

TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR

Minutes

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October 5, 2015

**TOWN COUNCIL – REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS – SOUTH WINDSOR TOWN HALL**

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Anwar called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

4. Roll Call

Members Present: Mayor M. Saud Anwar
Deputy Mayor Edward Havens
Councilor Thomas Delnicki
Councilor Carolyn Mirek
Councilor Andrew Paterna
Councilor Liz Pendleton
Councilor Matthew Riley
Councilor Janice Snyder
Councilor Stephen Wagner

Also Present: Keith Yagaloff, Town Attorney

The Council had a Moment of Silence for the victims in the recent shooting at the Community College in Oregon.

5. Public Input

None

6. Environmental Health & Safety Message

Mr. Greg Roberts from the Fire Department came before the Council and explained that this week is Fire Prevention Week and the month of October is Fire Prevention Month. The motto this year is "Hear the Beep Where you Sleep". It is very important to know that your smoke detector is a working smoke detector with a 10 year life span. Between 2009 through 2013 there was an average of 940 deaths because people did not have smoke detectors in their homes. Two thirds of any fire death is attributed to smoke detectors not working or not being present. Fifty three percent all of all fires occur while people sleep. It is very important to have a good working smoke detector and to change the detectors every ten years. A carbon monoxide detector is also a very important item to have in the house.

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6. Environmental Health & Safety Message (Continued)

Councilor Mirek informed the Council that this week is also Latex Allergy Awareness Week. Up to 6% of the population is affected by this. Representative Aman helped pass a Bill that bans latex from food businesses in Connecticut. Also it is Dental Hygiene Month so every one should make sure to schedule their appointments. It is also Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Annual mammograms are very important.

Mayor Anwar stated the early identification with breast cancer can truly save lives. Mayor Anwar informed the public and Council that it is also Bullying Prevention Month as well Mental Awareness Week. Bullying can have lasting effects on individuals.

Councilor Pendleton stated that men can also get breast cancer.

7. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meetings

BE IT RESOLVED that the South Windsor Town Council hereby approves the Minutes of the following Town Council Meetings: Regular Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2015.

Was made by Deputy Mayor Havens
Seconded by Councilor Snyder
The motion was approved, unanimously

8. Public Petitions

Ms. Betty Warren of 494 Abbe Road came before the Town Council and presented a petition to the Council with 166 signatures on it. The petition is in support of the South Windsor Parks & Recreation proposal to establish community gardens on Deming Street. When the property was sold to the Town, Mr. Nelson was interested in keeping the property agriculture or community gardens.

9. Communications from Officers and Boards Directly Responsible to Council

None

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10. Reports from Standing Committees

Mr. Peter Anthony came before the Town Council to inform them that the Patriotic Commission has received a \$75,000 grant from the State of Connecticut which is to go towards the construction of a memorial wall at VMP. Mr. Anthony thanked Representative Tim Larson for all of his help in getting this grant. The Commission is hopeful to start construction this month in order to have it completed by November. The wall will be dedicated on Memorial Day 2016.

11. Reports of Temporary Committees

Councilor Paterna informed the Council that the South Windsor Agricultural, Arts & Nature Center Committee will be forming a Subcommittee that will review the RFP's that have been received for the completion of a feasibility study at the Priest property.

12. Consent Agenda

None

13. Unfinished Business

None

14. New Business

A. Resolution Appointing Paul Burnham (R) a Full Member to the Economic Development Commission and Postponing Consideration of this Motion until the Town Council's Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting

BE IT RESOLVED that the South Windsor Town Council hereby appoints Paul Burnham (R) a full member to the Economic Development Commission for a term ending November 30, 2017 to fill the vacancy from the unexpired term of Mark Lillis and postpones consideration of this motion until the Town Council's next regularly scheduled meeting.

Was made by Councilor Snyder

Seconded by Councilor Delnicki

The motion was approved, unanimously.

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ITEM:

14. New Business (Continued)

B. Resolution Appointing Bernard Thomas (D) to the Public Building Commission and Postponing Consideration of this Motion until the Town Council's Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting

BE IT RESOLVED that the South Windsor Town Council hereby appoints Bernard Thomas (D) to the Public Building Commission for a term ending November 30, 2015 to fill the vacancy from the unexpired term of Ken Jeski and postpones consideration of this motion until the Town Council's next regularly scheduled meeting.

