MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2000

<u>6:15 P.M.</u>

<u>AGENDA</u>

- 1. Roll Call & Pledge of Allegiance
- Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$14,000 from Contingency Acct. #8050-800-3190 to Purchased Professional Services – Veterinarian Acct. #001-2020-901-9015 – Animal Control Office
- 3. PUBLIC HEARING for March 6, 2000 at 6:30 P.M. to Consider and Act Upon an Ordinance Amending an Ordinance Appropriating \$140,000 for the Design of a Senior Center and Authorizing the Issuance of \$140,000 Bonds of the Town to Meet Said Appropriation and Pending the Issuance Thereof the Making of Temporary Borrowings for Such Purpose (The purpose of the amendment is to increase the appropriation and bond authorization therein by \$3,321,000 from \$140,000 to \$3,461,000 to provide for the construction of the senior center, and to ratify, confirm and adopt all prior authorizations and ordinances in connection therewith.)

MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2000

<u>6:15 P.M.</u>

ADDENDUM TO AGENDA

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4. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding a Transfer in an Amount Totaling \$11,929 from Various Accounts within the Dept. of Public Works' Budget to Dance Room Floor – Recreation Dept. Acct. #001-5015-999-9963 to Eliminate Water Problems in the Recreation Department Dance Room – Public Works

MARCH 6, 2000

<u>6:15 P.M.</u>

<u>SUMMARY</u>

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2.	Approve a Transfer Totaling \$14,000 to Purchased Professional Services - Veterinarian Acct. – Animal Control Officer	1-2
3.	Adopt an Ordinance Amending an Ordinance Appropriating \$140,000 For the Design of a Senior Center and Authorizing the Issuance of \$140,000 Bonds of the Town to Meet Said Appropriation and Pending the Issuance Thereof the Making of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose	3-12
4.	Approve a Transfer Totaling \$11,929 to Dance Room Floor – Recreation Dept.	2-3

MARCH 6, 2000

<u>6:15 P.M.</u>

A special meeting of the Wallingford Town Council was held on Monday, March 6, 2000 in the Robert Earley Auditorium of the Wallingford Town Hall and called to Order by Chairman Robert F. Parisi at 6:18 P.M. Councilors Centner, Farrell, Knight, Papale, Parisi, Rys and Vumbaco answered present to the Roll called by Town Clerk Rosemary A. Rascati. Councilor Brodinsky arrived at 6:30 P.M. and Councilor Zappala arrived at 6:19 P.M. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr. and Comptroller Thomas A. Myers were also in attendance. Town Attorney Janis M. Small was absent from the meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given to the Flag.

<u>ITEM #2</u> Consider and Approve a Transfer of Funds in the Amount of \$6,000 from Regular Salaries & Wages Acct. #2020-101-1000 and \$8,000 from Contingency Acct. #8050-800-3190 for a Total of \$14,000 to Purchased Professional Services – Veterinarian Acct. #001-2020-901-9015 – Animal Control Officer

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

Correspondence from Animal Control Officer, Kathryn Lindemann, informs the Council that the department currently owes over \$8,110.18 in veterinary bills as a result of a high number of animals struck by motor vehicles, the large amount of stray cats picked up under the Nuisance Cat Ordinance and a large number of animals picked up in need of minor veterinary care. Ms Lindemann is also expecting the number of stray cats and dogs that are picked up to increase this coming spring and summer.

Mr. Farrell stated that the Ordinance Committee had an opportunity to discuss the stray cat problem with Ms. Lindemann at their most recent meeting and was satisfied that the facts and figures presented that evening, as well as tonight to the Council justified the request for the transfer of funds.

Mr. Rys stated that he had suggested transferring some of the funds from the salary account rather than take the entire amount from the contingency account. He was glad to see that Ms. Lindemann had taken his advice.

Jack Agosta, 505 Church Street, Yalesville referred to a newspaper article and questioned the ratio of cats claimed by their owners versus those that were euthanized due to no one claiming the animals.

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Ms. Lindemann stated that over 140 were euthanized however, a much larger number had been claimed by their owners/keepers.

