

**AVON TOWN COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 3, 2007**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Selectmen’s Chamber by Chairman Carlson. Members present: Mr. Shea, Mrs. Hornaday and Mr. Woodford. Absent: Mr. Zacchio.

**II. PUBLIC HEARING - NONE**

**III. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING: April 5, 2007, April 10, 2007 and April 23, 2007**

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

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council approve the minutes of April 5, 2007 as read.  
Mrs. Hornaday and Messrs Carlson and Shea voted in favor. Mr. Woodford abstained.

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

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council approve the minutes of April 10, 2007 as read.  
Mrs. Hornaday and Messrs 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 approve the minutes of April 23, 2007 as read.  
Mrs. Hornaday and Messrs Carlson, Shea and Woodford voted in favor. **DELETED**

**IV. COMMUNICATION FROM AUDIENCE - NONE**

**V. COMMUNICATION FROM COUNCIL - NONE**

**VI. OLD BUSINESS**

**04/05-74 Extension of Tax Circuit Breaker Program**

The Assessor reported he has compared the Elderly Tax Relief Program in the towns of Avon, Farmington and Simsbury. He reported Farmington has increased the income limits but does not offer very much, in terms of benefits. We have broken our income limits, beyond the state program, into two categories. Simsbury recently revised their elderly program by increasing their income limits to \$45,300. This is \$10,000 over and above the \$35,300 that the State allows. They also offer \$500 for both single people and married couples. He reported it is good to see how we compare with what the surrounding communities are doing. We are in line with the benefit we provide because we give additional tax breaks to people who qualify under the state program.

The Town Manager reported as a reminder, we go into revaluation in October 1, 2008, which will affect the July 1, 2009, tax bills. If the Town Council decides to extend this program, we will be looking at this again in two years, just prior to the tax bills coming out for the revaluation of October 2008.

The Assessor reported the breakdown as follows:

<u>Income</u>	<u>Town of Avon</u>	
	<u>Homeowners Tax Relief – Town Program</u>	
	<u>Town Benefit</u>	
\$0 - 14,400	\$700	(+ State Benefit)
14,400 – 19,400	\$700	(+ State Benefit)
19,400 – 24,200	\$700	(+ State Benefit)
24,200 – 28,800	\$450	(+ State Benefit)
28,800 – 35,300	\$450	(+ State Benefit)

33,900 – 38,000	\$650 Married
	\$425 Unmarried
38,000 – 43,000	\$400 Married
	\$325 Unmarried

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

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council extend the Elderly Homeowners Tax Relief Program for two more years, to expire January 1, 2008.

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

Mr. Woodford reported as far as looking at the benefits portion, it might be wise to wait and look at the whole program at the end of this two-year period.

Chairman Carlson reported our property tax increase for the last two years has been just below three percent. That is tracking very well with CPI and the social security increases are tracking about the same last two years.

Mrs. Hornaday reported our community was the first one to do something in a new and different way with regards to the tax relief program and people in other communities have used the town of Avon as an example. When we have the revaluation, that might be a good time to look at the program and make additional changes. The assurance of confidentiality has allowed many people who need it, to take advantage of this program.

Mr. Shea reported we should keep the income limits the same but maybe we should consider increasing the benefit portion of it. I was thinking about a small increase to be considered on all four of the categories the \$35,300 – 38,000 and \$38,000 - 43,000 for both married and unmarried. It might be wise, in light of the increase in taxes and potential projects that we will be looking at in the next couple of years. He proposed the following: \$50.00 increase of the tax benefit for married people, which would raise the benefit of \$600. to \$650 and \$350 to \$400., and also propose the benefit for unmarried be increased from \$400 to 425 and \$300 to \$325.

The Assessor reported this would increase our current budget by \$2,725, which is roughly 2.7 percent. Our cost would increase from \$ 29,650 to \$32,750. This would be based on the October 2006 Grand List and will be effective on the 2007 tax bill.

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

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council approve a tax benefit increase of \$50. for married people and \$25. for single people, to be effective on the October 2006 Grand List.

