15/2020
Date

Barbara Thompson
Barbara Thompson, Town Clerk

6/15/2020
Date