Mr. Agosta suggested that the Animal Control Officer consider setting aside one week per year to have a veterinarian offer services at a discounted rate to the public for those who cannot afford to have their pets receive their rabies shots or to have their cats neutered or spayed. This service would not only help to improve the overall health of the cat population but curb the number as well.

Mr. Parisi acknowledged the idea as being a good one but stated that the problem lies with the public's participation in the program.

Mr. Rys asked, of the 145 euthanized, were the majority feral cats?

Ms. Lindemann replied, almost all of them were. A few cats were euthanized due to the outbreak of feline distemper.

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

<u>ITEM #4</u> Discussion and Possible Action Regarding a Transfer in an Amount of \$11,929 from Various Accounts with the Dept. of Public Works' Budget to Dance Room Floor – Recreation Dept. Acct. #001-5015-999-9963 – Public Works

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

Henry McCully, Director of Public Works explained that there is hydrostatic pressure under the dance room floor which allows water to become trapped and accumulate under it. When the concrete was poured before the Town purchased the building, a vapor barrier was not placed between the concrete and the gravel base. Failing to do so allows moisture from the ground to rise through the gravel to the concrete. Concrete will appear dry and there will be no evidence of moisture until you cover it. To eliminate the problem, new flooring will be slightly elevated to allow the floor to breathe and therefore eliminate the moisture problem.

Mr. Parisi asked if there was any recourse against the vendor for the problem?

Mr. McCully answered, the warranty period has passed and there is no way to go after anyone for the hydrostatic pressure.

Mr. Parisi asked if there was any way of knowing this could happen?

Mr. McCully stated, the building was originally designed for multi-tenant use. This particular area (where the problem is occurring) had not been fitted up for multi-tenant use. When we purchased it it was just a wide open area with a concrete floor. Once you start to cover floors, things change. That is where our problems began. The new flooring should end our problems up there and we won't see anything in the immediate future that we can't address.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

<u>ITEM # 3</u> PUBLIC HEARING to Consider and Act Upon an Ordinance Amending an Ordinance Appropriating \$140,000 for the Design of a Senior Center and Authorizing the Issuance of \$140,000 Bonds of the Town to Meet Said Appropriation and Pending the Issuance Thereof the Making of Temporary Borrowings for Such Purpose (the purpose of the amendment is to increase the appropriation and bond authorization therein by \$3,321,000 from \$140,000 to \$3,461,000 to provide for the construction of the senior center and to ratify, confirm and adopt all prior authorizations and ordinances in connection therewith.)

Mr. Parisi convened the public hearing for the \$3,461,000.00 senior center construction amending the appropriation and bond ordinance. The ordinance, which is the subject of the public hearing is available to the public and may be obtained at this meeting from the Town Clerk.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to read the Title and Section 1 of the Proposed Ordinance into the Record in Their Entirety and to Waive the Reading of the Remainder of the Ordinance, Incorporating its Full Text Into the Minutes of the Meeting, seconded by Ms. Papale.

VOTE TO DISPENSE WITH THE READING: All ayes; motion duly carried.

At this time Mr. Rys read the title and section 1 of the ordinance into the record.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$140,000 FOR THE DESIGN OF A SENIOR CENTER AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$140,000 BONDS OF THE TOWN TO MEET SAID APPROPRIATION AND PENDING THE ISSUANCE THEREOF THE MAKING OF TEMPORARY BORROWINGS FOR SUCH PURPOSE

An ordinance entitled "An Ordinance Appropriating \$140,000 For The Design Of A Senior Center And Authorizing The Issuance Of \$140,000 Bonds Of The Town To Meet Said Appropriation And Pending The Issuance Thereof The Making Of Temporary Borrowings For Such Purpose" adopted by the Town Council on September 9, 1997, which ordinance is hereby ratified, confirmed and adopted, is amended to increase the appropriation and bond authorization therein by \$3,321,000, from \$140,000 to \$3,461,000, and to provide for the construction of the senior center, as follows:

Section 1. The title of the ordinance is amended to read as follows:

"AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$3,461,000 FOR THE PLANNING, ACQUISITION AND CONSTRUCTION OF A SENIOR CENTER AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF \$3,461,000 BONDS OF THE TOWN TO MEET SAID APPROPRIATION AND PENDING THE ISSUANCE THEREOF THE MAKING OF TEMPORARY BORROWINGS FOR SUCH PURPOSE"

Section 2. The first sentence of Section 1 of the Ordinance is amended by substituting the amount of \$3,461,000 for \$140,000, and providing for the planning, acquisition and construction of the senior center, thereby making the first sentence of Section 1 read as follows:

"The sum of \$3,461,000 is appropriated for the planning, acquisition and construction of a senior center approximately in accordance with the Project Manual, Wallingford Senior Center entitled "Construction of Wallingford Senior Center Facility" dated December 1, 1999, prepared by Lazarus & Sargeant, Ltd., and for appurtenances and services related thereto, or so much thereof as may be accomplished within such appropriation, including equipment, furnishings, administrative, printing, legal and financing costs related thereto. Said appropriation to be inclusive of any and all State and Federal grants-in-aid and in addition to all prior appropriations.

Section 3. The first sentence of Section 2 of the Ordinance is amended by substituting the amount of \$3,461,000 for \$140,000, thereby making the first sentence of Section 2 read as follows:

"To meet said appropriation \$3,461,000 bonds of the Town or so much thereof as shall be necessary for such purpose, shall be issued, maturing not later than the twentieth year after their date."

Mr. Parisi opened the hearing to the public.

Robert Sheehan, 11 Cooper Avenue asked why the ordinance was being increased by \$140,000?

Mr. Parisi explained, the original ordinance for \$140,000 was adopted and the money appropriated for the design phase of the project. Now the bonding ordinance is being increased to allow for the construction phase.

Mr. Sheehan stated, I thought Lazarus & Sargent (architects) were here last year and the Council had already hired them. They (Lazarus & Sargent) had presented a plan to the Council at that time.

Mr. Parisi explained, the architects were hired for \$140,000. Now the ordinance is being increased for the bond issue for construction.

Mr. Sheehan asked, when will the construction start?

Henry McCully, Director of Public Works explained, the Town can sign the contract for construction around the second week of April.

Mr. Sheehan asked if a contractor had already been hired?

Mr. McCully answered, we have a low bidder, yes. We have checked the background and references; Purchasing has done the financial check on the firm. They appear to be a very good company capable of doing this work.

Mr. Sheehan asked, will they remove the remaining house on the property?

Mr. McCully stated, we have a bid in the works and a contractor will be removing the last house and garage.

Wes Lubee, 15 Montowese Trail asked if the public can wait to hear the presentation before making comments?

Mr. Parisi did not think there was going to be a presentation.

Samuel Sargent of Lazarus & Sargent Architects stated, the building is exactly the same as it has been for the last approximately eight months to one year with very minor changes. We would be happy to go through the plans but it is identical to what we presented in the past.

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Mr. Lubee asked what the land acquisition ended up costing the Town? It was originally proposed that it would cost the Town \$270,000.

Mr. McCully answered, \$430,000.

Mr. Lubee asked if it was part of the bond issue?

Mr. McCully answered, no, they are separate bond issues.

Mr. Lubee asked, what did it end up costing the Town for relocation of the existing uses?

Mr. McCully answered, there will be \$2,500 in my budget to put in a new garage door on the west side of the existing senior center. It is the rear entrance to the dining room. That is being converted to storage for Civil Defense and Traffic Maintenance. The only relocation costs will be, when the building is complete, we will move everything over to the new senior center.

Mr. Lubee asked, what did the demolition of the brick building garages cost?

Mr. McCully answered, we are not finished yet. To date, under the testing/demolition expenses, we have used about \$28,000 for demolition. We still have a bid that is going out. We had some lead that we had to deal with in the house and we had send out an addendum to the bid and the bid responses should be in next week or the week after.

Mr. Lubee asked, what were the demolition costs for the houses already demolished, those to be demolished and the garages?

Mr. McCully answered, the total for what is gone...we have spent so far under both ordinances \$28,000. for demolition and testing.

