

# TOWN OF WALLINGFORD, CONNECTICUT

## *Special Town Council Meeting*

APRIL 19, 2010

### BUDGET WORKSHOP

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The following Minutes are the record of a Special Budget Workshop Meeting of the Wallingford Town Council which was held in the Robert Earley Auditorium of Town Hall. Chairman Robert F. Parisi Called to Order at 6:00 P.M. on Monday, April 19, 2010. Responding present to the Roll Call given by Town Clerk Barbara Thompson were Councilors Vincent Cervoni, Nick Economopoulos, Jerry Farrell, Jr., Craig C. Fishbein, John LeTourneau, Robert F. Parisi, Rosemary Rascati and John J. Sullivan. Comptroller James Bowes was present at roll call. Councilor Vincent F. Testa, Jr. and Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr. arrived at the meeting at 6:08 P.M. and 6:09 P.M. respectfully.

The meeting began with A Moment of Silence. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance. The Roll Call was taken.

Chairman Parisi made a brief announcement regarding the collection of donations that would fund the Fourth of July Fireworks celebration in addition to a fundraising dinner at Zandri's Stillwood Inn.

### 3. BUDGET WORKSHOP

#### FIRE DEPARTMENT

*In attendance: Fire Chief Peter Struble  
Deputy Fire Chief Stephen Alsup  
Deputy Chief Richard Heidgerd*

Chief Struble referred to the Fire Department Annual Report, which shows an increase in the overall budget due to the 2010 53<sup>rd</sup> pay week. He said that they have been able to stay on a regular equipment replacement schedule and they were able to accomplish this budget this year by backing out the first year funding of an ambulance but, he said, as the Council knows, there is a contingency due to the CRRA funds.

Line 2000, Telephone- Chief Struble, in answer to Mr. Fishbein, said that most of the telephone expense is AT & T for incoming service to the station but also for the connection between the Police Department and the Fire Department, including radio systems all over town. He stated that those lines come back through the telephone lines to the dispatch center. Each fire station has computer connectivity to back to Central Fire Headquarters for records and reports management. He said that this is ongoing maintenance and that each year through system upgrades, they have been able to eliminate lines, thereby cutting costs. Through these efficiencies this year, the reduction is \$1,000. Phones that are included in the fire apparatus are used by the volunteers to speak with agencies, like the DEP, or the shift commander, directly from where they are in the field. The three chief officers and the shift commander each have cell phones.

Line 4100, Fire Operating Expenses- Chief Struble addressed Mr. Fishbein's question regarding a \$25,000 increase in this category. The Chief stated that it is the most inclusive line of the department with includes materials like small equipment, parts, breathing apparatus, and protective clothing. The specific increase is with regard to the ten-year old protective clothing in the department, which came during an influx of new volunteer firefighters. The line includes

\$27,109 to purchase additional fire-fighting, turnout gear to replace thirty (30) sets of this clothing in fiscal year 2010-11, thus the increase.

Chief Struble talked about Line 5700, stating it is used exclusively for costs in training people, He said that the department has 60 career employees and between 80-90 volunteers that must be kept trained. Recruit training is in-house; and mandatory training, required by OSHA, is medically compliant for paramedicine. He commented that they get three times the value for the in-house training. Deputy Chief Alsop outlined the types of training and materials received and spoke of an expected increase of 35% for essential critical and contractual education.

Mr. Sullivan inquired about Line 1500, Replacement Pay, as it relates to unscheduled absence and no sick leave incentive. Referring to the union contract, Chief Struble replied that there is a small stipend of about \$200 for not taking a sick day all year long. He stated that sick leave is two-tiered for a bargaining unit member, depending on when they started. He stated it's either 1.2 days per month or 1.5 days per month, up to maximum 120 days accumulation, which can take years. He said the average is 7.5 days per year of unscheduled sick leave and that they maintain a minimum staffing on a shift of 14 staff, of a 15 person platoon. He explained variances depending upon the time of day, and when it falls below 14 people, is when a 'fill' occurs, and when it effects replacement pay.