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

**06/07-04 Review and Discussions: Draft Recreation Master Plan:  
Park and Recreation Committee & Glenn Marston**

Peggy Roell reported we hired Weston & Sampson and Jon Wagner to help the Parks and Recreation Committee work on the master plan. She reported the process has been difficult looking at what we have, having Jon Wagner tell us what we should have and why, and then, what do we need to get there. We will need input from the Town Council and other people as to what would be reasonable for us to accomplish over a five-year period or a ten-year period.

Jon Wagner reported, as a landscape architect and planner for 40 years, he tried to approach things pragmatically and try to retrofit things which you already have that makes sense. The plan that we will end up with in the future, after we have comments from the Town Council, is really a workable plan. It is just a matter of having the community deciding how it wants as its priorities and what it can afford on an annual basis. This plan will also have alternatives, if you do not have the funds for do plan A, you can then use

Plan B. We have tried to look at many different things, what you have, what is the potential for what you could have, within the facilities that you already have, and some new acquisitions and some expansions that had not been thought of.

He reported we looked at the high school first because it was under construction and there was a prior initiative to attempt to light the fields and also tried to put forward a synthetic turf field. We examined a full size turf track, which is 225 feet by 360 feet, but it would not fit into the track area. The impact of that would be so costly that it would not be feasible at the high school. There were other problems also including the lack of parking. He reported the second thing was to look at the track with a synthetic turf field, in its existing size, which is now used by the high school teams for all their sports activities. We have looked into this option and have determined that it would work. We are therefore recommending a synthetic turf field within the track with flood lighting. That will be private initiative unless the town chooses to fund itself.

Secondly, the construction of a second full size synthetic turf, multipurpose field with safety zones and a full size lighted baseball field, also lighted, with press box and concession, storage, restrooms plus parking for cars at the Thompson Road property. The reason we looked at the Thompson Road property was because it is graded and was a disturbed site. It had contaminated soil, which was removed, it has been monitored and has no risk assessment involved and it is safe to develop. It already has sewers and water with a sufficient capacity to handle events. It also has proximity to the Thompson Brook School and the Pine Grove School for parking.

He reported the key to the whole process throughout the town for multipurpose fields is to develop new fields at Fisher Meadows in the area that is now farmed and that lease will be up in 2008. The idea is to take all the double used fields that are softball, baseball, little league, being used in the outfield by soccer, lacrosse and field hockey to the new fields and to give sole use to the softball, baseball and little league fields. It also allows us to expand parking for 200–300 cars.

He reported we also recommend lighting of the fields and parking at Buckingham road, construction of tennis, basketball, and volleyball courts, with full-service restrooms, concession and storage. The play area is being completed now and will be open sometime in June.

We recommend irrigation of all multi-purpose fields at school and parks that currently do not have it; lighting of tennis and basketball courts at Thompson Brook School and future courts at Buckingham. Those areas would be the least of service to the residential communities; construction of skimmed softball fields, 200' girls' softball at the Pine Grove School and the Thompson Brook School. Thompson Brook School is already irrigated, but Pine Grove needs to be;

Reconstruction of fields and t-ball at Huckleberry Hill School which are now apartments, and Roaring Brook School.

Providing electrical and water service to Alsop Meadows from River Mead Road and from the river. We have a limitation of 50,000 gallons per day from any river area, so we can manage field by field over days does not accumulate to 50,000 gallons per site.

He also recommended dredging ponds and upgrading facilities at Countryside Park and refurbish the big meadow field behind Sycamore Hills.

He also reported that Sperry Park was very suitable for expansion now that the Towpath School is down and the site has been restored. It is suitable for additional parking, which is direly needed there, upgrading of the rest rooms, seating plaza and concession areas need to be upgraded because of the extensive use it gets.

