

**AVON TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 3, 2005**

I. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Town Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Selectmen's Chamber by Chairman Hines. Members attending, Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Carlson Shea and Woodford.

II. PUBLIC HEARING: None

III. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING

On a motion made by Mrs. Hornaday, seconded by Mr. Woodford, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council accept the minutes of January 6, 2005 as amended.

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Hines, Carlson, Shea and Woodford voted in favor.

IV. COMMUNICATION FROM AUDIENCE

Diane Carney, 36 Rosewood Road, reported a lot of people had some great ideas about the Towpath area, but there is hardly any mention of that in the Newsletter. There was only half a sentence when it seems to be such a big issue. Chairman Hines reported the property we have there is sort of in limbo, and has been for quite a while, and the Council will not make any decision regarding Towpath School until the Center is approved. Once that is approved, that tells us what the Planning & Zoning Commission feels is reasonable uses of that property. At that time the Council then can make a decision.

Andy Orwell reported he is Chairman of the Avon Development Committee with the Avon Chamber of Commerce. We have been spending a fair amount of time putting together a concept of wanting to survey local businesses, somewhat along the line of the way the residents were surveyed last year through UCONN. We would like to ask the Council to consider joining the Chamber in conducting that survey through an organization such as UCONN, sharing in those costs and also sharing in the responses and obviously use of the information.

The Town Manager reported in terms of giving some background, the Chamber approached the Town Council last fall. More recently this has come into fruition and they have approached the Town, and asked us to participate, they are willing to participate up to \$5,000, they are asking for a similar commitment from the Town. Essentially, there will be a certain number of questions, and approximately half of those questions will be paid for by the Chamber, and half paid for by the Town. Of the ones that the Town would be participating in, the Town Planner, through the Planning & Zoning Commission, would be formulating a series of questions that would really be ancillary to and contribute to the Comprehensive Plan of Development process, but be more focussed on some of the more strategic issues relating to the business community from the standpoint of land use issues. The other part of those questions will be focussed more on a satisfaction survey type of component to see how the business community feels about the services that the Town provides, areas that where we have strengths, areas where we need improvements. It is a good opportunity to participate with the Chamber of Commerce and the business community, to take a pulse as to how we are doing. Both of us have agreed that the University of Connecticut which conducted the Survey for the Planning & Zoning Commission as part of the Comprehensive Plan of Development, would be the appropriate group to undertake this to make sure that we get objectivity. He is very supportive of participating with it, from a Staff standpoint, so is the Town Planner, but again it is something that rests with the Town Council. Chairman Hines reported what we do not want is some questions regarding neon signage, they should not be asked with Town

money. We want to be very careful, if we do this, that the Town has the chance to look at the complete questions before it goes out.

Mr. Ronald Evans, 23 Westbury and also with the Chamber, reported we are not interested in neon sign issues, we are interested in things like, if a mall goes up in Canton what is the impact on the main street quarter. The Town Planner deals with Planning & Zoning Regulations and enforcement issues, which is quite different from a comprehensive look at the business community, what issues are impacting economic development, and growth and it appears that this whole town center project has a very significant business component to it. He does not feel that anyone has really assessed how much square footage of what we already have around here, and what would make sense to go there, just one example of the types of information we hope to obtain. We are not claiming, as the Chamber, we know those answers but we think those are some of the right questions. Those are the sorts of things we were after, not sort of micro, but big picture issues that might help the Town guide a ten year planning process from both a business prospective.

Chairman Hines reported he can see areas where, and he and the Town Manager have discussed in the past, was the electronics needed here, the type of cable systems and so forth to be governed for all businesses. That could be a very key issue, and we want to help that area, so if we find out that is a big need, and there should be questions like that in there to be sure that we do find out what the pulse is out there, because there are some companies that if they are thinking of locating to Avon, may or may not make that decision based on what we have here. The Town Manager reported the interesting statistics that have come out of the census of business, from the Federal Government, is the fact that we have the largest number of home businesses in the Hartford Region, with over 500 of them in Avon. The question then begins, if the information technology changes that we have all experienced over the past 5 to 10 years, are going to accelerate or continue at that range, and allow for a distributive type of home occupation business. Such as, should the Town reinvest in sewers, we invest indirectly in the water system, we invest in roads, should we be investing more in an IT infrastructure for the community. He is hoping that some of what we get out of the survey will begin to give us more of a focus on some of the economic development issues that we are dealing with.

Mr. Woodford questioned what the Town Manager would need from the Town Council. The Town Manager reported an authorization to allow for up to \$5,000 to be spent out of the current year's budget, or out of contingency, for the purpose of participating with the Avon Chamber of Commerce in this joint survey. The Chamber's Board of Directors have also asked for a review of all questions as well, so that those of us as an informal group working on this, including himself, the Town Planner and Chamber Members, and UCONN will have to get the instrument reviewed by both the Town Council and the Chamber Board of Directors.