Was made by Councilor Paterna
Seconded by Deputy Mayor Havens
The motion was approved, unanimously

C. Resolution Appointing Linda Jeski (D) an Alternate to the Board of Assessment Appeals and Postponing Consideration of this Motion until the Town Council's Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting

BE IT RESOLVED that the South Windsor Town Council hereby appoints Linda Jeski (D) an Alternate to the Board of Assessment Appeals for a term ending November 30, 2017 to fill the vacancy from the unexpired term of Debbie Duarte and postpones consideration of this motion until the Town Council's next regularly scheduled meeting.

Was made by Councilor Pendleton
Seconded by Deputy Mayor Havens
The motion was approved, unanimously

D. Resolution Approving the Use of 490 Deming Street for Community Gardens

WHEREAS, the Town purchased a 10.92 acre property in November 2010 with Open Space bond monies; and

WHEREAS, the property known as the "Nelson Farm", with frontage on Deming Street consists largely of previously cultivated farmland; and

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ITEM:

14. D. (Continued)

WHEREAS, the Town has proposed this location be used for additional community gardens to include seventy (70) 20' x 40' plots and six (6) raised handicap accessible planting beds, 4' x 8' x 30" in size; and

WHEREAS, the current community gardens at the Avery Street property totaling 61 plots at 20' x 38' each are fully subscribed with 26 individuals on a wait list; and

WHEREAS, development of the new community gardens at 490 Deming Street will be funded by a combination of in-house efforts by the Parks & Recreation Department, in-kind contributions of South Windsor Food Alliance volunteers and a \$20,000 grant from the State of Connecticut, Department of Agriculture Farmland Restoration Program; and

WHEREAS, the Town recognizes the value of gardening in that it provides for physical activity and a local natural food source for sustaining health and wellness of our residents; and

WHEREAS, the Planning & Zoning Commission at its Regular Meeting of July 14, 2015, forwarded a favorable recommendation unanimously to the Council of the Community Gardens on Deming Street; and

WHEREAS, the South Windsor Park & Recreation Commission reviewed the use of 490 Deming Street as well as other alternative sites for additional community gardens and have submitted their recommendation in written form to the Town Council as charged

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the South Windsor Town Council hereby approves the use of Deming Street for community gardens as recommended by the Park & Recreation Commission.

Was made by Councilor Wagner
Seconded by Councilor Snyder

Councilor Wagner explained that after concerns by neighbors were raised, the Town Council requested the Planning & Zoning Commission to review the project as well as the Park & Recreation Commission. The Park & Recreation

(Resolution Continued on Next Page)

ITEM:

14. D. (Continued)

Commission was also asked to make a recommendation of the best use of the property at 490 Deming Street and if there was a better site in Town where the community gardens could be located. The Park & Recreation Commission toured numerous sites in Town and wrote a report to the Council, as shown in attached **Exhibit A**.

Mr. Robert O'Connor, a member of the Park & Recreation Commission came before the Council. Mr. O'Connor explained that the Park & Recreation Commission, with the direction of the Council, did a thorough vetting of the Deming Street site as well as alternative sites. The Park & Recreation Commission focused on the best use of the property and feels the community gardens would be the best use for the Deming Street property. It is a docile use of the property and it is in the intended use of the property. The grant that the Town will be receiving is specific for this project as well as specific to the property and would not be able to be used for another use.

Councilor Riley thanked the Park & Recreation Commission for a thorough and comprehensive report which allows him to support the recommendation put forth because all of his questions have been answered.

Councilor Paterna stated that the neighbors are not opposing the project after reviewing the Park & Recreation Commission report. The Town should make it a point to be a good neighbor.

Answering questions from Councilor Mirek, Mr. O'Connor informed the Council that soil testing has been done on the property and is available in the Park & Recreation Department.

Mayor Anwar thanked all parties involved in the process of this project. The process allowed for neighborhood concerns to be addressed.