He also reported the maintenance or recurring activities which we will build into the plan is basically the following:

- Resurfacing or re-seal coating of all court surfaces
- Repainting, repair/patching of swimming pool
- Slice-seeding and resting of fields; reducing combined uses as appropriate
- Aeration and top-dressing of fields as required
- Playground equipment replacement
- Track resurfacing and relining. Keep in mind this should be done every eight years.
- Synthetic turf cleansing and replacement. This also needs to be cleaned and needs irrigation system even though it is synthetic and also needs to be replaced every eight to ten years.
- Floodlighting re-aiming and on-going maintenance

He reported Sperry Park is an intensely used complex and consists of two Little League Fields, flood lighted, with a concession building and minimal parking. There are two areas, now that Towpath is down, that are very gently sloping that could house another Little League field, probably not lighted, and hundreds of cars parking as well as open park land.

He also reported there are a number of issues that can be considered. One, the Marriott Extended Stay driveway, connecting to Route 10, is served by a left-turn storage lane on northbound Route 10. With that, a painted island, heading southbound, directs through traffic to the right, bypassing the storage lane. This provides an opportunity for an opposing left turn storage lane, southbound, into the Sperry Park Complex. That would also allow exits from Sperry Park, northbound. CT DOT will certainly control that decision, but there is a tremendous area that can be used for ball fields and parking. We are suggesting that the school department be approached to take the area from the south end of the building to Enford Street, to create an open path of park area, which would become part of the reinforcement of the town center green space idea. It is a perfect location because it is adjacent to the Post Office and adjacent to the Enford Street site as well. He reported there are a number of different solutions that can happen at Sperry Park this is a real signature area that needs to be addressed, and since it is already disturbed at this point, it should have top priority, especially since it is so well used by the Little League.

He reported the Enford Street site across from the Post Office, has a small gravel parking area, which people like to use instead of going into the Post Office parking lot. This gravel area should be restricted for park use. There is also a lovely meadow site that can be used for neighborhood playgrounds, which could have a shelter and some trails through the wooded area that surrounds the park area.

He reported the area to the rear of the high school is primarily wetland area that could not be developed. It was decided to keep the existing track, which is 225 feet x 350 feet, because it was just resurfaced and to redo it would cause complete tearing out of existing irrigation system and reconstruction of adjacent playing fields, which would cost millions of dollars, and we do not think that would be justified. Also, when asked if you could live with the area within the existing track, the answer was yes. It is also lighted and is used up until about 10 P.M. in the evening. This also is proposed to be under private initiative.

He suggested the following recommendations:

- Reconstruct the multi-purpose field interior of the track with synthetic turf
- Floodlight the track and field for scheduled night games
- Restore irrigation to maintain field surface
- Purchase portable out field fence for the relocated baseball field
- Consider reconstruction of the baseball/soccer field as synthetic turf during expansion of the high school

Mr. Wagner reported Fisher Meadows 250.45 acres, which is partially developed (20 acres) with the remaining meadows, wooded areas, and lake in the natural state. Right now, there is about 15 acres that are being farmed under a lease arrangement, which will be taken back. The fields are already graded, so the construction costs will be minor in the sense that this area will not have to be cleared, and you can also sell a good deal of the topsoil, if you get the permits, to reinvest for the construction of the field. The fields do not need 18 – 20 inches of topsoil, so it can be replaced with normal suitable backfill material. It is a flood plain so the grade cannot be changed because we have to maintain the flood storage capabilities in that area. We can then move the baseball, softball and little league fields into that area. It would also have parking of 200 to 300 cars, which would connect to the Old Farms School. We spoke to Ken Laroche and he was open to discussion on this. One of the things you have to realize is that CTDOT and the Town are relocating Old Farms Road, which will raise that road probably 15 - 20 feet above flood plain, which is the whole idea of putting the new bridge in. The old bridge prevents the river from moving the way it should move. The new bridge will be above flood plain stage and also allow for concession areas and comfort space to be constructed because they will be out of the flood zone area. However, we have also looked into restroom trailers for large field facilities and events. These trailers can be pulled by a pickup trucks, that are handicapped accessible which range from 1 or 2 and go up to 10 or 12 units that are used for commercial events like concerts. They are easy to clean and hose down and are much better than port-a-potty, which no one likes to use. The restroom trailers can be purchased by the town for \$25,000- \$30,000 each and can be moved at any event and can be moved to different sites. The cost of pumping them and maintaining them are less than the port-a-potty's and would be a good investment for the town.