Mr. Lubee stated the original amount estimated for relocation was \$500,000 to \$700,000.

Mr. McCully stated that he believed those figures were based on the option of renovating the existing senior citizen center.

Mr. Lubee replied, no, the estimated costs were obtained from the Senior Center Expansion Project committee report.

Mr. Lubee stated that he would like to know what the total cost of the project will be. It is going to cost \$3.9 million. He did not know that until tonight. He had learned from the Comptroller that current bond rates for the Town would be running around 5.3% and at that rate the Town would have a total financing cost over a fifteen year period of \$5.5 million. We are not talking about a \$3.5 million project; we are talking about a \$5.5 million decision tonight.

At this time Mr. Lubee reviewed a few of the facts and figures that he presented to the Council at an earlier meeting on the project. He highlighted the following points to which there has been no rebuttal since the last time he brought them to everyone's attention:

- the center averages 47 meals served per day and the present facility can serve three times that amount
- a daily survey of the parking situation for two months verified that there was inadequate parking at the present facility but only when occasional bus trips filled the parking lot with all day parking. When the bus trips are not underway, there is no parking problem.
- the senior center's daily sign-in sheets, over a 50 day period, averaged 82 per day. An average of 47 came to lunch therefore non-lunch attendance is 35.
- the Senior Director's own monthly report listed total attendance as 1,465. It also listed the meals served for the month at 957; the difference being 508. If you divide number by the twenty days of the month, the Director said that the non-lunch attendance was only 25 per day.
- we are about to spend \$5.5 million or over \$200,000 for every one of those 25 attendees because the lunches can be done anywhere.
- that 25 average includes bingo on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- the CT. State Office of Policy and Management classifies Wallingford in the slow growth category; amongst the 169 towns, there is about 1/3 of us that have been rated as having potential slow growth. At the same time the seniors are expected to increase as a segment of this slow growing population. These same state demographers say that for the next 10 years our senior population will grow less than 1% per year.
- the same demographers say that in the following 10 years, we will experience a decline of ½ of 1% per year despite the birth rate bulge.
- the present facility is much under-utilized; scheduling sometimes creates needless over-crowding.
- little or no afternoon activities exist except for Tuesday and Thursday bingo and an occasional small meeting.
- the building does have shortcomings and inefficiencies which could be corrected with a modest upgrading at half of the cost. Such a plan was drawn and suggested and ignored and was never rebutted.

Mr. Lubee stated, these are the reasons why it behooves you as Councilmen to have some hesitancy. Your worries and concerns about the "monolithic senior voting block" which does not exist...if there are valid reasons for your spending \$5.5 million of the taxpayer's money, please let's hear them. Up until now, there has been no justification for doing this. Thank you.

Geno Zandri, 37 Hallmark Drive asked for a fairly accurate figure from the Comptroller as to what the total cost would be with the interest and expenses over the life of the bond?

Comptroller Thomas Myers answered, as a rule of thumb you can add 50% of original cost as interest. If you bond \$1 million, you pay back approximately \$1.5 million.

Mr. Zandri stated that he considers the project a "people project' because it enhances the quality of life for the residents of town. There are other projects that he would put in the same category as this one, for example, a golf course, linear trail, Community Lake, girls' softball fields, permanent restroom facilities for the ball fields and an ice rink, to name a few. All of these projects enhance the quality of life for the residents of Wallingford. He stated that the Town had an opportunity to pay for not only this project but all of the projects mentioned, with cash. The Town would save all of the interest. We have \$10.6 million of profits from the Electric Division over the next three years, which belongs to the residents of Wallingford, could have been utilized for not only this project but the other projects mentioned. Instead, this Administration has chosen to lower electric rates with \$7 million of those dollars going back to businesses in this town. We are utilizing the dollars that belong to the residents to subsidize the electric rates of businesses in this community. This is a prime example of how those same dollars could have been better spent to enhance the life of the residents in Wallingford. Almost all of the projects mentioned could have been done over the next three years.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville asked if it was true that the project was originally supposed to cost \$2 million?

Mr. Parisi stated, the bidding is what determines the cost. You did read estimates that were a little lower.