Mr. Sullivan was interested in employees who use their sick time to excess. Chief Struble deals with this situation up front with good supervision, and he gets a ranked, accumulative sick leave report every week, so the review is weekly. It is dealt with through the shift commander, then Deputy Chief Heidgerd, and finally to the Chief himself. He commented that they look for patterns, such as every Saturday night. Sick leave usage is perhaps higher than in an office since firefighters with certain maladies, such as a breathing problem or a cut finger, must stay away from duty. Chief Struble said that when they have a vacancy, such as a retirement, it drives the replacement pay upwards. Mr. Sullivan noted that he was interested in the replacement pay aspect since it is a cost factor for the town.

Line 1400 Overtime - Chief Struble said the difference between Replacement Pay and Overtime is when there is an unanticipated fill-in of staff versus holding staff on the job because of an unforeseen event, such as ambulance duty. This then runs beyond a normal sift time.

Line 1700 Other Pay - He said 'other pay' is a series of obligated, contractual payments made to the bargaining unit, such as a stipend for paramedics; EMT; no sick leave incentive program; and for continuous duty pay. Over the past two years the replacement pay line has been increased to allow for staffing on each work shift by an increase of one person. They have gone from one ambulance with one paramedic on duty at night to having three on duty at all times and four during the day, so that there are now four paramedic units for the budget increase of \$110,000 from two years ago. He said that they have done this with existing staff and by increasing the replacement pay line.

Chairman Parisi said that he agrees with the incentive programs and asked how they are invented. Chief Struble said that they are negotiated with the union and are part of the contract.

Lines 9031 Engines-Body Repairs and 9093 Thermal Imaging Cameras - Mr. Cervoni inquired about these two lines in the Capital section of the budget for the Fire Department and said that he likes seeing the CRRF funds used for this sort of item. With regard to Line 9031, Chief Struble said that New England winters are rough on trucks due to roadway salt treatments, so the trucks develop rot on the underside due to the collection of road salt and are in areas that cannot be

washed. Repairs prolong the life of a good truck. After researching the problem, both Chief Struble and Deputy Chief Heidgerd attested to the fact that one way that they are attacking this problem is through the purchase of stainless steel trucks. It's a big investment but yields 10 years of use.

Thermal imaging cameras, Line 9093, Mr. Cervoni asked if expenditures are due to upgrades or if it is because of the life of the camera. The original cameras were purchased with State of Connecticut grant ten years ago. This camera is considered a critical tool in that it can 'see' in a smoke-filled room. Technology now yields a camera that is half the size and half the cost of the original camera. Mr. Cervoni stated that this is life-saving technology that outweighs the inventory replacement cost.

Line 9012 Purchased Professional Services - Physical Exams - Mr. LeTourneau asked why this is not covered under health insurance. Chief Struble explained about the OSHA requirements in certifying firefighters to be physically capable to perform the duties of firefighters. He said that this includes 63 annual exams for career firefighters and about 80 recurring physicals for volunteers. This exam looks for respiratory problems, heart disease, etc. He stated that half of firefighters in this country die of heart disease. He said that is why this is a budget line and not health insurance. He said the services are awarded through a public bid process.

Mr. LeTourneau asked about the four fire stations and their custodial services, \$2,625, and said that this may be the year for this to come out. Chief Struble recognized the comment and noted that this line has already been significantly cut at the department level before reaching the budget workshop with the Town Council. Mr. LeTourneau commented on 'Other Pay'.

Chief Struble stated that in the face of layoffs in order to maintain the current level of services that this would cause an increase in the 'Replacement Pay' line in the budget. If there was not a desire to increase the 'Replacement Pay' line, then services would be cut and that the first thing that would be cut would be to take the paramedics off the engines and return to a lower-count, shift platoon. Chief Struble spent some time explaining what happens to the 'Replacement Pay' account when firefighter positions are vacant.