Mr. Wagner reported the Thompson Road property, consisting of 15.25 acres is very suitable for a stadium complex for your high school baseball games high school lacrosse/field hockey/soccer competition. The proposed facility would include:

- Lighted synthetic field turf soccer, lacrosse and field hockey field 225' x 360' with 30 ' safety zones
- Semi-professional standard high school baseball field with 50' foul area and backstop, also lighted
- Parking sufficient for up to 1,000 people (350 cars: with overflow and bus parking at nearby Thompson Brook and Pine Grove Schools (shuttles for events)
- Concession and comfort station plaza and seating areas with a small adventure playground
- Grandstands, press boxes, gated ticket booths
- Upgraded maintenance/storage building
- Thompson road shade tree buffer zone (50 ft – 75 ft wide)
- Connections to trailhead and bikeway

He reported we proposed flood lighting of all fields as well. We also proposed approaching the property owners for future acquisition of property abutting the western side of the site, which is approximately six acres and do not know the plans for that.

Mr. Wagner reported Thompson Brook School 14.8 acres is used by the Recreation Department for both indoor and outdoor activities. He recommended the following:

- Light tennis and baseball courts
- Relocate benches in tennis "play" areas to mid-court side
- Connect service drive to Rear/side of Pine Grove School
- Construct T-ball field with protective backstop, fencing and benches
- Irrigate fields

He reported the facilities at Thompson Brook School are very adequate, well maintained. What we want to do is light the tennis courts, get the benches out of the way, construct a t-ball area and irrigate the fields.

Mr. Wagner reported we also recommend, for Pine Grove School, which has 21.24 acres, the following:

- Provide a service gate and create a gravel service drive leading from the intersection of the front driveway and the Thompson Brook service path to allow maintenance from the side and rear lawn areas
- Relocate the softball field 40' towards left field, reconstruct skinned infield, and irrigate; place outfield fence at 200' and relocate or provide new back stop, protective sideline fencing, and player's benches
- Expand soccer field to full-size regulation and irrigate
- Add shelter buildings with tables and benches for children's activities in the shade.
- Refurbish play equipment as necessary
- Refinish and color seal-coat basketball courts

He reported an alternate service drive to Pine Grove School is needed because, currently, the maintenance crew cannot get access to the fields. It requires removing two sections of trim to allow them to drive across the grass. We are also recommending to relocate the softball fields 40 –50 feet over with all new end fields for girls softball, with protective fencing so you do not have adult men playing in the area. We also recommend irrigating the fields, which was never done when the school was built. We also recommend some shelter for shade because there is no shade anywhere and finishing the basketball court.

Mr. Wagner reported Sycamore Hills needs to be painted and patched. The volleyball court has a utility line overhead, which needs to be put underground, and resurface the tennis and basketball courts, and also provide some passage area from the main road to the building. Presently, the pathways are very narrow and do not allow for handicap passage.

He reported at Alsop Meadows, 56.69 acres on Waterville Road, we recommend removing the barn and create more parking area to allow more people to walk in that area. The canoe launch access area needs to be repaired and the riverside edge needs to be filled in because it has been washing away. That will allow us also to bring electricity from River Mead Road down to the fields, with pump station above flood stage, and we will be able to pump 50,000 gallons per day from the river, and will provide the community gardens with water. They will also have some storage bins or trailers.

He reported Roaring Brook School has 20.02 acres, 30 Old Wheeler Lane, is used by the Recreation Department for both indoor and outdoor activities. It is being maintained as well as it can be, some areas are in acceptable condition, but the ball fields need immediate attention. We recommend the following:

- Two multi-purpose fields need to be refurbished, including aeration, top-dressing and seeding
- Irrigation should be installed
- Temporarily, the need for T-ball fields require at least 2, and up to four corners of the fields to be utilized for t-ball
- The softball field needs to be refurbished with a skinned infield constructed
- Protective fencing, a backstop and new players benches should be stalled
- At some future time, when additional multi-purpose fields are constructed in other locations, a field will be eliminated, and a "sole-use" softball field constructed in its place

He reported the fields need to be irrigated, so we are proposing the refurbishing and regrading of two soccer fields with four t-ball fields set into the corners and at some point, when we have all the other fields that we are going to get, at Fisher Meadows and some of the other school areas, we will be able to eliminate one of these soccer fields and just make it 2 "sole-use" t-ball or softball fields.