Deputy Mayor Havens thanked everyone for the work put into this project and urged residents to come to the Town if there are any additional concerns.

Mayor Anwar called for a vote on the motion; it was approved, unanimously.

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E. Resolution Approving the Transfer of \$233,820 from Various Accounts to Various General Fund Operating Budgets within the 2014/2015 Fiscal Year

BE IT RESOLVED that the South Windsor Town Council hereby approves a transfer of \$110,473 from Social Security, \$12,084 from Workers' Compensation Insurance, \$11,267 from Unemployment Benefits, \$44,070 from the Town Manager Professional Account, \$15,411 from Central Services and \$40,515 from Environmental Health to cover the following 2014/2015 expenditures:

- \$2,479 to Public Building Commission Professional Account
- \$1,195 to the Planning Overtime Account
- \$1,879 to the Planning & Zoning Advertising Account
- \$185,012 to the Capital Lease Account
- \$3,936 to the Casualty & Liability Insurance Account
- \$2,358 to the Pension Benefit Account
- \$36,961 to the Health & Life Insurance Account

Was made by Councilor Riley

Seconded by Councilor Delnicki

Councilor Delnicki explained that these transfer will balance the Town's books and close out previous year accounts.

Mayor Anwar called for a vote on the motion; it was approved, unanimously.

Councilor Delnicki made a motion to suspend the rules in order to take Item 14. G. out of order. Councilor Wagner seconded the motion; and it was approved, unanimously.

G. Resolution Approving a Refund of Taxes to Six (6) South Windsor Taxpayers

BE IT RESOLVED that the South Windsor Town Council hereby approves a refund of property taxes to Six (6) South Windsor Taxpayers, the total of said refund being \$681.82 and as more fully described on attached **Exhibit B**.

Was made by Councilor Delnicki

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Havens

The motion was approved, unanimously.

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ITEM:

15. Passage of Ordinance

None

16. Communications and Reports from Town Manager

None

17. Public Input

There was none at this time, but it was felt that that this item should be brought up again later in the meeting.

18. Communications and Petitions from Council

Deputy Mayor Havens thanked the South Windsor Police Department for the publicity in the Hartford Courant regarding the body cameras on the Police Officers.

Mayor Anwar congratulated Chief Timothy Edwards who was sworn in last week as Chief of Police and Deputy Chief Scott Custer who was sworn in as the Deputy Chief. Mayor Anwar also congratulated Chris Gargano and Mike Costa who have earned the Level One Building Operations Certification from the State of Connecticut.

Councilor Mirek informed the Council and public that Heritage Day was canceled on Saturday, but the Walk for the Public Education was still held. There was \$4,000 raised for the public education fund.

Councilor Pendleton acknowledged local fire fighters who just attended and represented South Windsor at the National Fallen Fire Fighters Memorial Service that is held every October.

Deputy Mayor Havens informed the Council and public that a celebration for the 35th Anniversary of the Senior Center will be held on Friday, October 9, 2015 from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

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ITEM:

18. Communications and Petitions from Council (Continued)

Mayor Anwar read a letter into the record from Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman regarding crumbling foundations. Residents should report crumbling foundation cases to the DEP at 1-800-842-2649. If residents need assistance interpreting their insurance policy they should call Gerard O'Sullivan at the Department of Insurance at (860) 297-3889.

Mayor Anwar then informed the public that there will be a Public Update regarding Avery Heights Road Reconstruction Project on October 7, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall.

19. Executive Session

None

At 7:48 p.m. Mayor Anwar recessed the Regular Meeting. A Public Hearing was held at 8:00 p.m. The Regular Meeting reconvened at 8:26 p.m.