Mr. Testa asked about the Fire Surgeon account. Chief Struble said that Dr. McGaughey has retired, and Fire Surgeon slot will remain vacant since the fire department has a bid-contract to provide medical services and medical control for the paramedics through Mid-State.

Mr. Testa directed comments to the Mayor with regard to the CRRA funds. He said many items for the fire department are included in those funds.

Mr. Testa notes \$170,000 in capital expenses and that he also notes that about \$120,000 is comprised of items that are \$10,000 or above. He asked if it was a matter of prioritizing, some for fire and some for Board of Education. He asks because there is about \$140,000 for the rescue vehicle for engine replacement and so on. He said that next year they will be looking at about \$650,000 that the Mayor has set aside for future Board of Education expenditures, and that when they get to the Mayor's budget, he wants to talk about the concept of borrowing since we are in the most attractive environment that we can be in right now.

Mayor Dickinson said that he thinks that all capital items should not be eliminated from the budgets. He commented that it is not a good way to go as every department has certain capital needs. He said that when you get to the larger amounts of money that it makes more sense to go to the CRRA money. Mr. Testa suggested that, as example, take the \$140,000 and use CRRA

funds and remove it from the operating budget for this year. Mayor Dickinson said that he thinks that is a mistake because next year that money is not in the tax rate, so now anything that has to be purchased in the next year has an impact on the tax rate, making it leap up. It spikes. He noted that the CRRA money should be used for large items that are not always repeating. When you get into a lower range of items, he said that those items will repeat next year and that a number of them are safety related, so it would be difficult to say, no, we aren't going to do them next year. It's better to have that in the base of the budget. Mr. Testa said that he understands and agrees with the Mayor but he pointed out snowplows, which are in every year's budget and an ambulance, which would be frequent.

Mayor Dickinson said that those are very high cost items. The snowplows are \$350,000 but that the items that are here are fairly low amounts of money. He pointed out that it actually reduces the capital account to the budget by approximately \$100,000, which is less than what was requested but to take it below \$150,000 gives us a problem next year. He said that most of these items will be back, and then we are faced with increasing the mill rate to cover them because there won't be money outside of the budget to cover them. Mayor Dickinson said that if we have large ticket items next year, and it is the worst year, then we may not be able to cover any of them. He said that for the safety related items, he can't picture saying no. He said that once it is out of the mill rate that getting it back in will cause a spike. Mr. Testa summarized the discussion stating that he was satisfied in what the CRRA money is for.

Mr. Bowes said that Mr. Testa's points were discussed before the Mayor's budget deadline. He said that the thought process is in trying to smooth in the CRRA funds without bleeding the capital down to zero in the attempt to avoid the spike and the negative ramification next year.

Mr. Testa said that he thinks the Fire Chief's vehicle replacement plan is like clockwork and is terrific. He likes it. He made comments about various budget lines, including how specific vehicles channel through the replacement program. Chief Struble and Mr. Testa discussed the maintenance that is necessary for the training tower.

Lightness of conversation centered around the problem that someone keeps setting fires in the training tower but they can't seem to find out who that might be. Mr. Testa said that he had heard that.

Mrs. Rascati confirmed with Chief Struble that CRRA funds will be used for the aerial truck reconditioning.

Mr. Fishbein talked about the Fire Department's ambulance money-making operation. He noted that the Fire Department will be purchasing another ambulance for \$180,000. He asked if the anticipated income was considering the new ambulance. Chief Struble said without the new ambulance. Mr. Fishbein focused on increased revenues with regard to the new ambulance. Chief Struble made the point that the new ambulance will not generate any additional revenues. He explained the cycle of the three ambulances in that the third ambulance is held in reserve for a variety of reasons, including special events and monthly maintenance of the other vehicles.