Mr. Wagner reported Buckingham Road Recreation Area consisting on 17.73 acres; 10 Buckingham Road has access off Huckleberry Hill Road. The fields that are there really should be ripped because they are in an area that is not going to be played by anybody. The playground is now being constructed in this area and we would like to have a major concession/comfort facility in the middle of the park. The future basketball, tennis and so forth will be served by another 150 – 200 car parking area. All of the play area will be surrounded by fencing. We recommend the following:

- Construct a parking area for basketball and tennis courts and for the playground
- Floodlighting the baseball field and one lacrosse field
- Pave the parking areas and provide storm water runoff controls
- Light parking areas with time controls
- Construct a concession, storage and restroom facility
- Light the tennis, basketball and volleyball courts with time controls
- Continue trail connections to Countryside Park and Huckleberry Hill; sign and trail maps

He reported Countryside Park consisting of 17.5 acres; 335 Huckleberry Hill Road has two ponds designated as the upper (north) pond and lower (south) pond and a 60 by 25-foot multi-use building. We recommend the following:

- Dredge the ponds and stabilize edges and banks
- Restore and stabilize “beach” areas; ensure handicap access
- Construct small fishing decks or piers to prevent pond edge and bank disturbance
- Seal or repave all paved areas and refurbish trail surfaces
- Add security lighting for parking area
- Add sidewalks/trails to and from Edwards Road

He reported basically, the lower pond needs to be dredged, the upper pond can be left. He also reported the lack of handicapped facilities in this area is really quite deficient and needs a lot of work to allow handicapped people to get to it. It has a nice setting and should be taken care of by repairing the pond. It has gotten many decades of use without being able to repair it and there are all kinds of environmental issues when dealing with ponds.

Mr. Wagner reported the Huckleberry Hill Apartments lack sufficient parking and has no handicapped parking spaces. The basketball and tennis courts are pretty well deteriorated and, in order to be used, would have to be completely reconstructed. We recommend the following:

- The tennis and basketball courts were determined to be unnecessary for the Parks and Recreation Department programs and are recommended to be removed
- The area of the courts may be re-paved and expanded to increase parking by a total of 20 spaces providing two (2) handicap van parking spaces
- The play equipment area should be removed, restored to lawn to expand the multi-purpose field, and establish two (2) t-ball fields
- A new play area, handicap accessible, should be developed for adolescents/tots in a secure area at the end of the parking area
- An irrigated multi-purpose field, 180’ x 240’, expandable to 240’ x 300; should be reconstructed
- T-ball fields should be constructed in diagonal corners with protective fencing, backstops and, player benches
- Fencing should be relocated along the entire parking area at the field side and around the new play area
- Disturbed area should be restored to lawn

He reported since the Recreation and Parks decided they did not need the tennis and basketball but the tenants need additional parking. Basically we would reclaim the pavement, add 20-car parking, expand the grass area to include a 240' x 300' multipurpose field with two t-ball fields in the corner and relocate the existing play area, which is now obsolete.

Mr. Wagner included the following recommendations in the preliminary draft of the Recreation and Facilities Master Plan: Avon Middle School, consisting of 18.52 acres on West Avon Road:

- A geotechnical study of the tennis courts is required to determine the reason for “cracking and lean” and to determine if the courts can be repaired or reconstructed with subsurface drainage infrastructure
- The fields should be completely refurbished, including tilling, regarding, reseeding and irrigation, with skinned infields
- Infields should have new backstops, protective fencing, and players' benches

Also included in the preliminary draft is Found Land – 124 acres adjacent to Lofgren Road located off Huckleberry Hill Road, which is open space and wooded area. Recommendations as follows:

- The purchase of this land is primarily to add a trail system to connect to Huckleberry Hills Park
- Encourage trails for conservation education/forest management
- Provide limited gravel parking area, information/trails kiosk

Mr. Woodford questioned why baseball fields seem to be the major theme at this time? The Director the Recreation and Parks reported there are a number of people playing baseball, both at the youth level and the intermediate level, and girls softball in particular, which is beginning to impact what we are doing. We also have a large increase in the lacrosse program. He reported a lot of the areas we are using for soccer, are also being used for lacrosse, the t-ball groups have also increase significantly, and those are just the six, seven and eight year olds. They do not take up a lot of space, so we have been doubling up, having two teams on each t-ball field, to consolidate them in one spot. He reported part of the plan of consolidation pretty much rests with Fisher Meadows. The softball field number 2 at Fisher Meadows has also been used for youth soccer for as long as we can remember. He reported we have all-purpose field number 4 that we are using as two U-8 fields, going across we can recover a full size soccer/lacrosse field, by moving the U-8 fields, which do not take up much room, to the north. All the fields we proposed there were U-10 so we can maximize that, by using U-8's. We are also using the U-10 soccer fields at Pine Grove. So, we are taking what we already have and consolidating it, using some of our resources. The field at Pine Grove works great for the school system because it is part of the recess area but is virtually unusable to us at night because we cannot get at the field to maintain it and it was originally designed for girls' softball, which is why it is a skinned area. By freeing up fields at Fisher Meadows, little league can be consolidated there. He reported a lot of the items mentioned early on are to maximize what we already have. There is a baseball backstop and benches at Roaring Brook School but we cannot use them because we have two soccer fields.

Mr. Wagner reported the High School baseball team does not have a flood lit field and the intentions under the high school plan is to flood light only the track and multi purpose field within the track. There is a real need in the town for a one major baseball field that can be lighted.

Mr. Shea reported, to speak directly to Mr. Woodford's question, is in the past 5 to 7 years, you now have a freshman baseball program, which you did not have; you now have 600 – 700 kids playing in little league; you have J C current and Babe Ruth leagues. There has just been a resurgence in the interest in baseball, and more people participating in baseball, at all levels. There are three high school teams, a team at Avon Middle School, along with all the other teams, are there just is not enough space.

The Director of Recreation and Parks reported there is also a prep baseball for 13 year olds, which does not require a large field, and we have talked about having it played down at Fisher Meadows. Baseball is the largest growing sport for both boy and girls in North America, and is played in the spring. He reported the fall season does not present us with as many problems. He also reported there are 1,100 kids in the youth soccer program, which is in the spring.

Mr. Shea reported this is an outstanding report and commended Peggy, Jeff and Glenn for working on it. We finally have a map to the future, but in reading it, and listening to the presentation, it does raise the questions, prior to any larger initiatives, in the short term, there should be some priorities listed, in dollar amounts placed on safety and ADA accessibility. That should be done as soon as possible- I do not propose to know the cost of it or how we fund it, but it should come before new fields. Whatever we have now, issues of safety and ADA accessibility should be taken care of first.

Mr. Woodford questioned why the benches at Thompson Brook School should be removed. Mr. Wagner stated they are near the tennis courts and are in an area where somebody could run into them. Chairman Carlson reported this should be taken care of immediately, with the building and ground people.

Mr. Wagner also stated, relevant to ADA Accessibility, there are grant programs, and there is quite a bit of federal money available simply for this purpose and would probably take one to two years to get it. Mr. Shea reported these issues need to be addressed, even though we might miss out on some grant money.

Mr. Wagner reported ADA compliant is terribly expensive. The new codes are unbelievably strict and it is a large amount of money that you have to address, but we think you can do that in certain priority also; you can do the urgent things right away and wait on the things that, although they are not ADA compliant, they are not a safety issue. Mr. Shea reported we have a very active community, but have limited opportunities, and I would not want to see anyone not have access to areas because they are handicapped.

The Director of Recreation and Parks reported many of your concerns are top priority and will be first on the list of things to be done. These things are or will be called the early action items and will show some results for the effort of what we are doing, in a relatively short period of time. A lot of those are issues of simply removing some bleachers and will show up as priorities in the very near future.