14. New Business (Continued)

F. Resolution Authorizing the Town Manager to Enter into a Lease Financing Agreement and Executing Related Documentation for the Financing and Construction of the Emergency Operations Center

WHEREAS, on May 18, 2009, the South Windsor Town Council authorized the Town Manager to execute an agreement for the purchase of the Old Post Office (also known as Town Hall Annex) located at 1530 Sullivan Avenue by the Town of South Windsor; and

WHEREAS, on December 17, 2012, the Town of South Windsor was awarded a STEAP Grant in the amount of \$500,000 for improvements to the Emergency Operations Center at the Town Hall Annex; and

WHEREAS, at the September 15, 2014 Town Council meeting, the Town Council authorized the Town Manager to apply for a second STEAP Grant in the amount of \$500,000 for improvements to the Town Hall Annex for an Emergency Operations Center; and

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ITEM:

14. F. (Continued)

WHEREAS, the Town of South Windsor has not been informed on the status of this latest grant; and

WHEREAS, on November 3, 2014, the South Windsor Town Council held a public hearing and then approved the appropriation of \$281,650 of LoCIP funds to be used for improvements to the Town Hall Annex; and

WHEREAS, the Town estimates that an additional amount of \$1,496,407 will be necessary to complete the improvements to the Emergency Operations Center

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the South Windsor Town Council hereby directs Town Manager, Matthew B. Galligan to enter into a lease financing agreement of up to \$1,496,500 to pay for the Emergency Operations Center and to execute any additional documents related to the financing and construction of the Emergency Operations Center at the Town Hall Annex, except those documents that require Town Council approval.

Was made by Councilor Pendleton
Seconded by Councilor Delnicki

Councilor Pendleton spoke in support of this project and thanked everyone involved in helping with the process. It is important to know that the local government is working to protect the community during emergency situations. Councilor Pendleton then questioned why the Emergency Operations Center could not be housed in the Fire Station.

Town Attorney Yagaloff explained that it was determined by the Bond Counsel that the additional space (previously used by the Ambulance Corps) at the fire house should be used for the same type of use or as close as possible to the intended use of a fire house. After review by a Committee, it was determined that the Fire Marshal should use the space rather than the EOC.

Councilor Pendleton then stated that it is good to see employees from the Town Hall being moved to this location because the Town Hall is overcrowded in some of the departments.

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ITEM:

14. F. (Continued)

Councilor Delnicki asked the Chief of Police to explain how the EOC works in emergency preparedness and emergency management with the Police Department and how the training room worked out. Chief Edwards explained that the training room at the Police Department is used for the EOC and first and foremost, it lacks security. When it is in use as the EOC there are a large number of individuals in the same room speaking at once which is not conducive to affectively deal with the hazards that are going on in the Town. The Police Department endorses the Emergency Operations Center for the Town and feel it is needed in Town.

Deputy Chief Custer added that this building is something that will be used daily. The Town will pay for this now and it will serve the Town well into the future. The Police Department Training Room does not have the security and/or privacy that is necessary for an EOC and would not withstand a Category 3 Hurricane. The EOC has the proper break out rooms areas which is critical, it has dedicated bathrooms, a meal area, a proper rest area, storage for long term events and will adequately house all of the staff from all of the services needed. Deputy Chief Custer explained to the Council that the Police Department supports this plan.

Councilor Delnicki asked if the department see's the EOC as a hub for command and control when minutes really count in the case of any sort of disaster. Deputy Chief Custer agreed with Councilor Delnicki's statement and informed the Council that last week the Information Technology Department came over to prepare the phones, computers, etc. for the Hurricane that was being predicted. If the EOC is financed and constructed, those items will always be ready to go which is preferable.

Answering further questions from Councilor Delnicki, Mr. Scott Fine from the Fire Department explained that EOC at Fire House #3 was reviewed. There is a large room but there are no break out areas which are necessary. During emergency situations, there are a lot of people at the fire house which would add to the noise of an EOC. The proposed EOC would be a benefit to the Fire Department during emergency situations.

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ITEM:

14. F. (Continued)

Councilor Delnicki questioned from a command and control standpoint, the ability to respond to a situation and handle emergencies in a timely fashion when minutes count that the EOC as laid out here would be a benefit to the Fire Department. Mr. Scott Fine said yes.

Councilor Delnicki then question, Mr. Scott Roberts who is the Director of IT why he would like the IT Department housed at the EOC versus the Town Hall. Mr. Roberts explained that all of the technology that is going to run the command and communications will be located at the EOC. The IT Department needs the technology that will be in that building to help handle the communications during an emergency situation.