Mr. Fishbein asked about the thermal cameras in regard to the CRRA funds. Chief Struble said there is a list of capital projects needed by the fire department that are in addition to the 2010-2011 budget. He said that they plan 5 to 15 years out with various pieces of equipment, and the thermal imaging cameras are included in this list. He referred Mr. Fishbein to the Annual Report for the list.

Mr. Economopoulos asked where they were in the contract negotiation and what the percent of raises are and will be for 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012.

Chief Struble responded that right now they are working on an expired contract, and since the contract expired, there are no wage increases. He added that they are in arbitration. Mr. Economopoulos asked Chief Struble what was his biggest disappointment when his budget was returned from the Mayor. Chief Struble said that his concern was with regard to funding for the refurbishment of the aerial truck.

Mr. Sullivan directed his comments to union contract arbitration and the money that is set aside for specific years if the arbitration does not come back favorably. He asked if it was just for public works union and not the firefighters. Mr. Bowes said that the Personnel has set aside funds to bring one union into consistency as far as the timeframe of raises with every other union. He said that is our AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) 1183 union, which includes the public works folks. It's not the firefighters.

Mayor Dickinson stated that the key is what year, which is 2008-09, and there is nothing after 2008-09. He continued that any contract that is open for that year, there is money reserved, and after that there is no reserve. Mr. Sullivan asked that if the town is not successful in the arbitration with the fire department union, then where is the money that we will have to provide. Mayor Dickinson said that there is no source for the money and that he supposes an additional tax bill could be put out. He said or we could start to deal with credit reserve. Mr. Sullivan said that he is concerned for the taxpayer.

Mr. Testa wanted more explanation with regard to the contract right now, its status. Chief Struble said that the contract expired June 30, 2009, then contract negotiations began in the winter of January 2009 and went to the spring, when it went to arbitration. He thinks that there is one more arbitration hearing. He said that the last five contracts have been for three years. Mr. Testa said then we have been without a contract since July 1, so that we are in the first year of non-contract. He confirmed that this contract runs the same as the fiscal year. He said that he does not understand why there is money in reserve for 2008-09, since it was the last year of the contract. Mr. Bowes said that it was deemed to be a matter of consistency for the 2008-09 fiscal year.

Mayor Dickinson said that it was not fire because fire was in place. Mr. Testa inquired if there is an arbitration settlement this year that we have 'this' year to contend with for fire. Mayor Dickinson said that there is no money in this budget. Mr. Testa stated that the budget has no money for this year or for next year. He asked that if they are awarded any type of raise in the contract, what is the plan? Mayor Dickinson said that if that comes, then we will deal with it, and we are in severe economic times. The fact is there is no money.

Mr. LeTourneau asked what is Line 9028, Heating System Controls for Headquarters. Chief Struble said that they evaluated the use of energy in their buildings and asked themselves what are the things that we can do to make changes that will result in considerable energy savings. One was the heating system, and the other is the windows. He said that they want to fix the computer system that runs the heating and air conditioning systems, and their current vendor assessed what needs to be done to get the computer to run correctly so there can be maximum energy savings but to date they have not found anyone who can get this computer to work properly. He explained that they budgeted to go back to a simple system and to take the other system out. Mr. LeTourneau expressed concern with regard to \$9,500 for thermostats. Deputy Chief Heidgerd said that the explanation from their contractors is the zone valve-dampers system. He said that this cost is to take away that computer controlled equipment to go to an analog

thermostat. The work is very involved, and that because of the valve locations, the removal of valves accounts for the cost.

### **FIRE MARSHAL**

*In attendance: Fire Chief Peter Struble  
Deputy Fire Chief Stephen Alsup  
Deputy Chief Richard Heidgerd  
Fire Inspector John Andrews*

Chief Struble referred to the tragedy in the loss the former Fire Marshal and said that the staff has stepped up.