Mr. Shea reported the \$5,000 being committed would not at any time exceed 50% of the costs. The Town Manager reported that is correct, that is the intent.

On a motion made by Mr. Woodford, seconded by Mrs. Hornaday, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council add to the Agenda Item # **04/05-70 Participation in Chamber of Commerce Survey.**

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Hines, Carlson, Shea and Woodford voted in favor.

04/05-70 Participation in Chamber of Commerce Survey

On a motion made by Mr. Woodford, seconded by Mrs. Hornaday, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council authorize up to 50% of costs, not to exceed \$5,000, to be spent out of the current year's budget, for the purpose of participating with the Avon Chamber of Commerce in a joint survey of businesses by UCONN, contingent upon the instrument being reviewed by both the Town Council and Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce.

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Hines, Carlson, Shea and Woodford voted in favor.

V. COMMUNICATION FROM COUNCIL

Mr. Carlson reported we had our first meeting of the Facilities Maintenance Study Group, all members attended. We agreed to undertake a review of the 1998 document to see what needs to be updated, and asked the staff to go back through and look at the conclusions and recommendations which came out of that study to understand what has been implemented and what has not been implemented, and why, then to decide whether we should implement the ones that have not been. We also agreed that we would tour each of the major facilities in the Town, both Board of Education side as well as the Town side.

Mrs. Hornaday reported she had many favorable comments from residents about the good job our Town crews did on these last few storms. They felt that the Town roads were in very good condition very quickly.

Chairman Hines reported we want to congratulate Ms. Colligan, once again on the financial award we just received again. We have received this for many years and a letter should be sent to her as Finance Director, on behalf of the Town Council, for her fine effort.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

03/04-50 Status Report: 175th Anniversary Committee; Herb Pandiscio

Mr. Pandiscio reported he would like to give an update on the 175th Anniversary Committee celebration. Originally he thought there would be one big event on Avon Day, then that would be the commitment of this committee. However, when the committee met, that is not the way things worked out, as he empowered everyone on the committee to have a voice, and the committee had a different view, and after discussions he agreed. They really wanted to make this what we considered an idyllic celebration, with a lot of activities for a lot of people. We have a dance coming up which is great for those who like to dance, but there are people that love art so we have an art show, there are those who love to hike so we are doing the Garvin Trail, there are those interest in history, we are doing a tour of Cider Brook Cemetery. So there are a whole series of fun things taking place, very different in nature to appeal to a lot of different people.

He further reported he needs to tell the Council that they made wonderful choices in the committee membership. The first organizational meeting was held in May, and with the exception of July, half of August and the two weeks over the Christmas/New Years holiday, the Committee has met every other Tuesday. This is a working Committee, and his whole life has been working with the public and worked with committees, and never worked with nine people like this. It is just so unusual and everyone brought different talent, but more important they really brought a love of Avon to the committee. No one would commit this kind of time if they really were not dedicated to doing it the right way. But given the kick off dance this Saturday which sold out in two weeks, 240 tickets, and we could have sold 350 tickets if we had room to do it. This is a good omen to what is to come.

Mr. Pandiscio reported he would like to share some of the list of activities:

- Kick off dance Saturday February 5, 2005 – tickets are sold out.
- Sunday, February 27, Jeannie Parker presents “Quaker and Abolitionist” lecture

- April 1-2 Great Avon Photograph, Archive and Artifact Search at the Library
- April 3, Organ Concert Avon Old Farms School – reservations required.
- April 17, Walking tour Cider Brook Cemetery – Avon Historical Society
- May 5, Special Council meeting to honor present and past town legislators and town managers, and their families and friends, open to the community. This is the actual 175th Town of Avon anniversary day.
- June 4-25 – Art show sponsored by Avon Free Public Library and 175th Anniversary Committee – both accomplished artists and aspiring artists display their works. We have requested all of the artists price their works and all of the proceeds would go to the Avon Public Library

Mr. Pandiscio reported we have begun the process and the brochures will be out shortly. We have had so many people come forward to volunteer their time, services and money. Three different printing companies have produced all of our work, each doing different segments of our publicity. We have had the website come forth to help us, and Avon Life has been incredibly thoughtful of our work. On and on it goes, people have given services, not necessarily money, but in kind services, and there are many, and we will publish a thank you list at some point.