Councilor Delnicki asked if the departments that are being located in the EOC are mission critical to emergency response. Mr. Roberts felt that all departments are very important.

Councilor Delnicki stated that he is in support the financing for the Town Hall Annex and Emergency Operations Center. This building will be a tool that compliments all of the resources that the Town has.

Councilor Wagner felt that an Emergency Operations Center and Town Hall Annex are something the Town needs and he would be supporting this project.

Answering further questions, Town Attorney Yagaloff stated that he believes that the Town Manager had said if the other STEAP grant is awarded to the Town that the cost would be reduced. The Town Manager is looking for additional State and Federal Grants to defray costs.

Councilor Mirek stated that public safety is very important and the Town needs to be prepared. The Town needs to find as much funding as possible.

Councilor Paterna voiced support for this project. The lease agreement interest rate is low, the operating costs are low and it will free up space at the Town Hall.

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ITEM:

14. F. (Continued)

Answering a question from Councilor Riley, Mr. Fine stated that during a Category Three Hurricane, he feels that Fire Station #3 would sustain damage. Mr. Majors came forward to talk about operating costs and stated that all of the equipment is state of the art. There will be a building automation system which will monitor the condition space 24/7 so if there happens to be no one in the EOC area for any amount of time, that whole section can be shut off so the Town will not be heating or cooling the entire building, just the sections that are being occupied at a specific time.

Councilor Riley stated he would be voting in favor of this resolution. Councilor Riley said he feels it is a favorable approach for this project to be going with a longer term financing of 10 years at 4.2%, as well as know that the Fire Department and the Police Department are both supporting this project and it has been determined that the Fire House is not the appropriate space for an EOC.

Councilor Snyder stated that she would be supporting this proposal and then quoted Jay Gonzalez by saying, "The only thing worse than a disaster is trying to explain why you were not prepared for a disaster".

Deputy Mayor Havens gave the public some history of this building. The building matches the look of the Town Hall and seems to be a perfect Town Hall Annex and Emergency Operations Center. It will be nice to give the IT Department more space to work. The Town Council's responsibility is to make sure that the public is protected.

Mayor Anwar stated that safety and security of the public is the Town Council's number one priority. The Town wants to be prepared for any situation that may arise. Once the Town has this protection in place, there are companies that look for this type of preparation.

Councilor Riley requested that to the extent possible he would like the process changed. After a public hearing is held, he would like the vote of the issue at a subsequent meeting. This would give an opportunity for Council members to review the subject and allow the public to contact Council members with questions.

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ITEM:

14. F. (Continued)

Councilor Riley then made a motion to amend the resolution. In the last paragraph, after the \$1,496,500 figure the following be inserted, "(the "Lease Amount"), provided that such lease amount shall be reduced by any STEAP Grants or other grants received to support improvements to the Town Hall Annex". Councilor Delnicki seconded the motion.

Councilor Riley felt that this language verifies that the Town Council is not approving a lease amount that goes beyond what is intended to be done.

Town Attorney Yagaloff stated that if the lease financing was approved but then the grant came in after, the expectation would be that the grant would be used to pay the principal down on that contract?

Councilor Riley stated that is the expectation and he would hope that the terms and conditions associated with the financing would allow for prepayment without penalty. If that is not the case, it should be built into the arrangement.

Town Attorney Yagaloff questioned what if it the financing company prohibited prepayment, could the funds be used to pay the annual financing charge? Town Attorney Yagaloff explained that he wants to make sure it is on the record that the Town Manager can still proceed with the lease financing agreement if he has not received information about the STEAP grant and that the subsequent STEAP grant that was granted for this purpose would be applied in some form against the payments for the lease financing agreement.

Councilor Riley stated that is his intent and he would be happy to leave it to the Town Manager to determine whether he wants the prepayments to go to backend of the lease and keep the payment amount on an annual basis the same or lower the payment amount and keep the term the same. The wording in the amendment actually speaks to not only the STEAP grant that has been applied for already but also any STEAP Grants or any other grants that may be received for this purpose.