Mr. LeTourneau asked about Office Expenses and Supplies of \$3,000. Chief Struble said that the Fire Marshal Office is separate from the Fire Chief's Office and that they maintain their own budget to reflect their costs. He said that some services like maintenance of the computers and paper for the copy machine are shared. The Fire Marshal's Office must maintain normal day-to-day operations. He commented that they have much more filing to do than the Fire Department due to the number of inspections that come to the Fire Marshal's Office. Mr. LeTourneau wanted to know how many people are involved in the budget line for Purchased Professional Services-Physical Exams. Chief Struble said it is for the three certified people in the Fire Marshal's Office, which are the Fire Marshal and the two inspectors. They have requirements similar to the Fire Department. He explained some of those requirements.

Chief Struble responded to Mr. Sullivan that the salary of the Fire Marshal is exempt, and there is no overtime. Chief Struble answered that the Overtime line of \$8,300 is for the inspectors who are called in to perform fire investigations outside the normal workday. Inspectors are in the bargaining unit and are paid overtime. He stated that there are times when an inspector is assigned to a public event because the fire code requires it, for example, interior pyrotechnics at the Toyota Theatre, formerly the Oakdale Theatre. They are charged the fireworks fee which comes back to the general fund. Mr. Sullivan said that he knows that there is a search to fill the position of Fire Marshal. Chief Struble said that the budget was obviously was already prepared but that he would not anticipate that the new Fire Marshal would slot in at the top level.

Mr. Testa discussed the salary range of the position for Fire Marshal with Mr. Bowes, Chief Struble and Mayor Dickinson. They discussed the Fire Marshal salary levels. Mayor Dickinson said that someone may not come in at the lowest level and that there should be enough there to bring in someone that you really want given their experience and availability.

Mr. Economopoulos asked about contract status

Chairman Parisi asked the Council if they would like to vote on the two budgets that they just reviewed.

Mr. LeTourneau said that he would like to vote on these as we go along.

Mr. Testa said that we could formally say we are OK with it right now with the understanding that nothing is in stone until we vote on the final budget in May.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT MOTION**

Mr. LeTourneau made a motion to remove \$2,625 from Line 9014 Purchased Professional Services-Custodial from the Fire Department budget.

2<sup>nd</sup> There was no second.  
The item did not go forward.

#### MOTION

Mr. Fishbein moved to accept the Fire Department budget as presented.

2<sup>nd</sup> Ms. Rascati seconded.

There was no further discussion.

Vote Eight (8) Councilors present voted Aye. Mr. Letourneau voted Nay.  
The motion passed.

#### **FIRE MARSHAL**

##### MOTION

Mr. Fishbein moved to accept the Fire Marshal budget as presented.

2<sup>ND</sup> Mr. Farrell seconded.

Vote Nine (9) Councilors present voted Aye.  
The motion passed.

#### **RECESS**

Chairman Parisi called for a five-minute recess.

#### **CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

*In attendance: Jeffrey Borne, Chairman  
Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner*

Mr. Fishbein commented that the budget indicates a part-timer, salary of \$927. He asked who is this for. Ms. O'Hare stated that it is for the recording secretary who takes the minutes of the night meetings. Mr. Fishbein asked how often. Ms. O'Hare stated monthly and that if there is a special meeting, she takes the minutes.

Mr. Fishbein asked about Line 9000 Purchased Services-Natural Resources, \$6,000. He wanted an explanation of the use of the \$6,000. Ms. O'Hare said the primary reason is for trail maintenance in the more than one thousand acres in the Tyler Mill Preserve. The trails need maintenance, signage and erosion control. She said that there are problems with invasive plants. Mr. Fishbein stated that last year \$6,000 was appropriated about this time of year and that his document shows that those funds have not been expended. Ms. O'Hare said that the work is typically done in the spring and is for trail blazing in Ferguson Woods and Bertini Park, which will be concluded by June 30, 2010. She said trails are set using the GPS system, then analyzed by the consultant, and finally, the trails are blazed. She said that the last trail to be addressed will be a walking path on the Galko Property. This path is the result of public input for walking in a beautiful area. Mr. Fishbein asked if there are any maps reflecting the areas on which next year's \$6,000 appropriation will be used. Ms. O'Hare said that there are maps and that the focus will be on one particular trail, the pink trail, the longest trail on the preserve. She said that two

years ago a consultant 'GPSed' the trail. She said that two of the areas need GPS evaluation due to erosion and trail plant invasion, and they will address the crossing of the Muddy River.