Next is the June 5 – Town wide “pasta festa”, with accommodations for 1,500 participants. Truly this is a big affair and this is so big that sometimes he wonders how we ever took this one on. The best thing that he can say about this is that the event chair person is Mary Harrop, and that says a lot, it will happen. We have had many conversations about how much this would cost to rent the 150 tables, 1,500 chairs, 30 ovens and whatever, it is incredible. Of course we are asking, and we have asked, restaurants and organizations in Town to actually take over the actual preparation of the food for that day. He has to say that 6 or 7 restaurants have stepped forth right away, along with organizations, and again we will publish that list. And there are even more activities around town, it will be a very big event, very complex, we are going to need a lot of volunteers, a lot of muscle to set up and break down, because we have a very big financial commitment to make this work, however we do have a rain date. If it does not happen one Sunday it will happen another, outside on Old Farms Road, we have been working with law enforcement people and others.

Mr. Pandiscio reported then on September 17th, which is Avon Day, we have four ex-officio members on that Committee, the Town Clerk being one, a young Avon woman named Lisa Alexander who prepared all of the publicity with graphs and set up all of our publicity so that eventually she just stayed with us. Also from UNICO, Leon Delgallo and Bob Galiette have become members of our Committee, so that we are a 14 member Committee now.

The Avon Land Trust is interested in running and sponsoring the hike on the Garvin Trail on September 25th. We have two other items we are considering, one is called ‘Run through History’, we are looking for experienced runners and walkers – we are thinking of having a run through history, by going from one historic site to another through the community. What we are hoping is that once people move from one historic site to another we could apply their names in the historical archives in the Town of Avon so that they would be there forever to see. The second item is, since the dance was such a sell out, we are giving some thought to some of a spring outing, more informal kind of fund, that is still in the planning stages.

And finally, we have commissioned a watercolor containing 27 historic sites in Avon by local artist Jane Lowerre. The original will be on display at the dance this Saturday and then will be on public display in the Avon Free Public Library until the end of festivities in Sept. at which time the original will be auctioned. We had 1,000 beautiful reproductions made, 500 have been signed by the Artist and

numbered, and will be available for sale at the dance this Saturday for \$10 and at the Petrini Gallery that was so kind as to frame the original. They also framed one of the reproductions that will be on display in their Gallery in Old Avon Village.

Mr. Pandiscio reported people have been generous with their time and money, especially the Committee, and he thanked the Town Council for giving him the opportunity. Chairman Hines reported we thank you, it has just been amazing to see how all of this happened, and seems that every time we see more and more information it seems better and better. We are pleased that Mr. Pandiscio became the Chairman, and have led this group. One of the things that we have been looking for is whether the Committee needs money from the Town of Avon. Mr. Pandiscio reported yes we will, but we are not prepared tonight, because we have been so busy with these early activities, and the 17th has been put on a back burner, not that it is out of sight but UNICO which is the sponsor of the Avon Day really runs their program from 10:00 a.m. in the morning until 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon. Our thinking was we wanted to pick up at 4:00 p.m., take over and do something exciting both in the late afternoon and in the early evening, since it would be a beautiful September day. What we have in mind would be somewhat costly, and he does not want to mention it at this time, we want to think it through and get some prices and see whether we can raise additional monies on our own before we approach the Council. We hope to get all the way to the 17th without asking for anything, be able to fund ourselves, and so far we are okay. We hope to be able to cover a significant bill if these prints all sell at \$10 each. The sites used were generated out of the Committee, we asked everyone what they felt was an historic site. We hope to cover and have some money left over, to be able in some small way to preserve and maintain the archives of the Town of Avon, that was the whole point of our doing this. We are asking \$10, but will take any donated amount for them.

Chairman Hines reported this is important as we did not budget any money in the present year budget, come July 1st we have a new years budget. If we had an idea ahead of time we could put something into the budget in the coming year and have it available July 1st. Mr. Pandiscio reported we can have something to you within the month, as we meet again on February 8th. We are going to have enough to carry us through to September 17th, from one function or another or gifting, again we anticipated not asking the Council for anything, except for the 17th event. We are also planning some kind of a silent auction and announce who won on the 17th.

04/05-12 FY05/06 Budget: FY05/06–FY09/10 Capital Improvement Program: Recreation Master Plan

Chairman Hines reported one of the things that we were concerned about is that we were paying consultants to take an inventory of what we already have, and we thought the Committee ought to be doing that with Town staff, and not pay someone on the outside. Then identify what we have, indicate some short comings, what we would like to see, and then bring in someone to do the work from there on. He questioned whether that had taken place. The Recreation Director reported to a certain extent, there is an attachment that identifies all of the Town owned properties. Chairman Hines reported then you are not ready to go out for an RFP at this point. The Recreation Director reported he would say not. The handouts are from various towns, including the City of Bristol and Concord Massachusetts. They are all mostly playing field studies. Some of the numbers he provided are a little better than the initial one, we narrowed the scope and therefore the amount of research therefore some of that cost has come down. Also through the GIS system, and some of the work that has been done through the Plan of Development, there is a lot of information there, that previously the consultants would have had to recreate. We will probably be progressing to the needs assessment which is time consuming, and we also talked about using some other resources, perhaps a UCONN graduate. We will be looking at what we have, where we think we are going to be regarding population build-outs, and we need somebody to

help with that as he does not have the time. Mr. Meyers, Recreation and Parks Committee, reported we suggested to the Director there are various colleges that have programs in recreation management and they have programs in the colleges whereby someone can put together an independent study program and get credit for doing something such as this, and that might be a source of help to the Director.