The Town Manager reported we are not through the process yet, part of the prioritization process here would be our analysis of the demographics of the age grouping and the way these people are migrating to different sports. We would hate to be in a position where we are building t-ball fields and missed the flag that we should be doing lacrosse. Once the prioritization is done we hope we will be looking at what needs to be done to meet the needs as they grow. This is not something that we will be able to accomplish over a short period of time, not only from a management standpoint, but also from a resource standpoint. The prioritization of safety and handicap accessibility are crucial, but we do not want to miss out on what we need to do to anticipate where the growth is going to be, so that we can accommodate it as we go along. In terms of our capital budget program, if you are forecasting a tremendous growth in the next two to four years, we need to make sure that we are ready for that, and if it is a higher expense item that needs to be put into the budget, to meet the anticipated needs, it needs to be indicated in here and why you are recommending it; like we have 1,700 children in this program and it will grow to 2,300 which requires additional fields, the location of those fields, and a plan as to how we are going to meet that. Mr. Wagner reported they did a very good job with the surveying all the leagues and all the users in the community, to come up with, what we thought was priorities. The Town Manager reported the elementary school enrollment has stabilized in the last couple of years and has actually declined very slightly, and with the enrollment studies that the board has been doing, there is not an anticipation that it will increase dramatically in the next five years. On the other hand, the high school enrollment, which is already in the system and we can track it, is going to increase substantially. That is the type of participatory type of planning that we are interested in seeing come out in the final report. Mr. Shea stated the final report should

also include the anticipation of trying to apply for grants. The Town Manager reported once we find out what we are going to do, then we have to find out how we are going to resource it.

Mr. Shea questioned if we can apply for a grant before we know the specifics, i.e. recreational field? Mr. Wagner reported that is not possible, we have to be specific, i.e. baseball field, soccer field, etc. Most of the grant programs require final design. You have to basically have at least preliminary design or better, with the community making the initial investment. For example, under the provision of conservation services on the Green, the town has to come up with 1,000,000 dollars for a million-dollar project. Then we can apply to get reimbursed \$500,000 through grants. Mr. Shea reported he would hate to see us identify this lacrosse field and then start the grant process, and hopes they can go in concert- the process allows for the grants to be applied for. The Town Manager reported we will have this available this summer and it will fall right into the fall capital improvement program scheduling, and as soon as the document is in place and we are going through that process, we can start applying for grants from various agencies that may have money available. We would anticipate we would be applying for grants in six to nine months from now. He also reported they are looking for financial commitment to match what we are applying for, and we will be competing against other communities, so the ones that are contributing the most will be most likely to win the grant.

Chairman Carlson questioned why the pool needs painting and patching. The Director of Recreation and Parks reported the pool is 12 years old and is actually due for repairs now but we are going to put it off for one more year because it is not in dire need- but the surface is starting to look worn in areas. Chairman Carlson reported his preference in terms of prioritization, would be safety and ADA issues, and then maintenance issues. He questioned how you determine your priority list? The Director of Recreation and Parks reported the short term ones will be based on need. Many of the issues that were mentioned, we need to address. Once some of the things become items that we are going to do, we become responsible for taking care of them. Chairman Carlson questioned when you could come back in with revised plans, can you also draw linkages, i.e. the plans call for soccer fields at Fisher Meadows, why are there baseball fields at Thompson Brook and that also called for removal of fields somewhere else? Also, when you talked about the high school, you mentioned the lack of parking, which surprised me. Mr. Wagner reported the need for added parking because of all the other activities that are happening at the high school. When you have a baseball game, you also have many other activities going on, which requires additional parking spaces. He also reported the bleacher capacity is for 600 – 700 people.

Mrs. Hornaday reported she appreciated the report and some of the information that was given, which answered some of the questions she had for the ACORN group. With regard to the synthetic turf fields and you indicated it would have to be replaced every 8 to 10 years? Mr. Wagner reported, ordinarily the synthetic turf fields are used so much that 8-10 years is the average life for them.