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ITEM:

14. F. (Continued)

Mayor Anwar questioned if the wording should be changed to read grant and not STEAP grant. Councilor Riley agreed to change the wording to grants.

The amendment to read as follows: "(the "Lease Amount"), provided that such lease amount shall be reduced in kind by any grants received to support improvements to the Town Hall Annex or Emergency Operations Center".

Town Attorney Yagaloff suggested the amendment to read "said amount be off set by grants or other funding obtained by the Town for that purpose". Councilor Riley explained that it is his intent to keep the lease amount down so if additional funds are received, those funds should be applied to reduce the lease amount as opposed to potentially being applied to other costs that may arise in the process of completing this project.

Mayor Anwar felt that the language should be left alone because the Council has a clear understanding of what the Town Manager wants and the Town Manager has a clear understanding of what the Council wants.

Councilor Mirek thought it should be spelled out where the money is intended to go.

Councilor Wagner felt that it is clear in the resolution that the Town has applied for a second STEAP grant and the Council has the legislative intent from this discussion and previous meetings. Agree with the intent of the amendment but felt that more language would be necessary to word it appropriately and felt that resolution should be left as it was originally.

Councilor Delnicki wondered if at the end of paragraph three, if the following should be added, "and it is our intent to utilize those monies and any other grants against the lease".

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ITEM:

14. F. (Continued)

Town Attorney Yagaloff said that he is more inclined to try to use language of "off set", rather than "reduction" as stated previously. Councilor Riley felt that the words are different but the result is actually the same. Councilor Riley explained that he wants to make sure that any grants that are received before or after the lease financing is set up, is used to reduce the lease amount. The funds should not be used to make addition improvements at the EOC/Town Hall Annex. Town Attorney Yagaloff stated that after all of these discussions, the record should be clear of the Town Council's intent.

Councilor Riley reiterated his proposed amendment. In the last paragraph, after the figure amount, insert, "(the "Lease Amount") provided that such lease amount shall be reduced in kind by any grants received to support improvements to the Emergency Operations Center and Town Hall Annex".

Mayor Anwar questioned if the legislative and legal intent would be safe and if the Town Manager would still be able implement all options? Town Attorney Yagaloff felt that the Town Manager would be able to implement all options.

Deputy Mayor Havens said he would not support the amendment and feels the Council members should let the Town Manager do his job.

Councilor Pendleton stated that it is already spelled out how the funds for the second STEAP grant will be used. The other concern is that if the Town receives other grants for other items necessary then those funds would be used for the lease payment which will limit the Town on the creation of the Town Hall Annex and Emergency Operations Center. Councilor Pendleton said therefore she would not support the amendment.

Councilor Riley explained that is the exact intent of the amendment to insure that any additional funds received are not going to increase the amount of funds given for this project.

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ITEM:

14. F. (Continued)

Town Attorney Yagaloff suggested that "grants received for the construction or the build out" be inserted into the amendment. Town Attorney Yagaloff explained that Mr. Galligan stated that he would be seeking funding for other costs such as equipment and supplies. Mr. Riley reiterated that he would like any grants received for the build out to create the EOC and Town Hall Annex to be used to reduce the lease.

Councilor Wagner stated that the more this is discussed, the more unintended consequences come up as to how this might be interpreted in the future and he would not be able to support the amendment. The original resolution and all of the discussion that has happened should make everything clear.

Councilor Mirek felt that the intention of the amendment is to make sure no additional funds go into the project other than what has been designated for it.

Town Attorney Yagaloff felt that it would have to be reviewed if something like a technology grant could be used to reduce the lease. Councilor Riley stated that there is \$2.3 million dollars in sources of financing. There are uses that Mr. Galligan has matched up against that \$2.3 million dollars. To the extent that the sources are added to, Mr. Riley explained he does not want to see the uses expand, he would like to see the source which is the lease financing be reduced. Town Attorney Yagaloff stated that he does not have the data showing what cost is required for the build out versus what cost is required for the technology improvements, so he explained that he could not say whether the \$2.3 million dollars is sufficient for the whole project or whether he is expecting additional funds.