Mr. Woodford questioned what is the bottom line, what are you doing and what is happening? Mr. Meyers reported there needs to be some money in the budget for the plan. Chairman Hines questioned what their best estimate is at this point. The Director reported if we base this on the needs assessment first, he will have that number very soon. Chairman Hines reported we are going to finalize our budget on February 12th, and we are going to have to put something in there. Mr. Meyers reported he would suggest to put somewhere in the area of \$40,000 in the budget, try to complete it for that, but he is not sure that it would be completed by the next budget cycle, and perhaps we would need a supplement when we come back next year.

Mr. Carlson reported this seems to be focused largely around inventory analysis and that type of thing, he was surprised at the lack of in the needs analysis paragraph which is very small and does not say a lot. He is one of those who have led the charge that we ought to have a comprehensive plan of our needs here, and he is not sure that we are going to get that. He reported as you look at the work which was originally scoped out for March 1st of this year, it be revised to include more of that with more focus on where we as a town is going to be with so many thousands of people, where like towns have or need, essentially what can we afford, those sorts of things need to be spelled out more. Mr. Meyers reported we have a broader view of the needs assessment in response to your comments, and we can change what is in the present report. Chairman Hines reported yes, we do the inventory, here is what we have that can be used for recreation, here is what we would like to have for our needs, and how we can utilize those to make that happen.

Mr. Shea questioned whether several vendors did the comprehensive plans of development. The Director reported three are done by a large company that does these, but there are a lot of companies that do these for the entire town, a lot of them do comprehensive plans for facilities, similar to what we had done for Buckingham. They tend to isolate, Weston & Sampson and M. R. Roming Associates who built Fisher Meadows do a lot of facility master plans, but not necessarily town wide master plans. There is not a lot of information that he can get out of what he has, he combined a lot of the information from the 20 documents that he has. Chairman Hines reported we should find the needs from our Committee, and what we want to have, working with the school deciding what they need, what we think we need for our adult community, and the Committee comes back and says here is our needs, it will be well defined. Mr. Meyers reported it has to be broader than our Committee we are going to reach out to soccer groups, tennis groups, lacrosse group, little league. Chairman Hines reported exactly, good. Mr. Shea reported the good news also is with these professional companies that are going to be involved, along with the various academic institutions, you are going to get some diversity and you are also going to get more than two or three bids. We also will be able to pick up if we have any weaknesses, which is the thrust of where we are at, and the Committee is getting closer.

Chairman Hines reported one of the suggestions made by a resident recently was to have a skating rink in Town, and years ago we had that up at Country Side, the suggestion was a one foot type, and the M. H. Rhodes property might be something to look into. He would like the Recreation Committee to consider that as something down the road, the Towpath School might be considered, something that is weather dependent, or perhaps something mechanical for all winter. The Director reported one of the things that has been disappointing for several years is the winter weather especially for ice skating outdoors, with the freeze thaw cycle it was one of the reasons we were forced to give it up at Country

Side Park, because it makes the ice weak and we cannot retain staff. We have tried various areas for one foot thick skating areas, it does not work on pavement or tennis courts, mainly because of the sun thawing the ice on the pavement, even when liners were used on ground surfaces the ice skates tore up the liner when it became softer. But we are continuing to pursue the idea of nature's freezing of a skating area. Mr. Meyers reported there are many options we discussed at our meetings, a skating rink, golf course, swimming pool. The golf course we negotiated and discounted as there is no percentage in building a public golf course, but we are still wrestling with things like skating rinks and swimming pools.

The Recreation Director was instructed to prepare a recreational conceptual plan which indicates what our needs and wants are, and how we produce the results we want. This should be in conjunction with the schools.

04/05/07 Appointment: Planning & Zoning Commission

On a motion made by Mr. Shea, seconded by Mrs. Hornaday, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council appoint David J. Cappello to serve on the Planning & Zoning Commission for a term to expire December 31, 2005.