Mr. Melillo asked, what kind of guarantees and warranties will there be on the building?

Mr. McCully answered, normally there is a one year construction guarantee, then you have a manufacturer's guarantee. The metal roof is guaranteed for 25 years; you have different manufacturer's guarantees along with contractor's guarantees.

Mr. Melillo stated that he hoped he would be able to enjoy the new center when he is old.

Philip Wright, Sr., 160 Cedar Street asked the Mayor if he was in favor of the project?

Mayor Dickinson answered, yes I am.

Mr. Wright suggested that the question be called so everyone can go home. He stated that no one on the Council is going to vote against the project so call the question and everyone can go home to watch the girls (UCONN Huskies) play basketball.

Mr. Centner was glad to finally be at this point in the project. He liked the proposed floor plan. At the \$3.4 million cost for a 20,000 sq. ft. building, it calculates out to \$173 per sq. ft. which is only 2% higher than the completed school project that was done about three years ago. In terms of inflation and cost, we are fortunate to get it in this price range. It appears to be welldesigned and will suit the needs. He thanked everyone on the committee for their hard work. He will vote in favor of the project.

Mr. Brodinsky stated that he will vote for the project. One reason is that the building and the complex will virtually last forever...it will be around for a long, long time. The projections for the life of the building will outstrip any demographic projections. The population of Wallingford is bound to increase when the word gets out as to how nice a facility it is; use will increase. It is good for the future.

Mr. Farrell stated that he was happy to hear the facility will last forever; being the youngest member of the Council. We have been at work on this project for a couple of years now and it is nice to see that it is finally coming to fruition and in the near future. He also thanked Dianne Saunders, Henry McCully, Virginia Philips and the architects as well as all of the advocates of the senior center. He thanked everyone for pressing for the project.

Mr. Vumbaco asked if there were any state funds available for the project?

Mayor Dickinson stated that he is not aware of any at this time. There was \$60,000 available earlier for the planning stage, but that was special legislation.

Mr. Vumbaco stated, my dad was the advocate for the original senior center some twenty or so years ago when he was sitting as Mayor of the Town of Wallingford. Bob (Parisi) and Iris (Papale) were serving on the Council when the renovation costs totaled, for the old borough electric building, was \$10,300. Times have really changed; we are now looking at a \$4 million project. I will vote in favor of this; it is a good project and the seniors are deserving of it. We are looking at a future for the Town, like Mr. Zandri stated, for the quality of life. I think my father would be very, very proud that some 23 or 24 years later his son is sitting up here voting for this new project. I will support this project 100%.

Mr. Knight stated that he has been privileged to serve on the Senior Center Advisory Committee as the Council liaison to it since 1995; the first meeting was held March 30, 1994. At no time was this project truly stalled, although the Record Journal reported many times that it had been. Input from the public is what drove this committee. Sometimes that means that you change direction. This committee was quick on its feet and changed direction when it was either advocated by the many seniors they queried regarding the project; when certain members of the Town Council very adamantly insisted, as did the seniors, that the project be built on Washington Street rather than at Simpson School or on the Wooding/Caplan property. The committee reacted to all the input that came their way. I am very proud of the way they handled it. There were a few other bumps in the road that stalled the committee for a few months. The committee agonized over every detail ever conscious of the project budget. When the center is finally built, we will see that we have a tremendous project due to the attention to detail given it by the committee. He noted Dianne Saunders' efforts in seeing the project get this far. He stated that Ms. Saunders is owed a great debt of gratitude, as well as the other members of the committee and architectural firm. It will be an asset to the entire community, not just the seniors and a lot of efforts went into seeing that this is a resource for the entire community. I am proud to vote for this project.

Mr. Zappala stated that he, too, is part of the committee and echoes what Mr. Knight stated. He has been unable to attend the meetings over the past year due to circumstances beyond his control. The senior center will be something that we can be very proud of; it is a great design and will serve Wallingford to its fullest. He hoped that his mother will be able to enjoy it...she is a regular member of the present senior center. He thanked the committee for their hard work and achievement.