Mayor Anwar called for a vote on the amendment, it failed on a Roll Call vote of 4 to 5 with Councilor Delnicki, Councilor Mirek, Councilor Riley and Councilor Snyder voting in favor of the amendment; and Mayor Anwar, Deputy Mayor Havens, Councilor Paterna, Councilor Pendleton and Councilor Wagner voting in opposition of the amendment.

Mayor Anwar then called for a vote on the resolution; it was approved, unanimously.

17. Public Input

None

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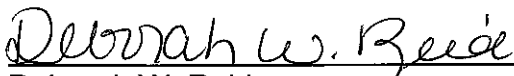
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ITEM:

20. Adjournment

At 9:46 p.m. Councilor Delnicki made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Mirek seconded the motion; and it was approved, unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Deborah W. Reid", is written over a horizontal line.

Deborah W. Reid
Clerk of the Council

South Windsor Park & Recreation Commission
Final Report
9-12-15
Community Gardens Evaluation

As directed by the S.W. Town Council the Park & Recreation Commission (PARC) has investigated alternative sites for potential additional community gardens in town, and discussed potential other uses for the Town-owned open space Nelson Property at 504 Deming Street.

The Commission's assessment is based on the following considerations:

1. Any recommendations agreed upon should not negatively impact, or displace any current successful activities or property uses.
2. Any recommendations agreed upon should not negatively impact any future plans already in place.
3. In any recommendation agreed upon there needs to be a reasonable balance of active recreation, passive recreation, land conservation and farm land preservation.
4. A site specific Farmland Preservation grant of \$20,000 that has been awarded for the Deming Street garden project.
5. Placing amenities in a central location can be very beneficial, but distributing parks & recreational facilities throughout town provides convenient opportunities for residents and helps reduce over-crowding.
6. There is currently a high demand for community gardens in town, as exhibited at Avery Street Gardens that is full with 61 plots and a waitlist.

On Tuesday, July 21, 2015 from 6:30 – 8:00pm PARC conducted a tour of the following town properties to assess them for use as a potential community garden site:

1. Community Gardens, Avery Street
 - a. Members loved the site, highly successful
 - b. Did not observe any signs of litter, noise, or excessive traffic
 - c. There were only two vehicles and two gardeners present at the time of the visit
 - d. The question of expanding these gardens was broached. The gardens share acreage with the apple orchard leased by a nearby farmer. The new Orchard Hill elementary school project will be encroaching on portions of the existing orchard. The loss of fruit trees due to school construction and expansion of the community gardens would render the orchard unproductive enough to lease and continue operating.
 - e. The land slope substantially increases the farther you go away from Avery Street.
 - f. The water supply there can be expanded upon.
2. Nelson Property, 504 Deming Street
 - a. Members still really like this site

- b. Gardens would be set back well off the road (200+ feet) and pretty much out-of-site
- c. Members suggested planting wild flowers on the existing mowed lawn area to provide a natural and attractive buffer between the road and the gardens and between abutters and the gardens.

3. Priest Property, Sullivan Avenue

- a. Conflicts with S.W.A.A.N. committee initiative currently, but certainly could and should accommodate community gardens. This project is in its infancy and could take many years to develop. It is premature to simply place community gardens haphazardly on this property until there is a definite plan.
 - i. Additional community gardens will most likely be a viable part of the master plan currently under development, but there is an identified need now.
- b. Public water supply is not readily available, well is possible but requires stringent monitoring and testing
- c. Much of the southern portion of the property is wetland and unusable, even for farming. Currently approximately 19 acres are leased for farming.

4. Water Treatment Plant, Vibert Road

- a. Suggested property across the gravel road from the treatment plant is in fact not Town-owned.
- b. The open space behind the plant is small and currently leased to a local farmer for grazing.
- c. Land down by the river and boat launch is likewise too small and subject to regular and serious flooding in the Spring.
- d. Vibert Road is gravel often impassable
- e. Site is somewhat out of the way and inconvenient compared to other sites.

5. Major Michael Donnelley Preserve, Sullivan Avenue

- a. Members felt this site was inappropriate as it is a dedicated memorial land preserve and should be maintained as such.