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Hines, Carlson, Shea and Woodford voted in favor.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

04/05-64 Review and Discussion: Registrars of Voters, Redistricting

Mrs. Dearstyne, Republican Registrar of Voters, reported the proposed change in districts and polling places are shown on a map to give the Town Council a better idea of how the Town would be divided. Mrs. Dumas, Democratic Registrar of Voters, reported the reason we did this was to get the traffic off of West Avon Road, that is the purpose for the different polling places that you see in the memo. In November we had no problems in the polling place for the election, but there was a problem with traffic. In order to get the traffic off of West Avon Road we thought we would move the polling place and set up three polling places.

Mrs. Dearstyne reported by having the existing District 2, which is what was set by the State Legislature two years ago that currently voted in the cafeteria at Avon High School, moving it to the Selectmen's Chambers at Avon Town Hall, would first of all bring the polling place closer to the residents that would be voting here. Chairman Hines questioned how the parking problem would be handled with all of the employees cars. Mrs. Dearstyne reported there would not be a parking problem, there are only 2,100 voters, certainly we do not get 100% of our voters. Chairman Hines questioned how many parking spots there are at Town Hall, after you have all of the employees park. Mrs. Dearstyne reported she does not know, but she checked with the Police Department on a couple of parking areas, at Town Hall and at Roaring Brook School, and they were looking at it, and just as an overview we would not have much of a problem with that. Chairman Hines reported you have had some experience now with District 2 at the cafeteria, how many people do you have an hour there. Mrs. Dearstyne reported she can tell you that we only work with one line and two voting machines and even during the presidential election there was never more than a 7 or 8 person backup. All that we would need here is only one table and two machines. Mrs. Dumas reported our records are at Town Hall, and one of us would have to be here, and if we do not use Town Hall, we would have to staff our office anyway. Mr. Shea reported you would have to staff each district. Mrs. Dearstyne reported we would have to staff each polling place, with registrars, deputy registrars, and moderators, it also brings central counting of our absentee ballots to Town Hall. Chairman Hines questioned how many people would be voting in the three polling places. Mrs. Dearstyne reported right now District 2 we have approximately 2,100 voters, by moving to Roaring Brook School, using Lovely Street west including Farmington Woods, we are at 3,300 approximately,

leaving 6,100 in the gymnasium at the High School which it certainly can accommodate. Mr. Shea reported getting the traffic off of West Avon Road is critical. Chairman Hines questioned the parking at Roaring Brook School. Mrs. Dearstyne reported she talked with Lieutenant Jadovich, he indicated that they are certainly going to look at the number of parking spots, but he did not foresee a problem. They could control the traffic, the only concern he had was Old Wheeler Road there, trying to cut down on anybody that just uses it as a cut through. She reported we would use the Gymnasium, and they have a separate side entrance there, so people are not going to have to walk through the whole school to get to the voting area.

Chairman Hines questioned how about for the future, if we look at the population today at about 17,000, say we go to 21,000, is there going to be a big increase on the west side so that number could take about 4,000 or so at Roaring Brook, you can still handle it? Mrs. Dearstyne reported yes, our other option is to move Farmington Woods again, we are taking Farmington Woods because they have an exit and entrance on Lovely Street, there is over 1,500 voters in that area, that is a moveable group of people, and that is why we moved them there, we can move them back to the Avon High School if we have to. Mrs. Dearstyne reported there are only 3,370 voters at Roaring Brook, even with that number there probably would be only two check off lines and we would probably not have any problems getting voters through. Mr. Carlson questioned whether this is being proposed for all elections. Mrs. Dearstyne reported absolutely, once we set it, it is very hard to tell people that this year you can go somewhere else, and the schools are all closed for elections. Mrs. Dumas reported that is why we want to start it this November, the smallest election, next year will be the gubernatorial which will probably be a big one, we will introduce electronic machines, and really would like to start it. Mrs. Dearstyne reported we also would need help from the Secretary of State's office in doing the redistricting, they can help us to dump streets and voters into their main frame, so that we would not have to sit down and literally move every single voter in Town to these areas. They can help us this year, next year when they get into gubernatorial, they are going to have primaries and they cannot guarantee any help to us, only this year.

Mr. Woodford questioned whether Pine Grove was considered for District 1, to get traffic off of West Avon Road, to defuse it left and right with some away from West Avon Road. Mrs. Dearstyne reported yes it was considered, she does not think they have the space and parking that the high school has to accommodate 6,000 voters. Pine Grove does not have that large a parking lot, unless you use the cut through to Thompson Brook, and you are always going to have some traffic on West Avon Road, and not that many people are going to use Old Farms Road.