Mr. Borne added that they inherited some open space that was in dire need of stewardship. There was an extensive set of trails that were not well marked. He said that they initiated the professional identification of these trails, and then set the professional markings of them. He said this is the continuation of that effort. He said that the benefits of clear trails results in fewer issues on the trails, since people are not cutting their own new trails. He stated that the Conservation Commission initiative of professional identification of the trails and professional trail blazing will bring the mis-use of the area under control.

Mr. Fishbein commented that he has blazed trails before and asked why is a professional is necessary. He said that perhaps the Conservation Commission could solicit the Boy Scouts. Mr. Borne said that the Commission would be delighted to walk with Mr. Fishbein on those trails, so that he could see the professional trail blazing as well as examples of previous blazing. He said that there is a difference from the type of paint, to the presentation of the blazes which are well-formed and well-marked. Mr. Borne added that when you contract with someone, you know when the contractor will begin, and you are guaranteed a product. Mr. Fishbein said that if they organized it through the Conservation Commission with the Boy Scouts, you would know when it would start, and although there is no product guarantee, it would still be a win-win situation.

Chairman Parisi called upon Mr. LeTourneau. Mr. LeTourneau said that he was all set and that Mr. Fishbein had covered most on his questions.

Chairman Parisi asked if there was anyone else. Mr. LeTourneau said that he was working on it.

#### MOTION

Mr. Farrell moved to adopt the Conservation Commission budget.

2<sup>ND</sup> Mr. Cervoni seconded.

Chairman Parisi asked for discussion, and there was none. He called for the vote.

VOTE Seven Councilors voted Aye. Mr. Fishbein and Mr. LeTourneau voted Nay.  
The motion was passed.

Mr. LeTourneau said that went too quick and explained that he has another one. Chairman Parisi said it's your colleague and that he can't tell someone not to make a motion. Mr. LeTourneau said that he knew that but he was going to make a motion. He said that he was trying to get the Chairman's attention. He said this is another motion. Chairman Parisi asked if he wanted to cut something out. Mr. LeTourneau said yes. Chairman Parisi asked him to make his motion.

Barbara Thompson, Town Clerk, asked to clarify the vote on the motion. She confirmed that Mr. Fishbein and Mr. LeTourneau voted Nay to Mr. Farrell's motion earlier.

Mayor Dickinson said that if no one objects to another motion being made, then it doesn't matter, but if someone does object, then you get into the technicalities of whether you can revisit the same matter.

Mr. Testa said that as a point of order, the idea of who can bring up a motion after it has been voted upon, is if it only relates to the same motion.

No one expressed objection to another motion.

#### MOTION

Mr. LeTourneau made a motion to remove \$6,000 from Line 9000- Purchased Services-Natural Resources.

2<sup>ND</sup> Mr. Fishbein seconded.

Chairman Parisi asked for discussion on the motion.

Mr. Cervoni said that this is the type of expense that leads to entertainment and enrichment for the town's citizens and that it is recession proof.

Mr. Testa said we can make arguments as we would like to on dozens of like expenditures in the budget, based upon the current economic climate; however, we have spent millions of dollars on open space, and we frequently hear from people who say that if the town is going to spend that money, then it needs to be taken care of and with someone overseeing those projects. When we were discussing professional staff involvement with the Commission and with the Open Space Program, those arguments came into play. He pointed out that this is a miniscule amount of money in order to backup a phenomenal amount of work that the volunteers do on the Commission. He said that it would be penny wise and pound foolish to cut this money.