Between August 12 and September 9 PARC also evaluated the following town-owned properties for potential consideration for use as a potential community garden site:

6. New Fire House on West Road
 - a. We need to verify that the Town is actually considering selling the undeveloped parcel at the corner of West and Sullivan.
 - b. This site is more suitable for economic development.
7. Lawrence Road Park
 - a. There is an approved plan of development for this nearly 30 acre site that does not currently include community gardens, but it certainly could down the road.
 - b. Extensive clearing is required
8. Niederwerfer Wildlife Sanctuary, Barber Hill Road
 - a. Approximately 30 acres of this 117 acre site is currently leased for farming, most of the remaining land is either a protected for wildlife or substantially sloped.
9. CT River Property, Vibert Road
 - a. Approximately 5 acres of town-owned land is in flood plain and risky for any activity
 - b. Access road is often inaccessible
 - c. An inconvenient location for the vast majority of residents
 - d. A system could be developed to pump water out of river to gardens
10. Open space north of Orchard Hill School, Gray Road
 - a. This 35 acre parcel is the site for the new Orchard Hill School scheduled for construction in 2016.
11. Town Hall, Sullivan Ave.
 - a. Not compatible with current public use
 - b. Considerable slope
 - c. Has been identified as a potential area for a connector road between the planned E.O.C. and Ellington Road, or expanded parking to service the Town Hall in the future.
12. Wapping Park, Clark Street
 - a. Large portion of property is heavily wooded and contains numerous existing foot trails for public use, and much of remaining land is rolling meadows
 - b. Nearly 43.5 acres are required to comply with the mandated grasshopper sparrow mitigation plan as a result of development if the I-291 corridor.
 - c. Bringing water to the site would be a major and costly endeavor.
13. Nevers Park

- a. One of our prime sites earmarked for continued development for active recreation
- b. Between 20 and 30 acres are currently leased for farming.
- c. Area below the existing Bark Park is a witch hazel plot and substantially sloped for gardening.
- d. There is potential site for a small community garden in the future, but this would have to be pre-planned along with the expansion of the active recreation components.
- e. Any of the more "remote" areas of this park would require extensive site and infrastructure efforts for public access regardless of the use – active or passive.

14. Foster Farm, Avery Street

- a. Currently farmed by the Foster family.
- b. There is a land use agreement between the Town and the Foster family as part of the property sale back in 2008.

Recommended alternate uses for the Nelson Property in order of preference:

1. Retain the current plans for community gardens
 - a. Anticipated cost \$50,000 less \$20,000 grant = \$30,000
 - b. The lowest impact possible on the land and neighborhood.
2. Full size athletic multi-purpose athletic field
 - a. Estimated cost with supporting infrastructure would range between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000.
3. Sell the property if the town is not going to use the site for public use.
 - a. Recover the \$650,000 expended
 - b. Doing nothing with the property results in poor investment and undermines the efforts of the Open Space Task Force.

CONCLUSION:

The PARC recommends maintaining and pursuing the current plans for community gardens at 504 Deming Street. The Deming Street site requires the least amount of effort, and money. The intended project has a low impact design sensitive to neighbors, yet highly beneficial to all residents on publicly purchased land and we feel this is the best use of the property.

TAX REFUNDS

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Exhibit B

Delhaie, Richard B Jr 95 Cody Circle South Windsor, CT (Handicapped vehicle) 14-505720	574.41	Hildebrand, Mildred C or Roger C 43 Cliffwood Drive South Windsor, CT (Vehicle sold 8/2015) 14-510286	19.36
Jenny, Theodore E or Jane 96 Clearview Drive South Windsor, CT (Vehicle sold 8/15) 14-511424	14.98	Pawelczyk, Mark Lucas 44 Evans Xing South Windsor, CT (Sold 4/2015) 14-517839	29.96
Tauris, Matthew J 160 Birch Hill Drive South Windsor, CT (Sold 8/2015) 14-522704	13.88	Tobin, William L or Carole 311 Oak Street South Windsor, CT (Vehicle traded 6-20-15 with new plates) 14-523081	29.23

Mrs. Bonnie F. Rabin, Collector of Revenue Total Refunds: \$681.82 Date: 10/5/2015