Mr. Shea questioned whether they thought about how you educate, as the first election is going to need a little more education. Mrs. Dumas reported we will notify everyone that their polling place has changed. Mr. Shea reported he can understand that but aside from the written notice, and the Secretary of State is going to probably be educate us as to other ways we can go about beside the website, besides the library. Mrs. Dearstyne reported also the newsletters, that is going to be the only way we can do it, and anybody that is actually registering to vote in Avon, will get noticed this year. We had no problem the last time, the newsletter really helped us. Mrs. Dumas reported when we went to District 2 initially, we had very few problems, but it was in one building, people were notified and they basically knew where they were going. But this time we will have to be educating people on electronics, but it will be accommodated. Mrs. Dearstyne reported they are anticipating by this November there will be at least one in each polling place, but we are not buying them. Mr. Shea reported but we would have to educate the people who are going to get to use the machine, then some will not. Mrs. Dearstyne reported they will have a choice, and what will happen is that we are going to find a lot of people are a little nervous of the machine, because they called even before the presidential, we had a lot of calls as to whether we still are using level machines. We will go to the Senior Center, the Library and different places,

wherever, to bring the machine out as we get closer so that people can see it. Mr. Shea reported it might be good to contact the student government at Avon High School, and get some of those young adults involved, especially educating the seniors, it would be a good way to bridge the gap between the seniors and people that do not get into the schools. Mr. Carlson reported there is a mandatory civics class that the sophomores have to take, it will be a good way to get those young adults involved. He further questioned how the tallying of votes would be done, and how would you get the information from one polling place to the other, as it is easy in the high school. Mrs. Dearstyne reported we would have to have a head moderator, and each of the moderators from the other two polling places and the head moderator, probably located in the high school gymnasium, the other two would bring their returns there. We will still have totals that night, but the biggest help out of this is when it comes to absentee ballot counting, we would centralize it, it will be near the Town Clerk's office at Town Hall, we will not be back and forth all day from the polling places. Mr. Shea reported something has got to be done, and after the plan is approved that is when the real work begins. You have done some work to get this on paper, it is a good idea, but that is going to be a big deal. Mrs. Dumas reported our reports will all have to be generated differently, the Secretary of State will help us with their system, and hopefully it will run properly. Mr. Shea reported we are not the first town to have this problem. Mrs. Dearstyne reported they go through this all of the time, it is not really going to be that bad, it is just going to help, but the biggest complaint that we heard on election day in November, which we only get every four years where it is just total chaos on West Avon Road. She further reported having two voting places in the same building, we have over 11,600 voters who potentially have gone through there. Mrs. Dumas reported we put a lot of time into planning the logistics of those election days, to get that running smooth, it is a big district and a lot of people to put through there. Mrs. Dearstyne reported we think it will cut down actually on the police and fire staff that we need because we hire a number for high school, and we are not going to need anywhere near that many.

Mrs. Dearstyne reported we need your approval to be able to have this ready for the November election.

On a motion made by Mr. Shea, seconded by Mr. Carlson, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council approve the concept of using three polling places for all elections, as outlined by the Registrars, the referenda and primaries to be held at the Senior Center.

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Hines, Carlson, Shea and Woodford voted in favor.

04/05-65 Schedule Public Hearing: March 3, 2005, 7:30 p.m. Amendments to Ordinance #29, Fees For the Issuance Of Building Code Permits

The Town Manager reported basically the differences are that this moves us towards a value oriented schedule to determine the fee that a person or corporation or developer will pay, instead of the developer saying this building is worth so many thousand dollars, we have tables that are furnished to us as part of the State Building Code, which is the international code. It also sets up, in Section III Fee Schedule A, permit fees should be \$26 for the first \$1,000 of work or part thereof and an additional \$13 for each \$1,000 or part thereof after. Right now it is just \$13 for the first \$1,000, and then every \$1,000 additional. We need to recover more of the cost, it takes almost as much time for us to review a \$1,000 deck addition in some cases, as something that might cost \$10,000 or \$20,000 as a room addition on something.

On a motion made by Mr. Woodford, seconded by Mr. Carlson, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council schedule a Public Hearing for March 3, 2005, to consider amendments to Ordinance #29, under fees for the issuance of building code permits.

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Hines, Carlson, Shea and Woodford voted in favor.

04/05-66 Architectural/Engineering Selection: Pine Grove School Roof; Kaestle Boos Associates \$28,000.

The Town Manager reported the Board of Education formally recommended this at their meeting, he would concur with their recommendation, and authorize the hiring of Kaestle Boos Associates.

On a motion made by Mr. Woodford, seconded by Mrs. Hornaday, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council authorize the hiring of Kaestle Boos Associates by the Board of Education for Architectural/Engineering Consultant Services for the Pine Grove School roof replacement, in amount not to exceed \$28,000.

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Hines, Carlson and Woodford voted in favor. Mr. Shea abstained.