Mr. Rys stated that he supports the center, he likes what has been presented to the Council. When he moved into Wallingford several years ago, the cost to purchase his house was \$32,000. Today, the house is worth over \$150,000. He wished the same formula would apply to buildings but, unfortunately, it does not. Today commercial or industrial buildings cost \$5.2 million. Ten years from now they will cost \$10.5 million or \$12.5 million; the cost does go up. He did not want to take a band-aid approach to the building, throwing a lot of money into it to find 10 or 15 years from now have to construct something and all that money has gone down the tubes. We are moving forward; there is a lot of public support for this; we are doing the right thing. He supports the project and looks forward to the rest of the Council doing the same.

Ms. Papale stated that it is her birthday today, she is officially a senior citizen. She is very happy to be able to vote on this project tonight. She witnessed this project taking so many different turns along the way. At the beginning she wondered why we would even consider building from scratch when we could renovate the existing building. Why would

it cost less money to start all over again rather than use a building we already have? Through the years she learned how it makes more sense, in most cases, to start over again. In the beginning the Administration and some members of the Council thought it would be better to have the senior center on the Wooding/Caplan property. There were some who disagreed and this is why the town is so great; we listened to each other and compromised which turned out to be for the good. It is a wonderful project and everyone is very excited about it. It is time for a new center. There are many people in our community who want and need the facility, not only for the additional room but for the parking. She is very proud to be a Council member at this time to vote yes on this project and, years from now, know that she was part of the process. Before we know it we will be cutting the ribbon for the new center.

Mr. Parisi stated that he is very pleased to see that Dianne Saunders was able to be in attendance this evening. He, too, has watched the progress of the project; sometimes painfully so, sometimes happily so. At last we are here. He wanted to commend Mr. Lubee for putting in an extraordinary amount of time on the project. While Mr. Lubee may feel his words were unheard, he did cause everyone to at least think and re-think some of the things that were going on. He (Mr. Parisi) stated that he is a firm believer that anyone in the negative should be respected. It doesn't necessarily mean they are against the project per say but sometimes it instigates deep thought which, over the long haul, makes a better project. To the committee members and all the seniors who are here tonight, we thank you for not being afraid to speak out at those times when it was necessary. There were many hearings that you appeared here to support your committee, the Council recognizes and appreciates that. It is good to know that people are in support of a project and the seniors have always come out in good number; for that you should be commended. He wished them much success with the project.

Mr. Parisi declared the public hearing closed.

Motion was made by Mr. Rys to Adopt an Ordinance Amending an Ordinance Appropriating \$140,000 for the Design of a Senior Center and Authorizing the Issuance of \$140,000 Bonds of the Town to Meet Said Appropriation and Pending the Issuance Thereof the Making of Temporary Borrowings for Such Purpose, seconded by Ms. Papale.

Mayor Dickinson commented, other than the fine support, help and advice from so many different people, there is one aspect of this project that went better than I ever had imagined and I think went better than I have seen any other project that the Town has undertaken and that deals with our ability to purchase two properties on Silk Street without which purchases could not move forward as it is. I noticed Rev. Cooley sitting in the audience here and perhaps he would lead us all in a prayer of thanks to divine providence that those purchases could be made because that is an aspect of this whole thing that could

not be planned and we are the beneficiaries of what ever the forces were at work that we are blessed by.

Reverend Cooley, 297 Pond Hill Road, stated that we should be grateful in many ways, they have been stated over and over by members of the Council. He stated that he believes that there has been divine guidance in this project and is ready at any time to give thanks to God as well as all the people who have made this happen. He stated that he learned something very important from a woman he had the pleasure of meeting in her last days at Masonic Home a while ago; she told him, "You need God, but you need other people, too. You can't do anything alone." Thank God for you; Thank God for the Council.

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

(Applause).

Mr. Parisi declared the ordinance adopted.

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

VOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:32 P.M.

Meeting recorded and transcribed by:

Kathryn F. Zandri Town Council Secretary

ÓÒ Robert F. Parisi, Chairman

Approved:

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aliate Rosemary A. Rašcati, Town Clerk

30. 100 Date

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