Mr. LeTourneau said the reason he made this motion to remove \$6,000 is that he agrees with the use of the money but *not at this time*. He said that we are in bad financial (times) this year and possibly next year. He said that sure, this needs to be done, and we need to take care of our open space but *not this year*. He remarked that he is looking for every dime that he can find because at the end of the day, it is real money. He noted that it's \$6,000 here and \$2,000 there and perhaps larger amounts from other departments. He said the reasoning is that we can't do it this year. He said that we have to do this a little at a time. He said Eagle Scouts are always looking for projects. He said that he will be doing this throughout the budget process, looking for little amounts.

Mr. Fishbein said that he echoes the sentiments of Mr. LeTourneau. He stated that we are looking at tax increases, and it is of no offense to the Conservation Commission or to Ms. O'Hare. He said that he loves the Open Space Program, purchasing open space. He said that he loves to hike but he has senior citizens who are on fixed incomes, and we are looking to raise taxes, and we are looking to blaze trails when we raise taxes. He commented that he does not necessarily see that this is the most prudent thing to do in this economy.

Mr. Sullivan asked to hear the motion repeated.

#### MOTION

Mr. LeTourneau made a motion to remove Account #9000 to remove \$6,000 from Purchased Services-Natural Resources, and Mr. Fishbein seconded.

#### ROLL CALL VOTE:

Cervoni	No	LeTourneau	Yes
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Economopoulos	No	Rascati	No
Farrell	No	Sullivan	No
Fishbein	Yes	Testa	No
Chairman Parisi	No		

7- Nay; 2 Aye

The motion was defeated.

## INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES

*In attendance: Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner*

Ms. O'Hare said that the Mayor has approved the Inland Wetland budget that the Commission submitted and that it is the same as last year. She said that the total budget is \$91,690 and of that salaries and wages is \$80,190 with an Operating and Maintenance Budget of \$11,500.

Mr. LeTourneau asked what is Line 9001 -Purchased Professional Services-Environmental. Ms. O'Hare said that they have not had cause to use those funds because it is used for an outside consultant when the Commission and the applicant's soil scientist do not agree where a wetland boundary would be. She said that in some instances the applicant will pay the cost of an outside consultant.

Mr. LeTourneau asked for explanation of Line 9002 Purchased Professional Services-Southwest Conservation District. Ms. O'Hare stated that it is for the technical assistance of the Southwest Conservation District group and that their fee has remained stable for several years. She commented that the Southwest Conservation District is a quasi-state governmental agency that services 43 towns in south-central Connecticut, and Wallingford is one of their towns. She added that this is the membership fee, so to speak, for the Town of Wallingford to use their services. She said that they provide technical service to residential property owners as well at no cost to the town itself.

Mr. Fishbein asked about Line 4000-Office Expenses and Supplies. He questioned why this line has increased. Ms. O'Hare said that the bulk of that line of \$3,500 is for the publication of legal notices, which are required by statute.

In reference to Line 9001 -Purchased Professional Services-Environmental, Mr. Fishbein asked Comptroller, Mr. Bowes where funds that are not spent go in the budget at the end of the fiscal year. He said that he heard that nothing has been spent from this line in five years. Mr. Bowes stated that it is folded into the operations whether that leads to an operating surplus or an operation deficit for that fiscal year. He stated is when the books are closed, usually three months after the fiscal year ends. There is no mechanical process to go back. He said that each budget is anew. Mr. Fishbein said that there is about \$10,000 over the last five years that has not been expended from this line item and asked if he was to assume that there is an account for 9001 that has a running balance of \$10,000. Mr. Bowes said no that the general fund closes by its very nature, by statute and by Charter. He said that it closes and that if this item were not spent that it becomes a positive variance in the expenditures. It is part of a much, much broader picture. He said, for example, a \$140 million budget, and we get \$140 million revenue from all of our sources, and we spend \$140 million in all of our general fund budgets, including our schools, then it is a break-even year. If we spent this \$10,000, then we would have spent \$140,010,000, we would have had an operating deficit of \$10,000 when the books are closed for that fiscal year.