04/05-67 Participation in CCM Amicus Curiae Case: Kelo vs New London

The Town Manager reported this is a case occurring in Connecticut but is has national significance, it relates to the ability of a municipality to use eminent domain procedures to acquire property for economic development purposes. CCM is sponsoring an Amicus brief in the court supporting New London, there are 31 other state municipal leagues and organizations including the national league of cities that are also supporting this, because it has such wide significance nation wide.

On a motion made by Mr. Shea, seconded by Mr. Carlson, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council approve participation in the CCM Amicus Curiae case of Kelo vs. New London, with no financial commitment at this time.

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs: Hines, Carlson, Shea and Woodford voted in favor.

04/05-68 Review and Discussion: Additional SUV Lease

The Town Manager reported we have three very old vehicles, and the issue is whether we trade them in and get a credit to get another SUV, or dispose of the vehicles. He spoke with Mr. Longo, who as Public Works Director, set up the original program for us before he left, he basically agrees because of the age and market for trade ins, and the fact that if we sold them independently ourselves, we could be potentially liable for fixing them up, that he would suggest just trading them in and getting rid of them, and taking as a credit. We want to trade them in and replace the Chief's vehicle and the two Lieutenant vehicles with lease vehicles, and eventually the same with all of the administrative vehicles. This SUV lease would be to replace either one of the Lieutenants vehicles or the Public Work vehicle which is a used Crown Victoria with 200,000 miles on it.

On a motion made by Mr. Carlson, seconded by Mrs. Hornaday, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council approve the trade in of three used Detective Division vehicles, at \$1,200 each, to be used towards the first year lease of a SUV Trailblazer in the amount of \$310.00 per month for a 3 year period and 15,000 annual mileage allowance.

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Hines, Carlson and Woodford voted in favor. Mr. Shea abstained.

04/05-69 Approve List of Authorized Financial Dealers and Institutions

On a motion made by Mr. Woodford, seconded by Mrs. Hornaday, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council approve for all transactions involving financial assets and related activity of all Town Funds excluding Retirement/Pension Fund and Post-Retiree Medical Trust Fund the following Authorized Financial Dealers and Institutions:

Bank of America

Reich & Tang L.P.

Municipal Investors Service Corporation, Cooperative Liquid Assets Security System for Connecticut

Connecticut State Treasury's Short-Term Investment Fund
The Simsbury Bank
People's Bank
Webster Bank
Citizen's Bank
Wachovia
Farmington Savings Bank
Sovereign Bank
Banknorth

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Hines, Carlson, Shea and Woodford voted in favor.

VIII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT/MISCELLANEOUS

The Town Manager reported we have a sample chair which was agreed upon by the Seniors and Staff as the replacement chair for the Senior Center, they are plastic and stackable. He reported they are about \$75 a chair. Chairman Hines questioned where the money is coming from. The Town Manager reported it either has to come out of contingency, he told the Director to check with the Seniors, to see how much they are willing to come up with of their money, or we do not move with it. He reported 125 chairs at about \$75 a chair. Chairman Hines reported we can put it in the budget this coming year, it is not an emergency, the present chairs work. The Town Manager reported it will stay in the budget, if it lasts through the budget we get the chairs, if not we will not.

The Town Manager reported next is street lighting, there is a top for public display purposes in the Selectmen's Chamber, they come on either a 10' or 12' pole. He has a map of where the first ones would be installed, and two individuals have already agreed to donate them.

The Town Manager reported you have the detailed budget for next year as it stands at this point in time. The Town Operating Budget is up 6.42%, the overall budget of the Town, sewer, debt service and capital is up 6.92%. To get the Town budget from 6.42% down to 4.5% you need to reduce the Town operating budget \$294,000. He also provided a copy of the power point presentation which is a good summary of what is in this document, which will at least pick up the highlights, the power point study is going to be presented next Saturday and it is over 30 pages, and he has a list of recommended adjustments.

The Town Manager reported you have the quarterly finance statement ended December 31, 2004, essentially things are pretty much on track, tax collections are a little bit less from what we had this time last year, something to keep our eyes on. The Surplus, the Finance Director is projecting an increase of about \$150,000, at the end of the year, which will probably keep us at about 5.5% level when the audit is completed a year from now. The Board of Finance is in the process of going through a selection of a new auditor, it has been ten years and we will have an RFP out soon.

The Town Manager reported the next item we are going to be working on is the Financial Advisor, we will be starting an RFP in the next 60 to 90 days. That is a Town Council's appointment, therefore, that will be coming to you to work on. There are three or four banks that are interested in putting proposals in.

The Town Manager reported he has tried to update the Town Council on the Avon High School project as that progresses. He worked with our financial advisor, on five or six different scenarios, finally down to one that shows an increase, not in the budget we are putting together right now, but in the budget a year from now, the 06/07 budget, assuming we are bonding about \$19.5 million, there will be about a

6% to 7% increase in the debt service, about \$275,000 to \$300,000, the subsequent year you will see a little more, another \$300,000 to \$350,000, and the year after that we are now dealing with 08/09 you will see another increase. Therefore we will have about \$1 million of an additional debt, going from \$4.9 million to about \$5.9 million in three years, that is based on 18 or 19 years for the high school. He reported that he has been forcing them out, and back a little bit when we have some significant drops, but no matter how you slice it in all of these scenarios, we have to pick up about \$1 million in debt over a two to four year period. He has been trying to mitigate it, which means that our debt service beginning a year from now will be going up 6% to 7% a year for three years, before it tops out. That is going to put pressure on the operating budgets, and particularly when that school comes on line, the materials, the staffing, the utilities, and the cost of bringing it on line, with a 6% to 7% increase in debt service plus tremendous pressure on the Board of Education's budget, which means that the municipal budget and the capital improvement program probably two years out, 07/08 are really going to be in a tight situation. Chairman Hines reported we may need to start looking at 20 years, something the rating agencies do not like, but if you look at this being the last potential building program that we see for the schools, based on all of their projections, maybe we can go out a little bit longer on this one. He reported the Library project will probably not be until 2010 based on this last number. The Town Manager reported that is what he did with the scenarios, he pushed that out to 2009/2010 budget year. Part of the problem with the squeezing is that under the SAC requirements you cannot keep doing bonds, you have to start paying after the third year, a significant amount. We can have the Financial Advisor in at the appropriate time, and he will still work on them to see if we can flatten that out a little more, but he told them to leave enough room in there for the library in 09/10 so that kind of works into the scenario.

Chairman Hines reported he attended the opening of the new well at Fisher Meadows. He rode with Mr. O'Neill and they discussed Towpath School, as to what we are going to do with it. He informed him that we did not know yet as we are waiting for the Comprehensive Plan of Development to be completed and once that is done we will make a decision. Mr. O'Neill questioned what he thought, and he responded that he would like it to be open space. Mr. O'Neill called him today and said that he attended the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting, and complimented the Chairman, in giving all people a chance to speak even twice, to give all of their different viewpoints and that it was a good meeting. Mr. O'Neill reported he now agrees with him that he would like to see that as open space. Chairman Hines reported he also spoke with Silvio Brighenti at the Water Company, as to what he thought of that meeting, and he responded that he thought open space would be the best thing for it too. Mr. O'Neill stated he was going to meet with the Directors of Sperry Park and recommend that they send a letter to the Town saying they would like to see that open space and combine the two together. Mr. Shea questioned by combined you mean Sperry Park and the Towpath area. Chairman Hines reported yes, and an educational development would be great for that location. He reported we would not get much money for it, but it would be a nice use. Mr. Carlson reported if someone came to him saying that we should give it for an educational use for \$1, and a long term lease, it is a done deal. Chairman Hines reported that would be nice because we would still own it, and it might be worth while to at least have them look at it. Mr. Shea reported in reference to the open space, clearly there is a lot more public discussion now, than there was. That being said he is hearing a lot of everything, open space, fix the school, about develop it and make it a nice town center. He is coming closer to making a decision on this, the one thing that he would not be able to defend is fixing the school. He does not think that we can afford to do it, even with five different people sitting here, we would not be able to in the next ten years. That being the case there is not a clear message from this community to do one or the other, which means it is going to be up to the people here and the professional staff to come up with a reasonable solution. He will keep an open mind to try to compromise, if we take our time and we deliberate and take into consideration everyone's feelings. There may be a way to have open space and

still have it developed so that it is a quality plan that works for decades. Chairman Hines reported with the completed comprehensive plan and after the budget cycle, we should take some time to think about it, then make the decision. Mr. Woodford reported he starting out thinking it would be a great idea to have it commercially developed for housing, etc., but now he has become much closer to Chairman Hines' position, and do we really need more bakeries etc? Mr. Carlson reported he agrees, in fact he is an advocate of development on the Town Center, a Center is the one thing we lack there, but as he drives by that area every day, he looks at it and the way that it would have to be crafted so that it does not stand out so that it fits in with what is a mixed architecture area, on both sides of the road, as well as the neighborhood, but now he is willing to reach a compromise in that area.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Litigation/Negotiation

On a motion made by Mr. Woodford, seconded by Mr. Shea, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council go into Executive Session at 9:50 p.m.

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Hines, Carlson, Shea and Woodford voted in favor.

On a motion made by Mr. Woodford, seconded by Mr. Shea, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council come out of Executive Session at 10:20 p.m.

Mrs. Hornaday, Messrs Hines, Carlson, Shea and Woodford voted in favor.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Attest:

Caroline B. LaMonica
Town Clerk