Ms. O'Hare said that Line 4000-Office Expenses and Supplies -\$3,500, that \$1,000 is for Office Supplies – paper, ink cartridges, etc. and that the remainder, \$2,500, is legal notices.

Mr. Fishbein wanted to know if it is voluntary that the town pays for the fee for (Line 9002) Purchased Professional Services-Southwest Conservation District. He wanted to know the ramifications if we do not pay this fee. Ms. O'Hare said she used their services just last week. She said that she might call upon them for an erosion situation that is out of her league. She said that she deals with most of the routine erosion situations on a development site or in a violation matter but when it involves heavy equipment, mud, equipment that might get stuck in mud and equipment that can dig a ditch on a slope, she does not have the technical expertise to direct them in that way. She stated that the Southwest Conservation District does and that they come to the site and help in those settings. She added that they also assist residential sites.

#### MOTION

Mr. LeTourneau moved to remove \$2,500, Account 9001 Purchased Professional Service-Environmental.

2<sup>ND</sup> Mr. Fishbein seconded.

Chairman Parisi asked Ms. O'Hare if she needed that money. She responded that in the five years that she has been staff to the Commission that the larger developer applicants have the resources that they can and do provide the service of hiring an outside service. She said, however, smaller developers, or residential folks, don't have the resources to front the money. Ms. O'Hare said that, yes, they do need that money in the budget.

Mr. Fishbein said that it is the Commission that decides whether or not these soil scientists are going to come into the property as part of the application process. He asked if that was correct. Ms. O'Hare said yes. Mr. Fishbein said that he would think that all applicants are treated fairly, so that he does not see the relevance that if we don't have this budget line, then why isn't it just the position of the Commission that whenever these things are sought by the Commission, that the applicant pays for it. Ms. O'Hare said that in the last five years they dealt with one applicant who was uncooperative, and in this situation the Commission used \$3,100 from this account.

Mr. Testa said it seems that if they need this money, then they could come for a transfer; however, there are three Commissions (Planning & Zoning, Zoning Board of Appeals and Inland Wetland) that we appoint and who operate and administer the laws in the town. He commented that these Commissions operate on bare-bones and that he would loathe to change their budgets.

Mayor Dickinson stated that he agrees that we should look for every dollar we can, but on the other hand, that we should be budgeting logically what allows a given office to function properly. He said perhaps take some of it out, but the idea of taking it all out does not represent that the office has the wherewithall to do the work that it is assigned to do.

Mr. Fishbein said that he sort of understands situations where this could come up. Ms. O'Hare said that in the case of an appeal that this budget line would be exceedingly important.

#### ROLL CALL VOTE:

Cervoni	No	LeTourneau	Yes
Economopoulos	Yes	Rascati	No
Farrell	No	Sullivan	No
Fishbein	Yes	Testa	No
		Chairman Parisi	No

6 Nays; 3 Ayes

The motion defeated.

MOTION

Mr. Farrell moved to adopt the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses budget.

2<sup>ND</sup> Mr. Cervoni seconded.

Chairman Parisi asked for discussion, and there was none. He called for the vote.

VOTE Seven Councilors voted Aye. Mr. Fishbein and Mr. LeTourneau voted Nay.  
The motion was passed.

*Public Celebrations*

*There were no questions or comments.*

*Registrars of Voters*

*There were no questions or comments.*

*Civil Preparedness*

*There were no questions or comments.*

Mr. Farrell moved to adjourn. Mr. Fishbein seconded. All Councilors present (9) voted Aye.  
The meeting adjourned at 8:28 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra R. Weekes  
Town Council Secretary  
Meeting digitally recorded

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Robert F. Parisi, Town Council Chairman

Date

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Barbara Thompson, Town Clerk

Date