Mrs. Hornaday stated we need to be aware that if we move forward with some of these items, that they have the ongoing cost that we need to be expecting. She also questioned if it is possible to do synthetic turf on one field at Thompson Brook and redo the lines on existing fields for different sports that are primary during the season. She also voiced concern over the expectations of most of these fields being lighted. She stated she is not certain that we need that many lighted fields.

Mrs. Hornaday questioned on Fisher Meadows property if Mr. Wagner had looked at the property we own that is north of where the playing fields currently are, and is there any proposal for that area? How much damage is going to occur to the fields at the school due to recess? Mr. Wagner reported that if they are properly maintained and irrigated, they should be fine because children at recess do not put the kind of wear on the fields that sports cleats do. It is a matter of keeping the grass refreshed so just the footwear does not continue to crush the grass. She stated the proposal suggests fields in almost all of the locations and reported we should eliminate some of those fields to allow for free-play, especially for young children. She reported that Sycamore Hills is an example of that. Mr. Wagner reported Sycamore Hills, specifically, is

meant to be a meadow field, the same thing is true at Enford Street, and the area south of the education building can also be open meadow and informal play areas. The only areas that we are bringing new fields are Fisher Meadows and Thompson Road, which is already disturbed. All the other fields that we are talking about are school fields that were already constructed as fields, so we are really not taking away any of the open space, with the exception of the 14 acres at Fisher Meadows and the Thompson Road property. He also reported there is about 2 acres at the bottom of the ball fields that we are leaving natural and that connects to the bike trail.

Mrs. Hornaday reported on a survey that was taken 15 years ago with the students, regarding sports, that lacrosse came in second, but since then it has dropped. So it may be a good idea, with regard to what is going to be the future interest in terms of organized sports, to run a similar survey at the high school and middle school, so we have a better idea of where the young peoples interest lies.

Chairman Carlson reported we should be mapping it out to needs, and also according to the population studies, which we have available to us. We would also like to see some rough estimates on the development costs and on the ongoing operational costs/maintenance costs.

The Director of Recreation & Parks Department reported any part of the language in this draft could be changed if needed. Some of the projects may never be done, but our objective was to see what we could have in the future and to pick and choose as we go along. He reported the interest in sports has continued to grow and have exceeded reasonable numbers and then drop back, right now lacrosse is on the upward spiral- it will peak, it will drop back, it will level off. Every sport has done that in the past. The only sport we have not seen this happen to is field hockey and we are addressing a program for the elementary school.

Mr. Wagner reported something to remember is that lighting gives you the capability to have less fields, assuming that the fields can be maintained properly and irrigated, the fact that lighting extends the day, makes it less necessary to have more fields. Mr. Woodford reported he is not in favor of lighting at Fisher Meadows.

Mr. Shea commended the Director of Recreation & Parks and Jeff for the outstanding job that was done in securing the funds of about \$350,000 for the fields up at Buckingham. Through their hard work and ongoing efforts, hopefully they can continue to find money at the State and Federal level that we had not planned on. What they have presented is a great plan- we are just going to have to find the funds for it.

It was reported there is now a new space age material that can be used to build hockey rinks, most of it is franchised—it is good for 12 months of the year- they are using it in California, Texas and mostly in Canada. It is approximately \$30.00 per square foot, a 5000 square foot rink would cost about \$60,000 and the material lasts 10 to 20 years. The Town Council advised him to get more information on it.

It was the consensus of the Town Council that this draft is a very well done report of not only the needs of the town but also the opportunities that are available.

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

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council table this item to the next meeting.

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

**06/07-49 Approve: Churches of Avon Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)**

The Town Manager reported we have a second group who is interested in forming a Community Emergency Response Team and that group is connected with the churches in Avon. We have a listing of the individuals that are interested in participating and a copy of a draft charter of the group, which we have gone over and made amendments to it. He reported this group is like the Civil Defense group that was around years ago but we are taking extra steps to make sure they are trained properly, and background checks will be done to

reduce our risk and liability as well. In the event of an emergency, when the town needs a lot of volunteers, we would activate this group and they become agents of the town and the State of Connecticut does cover them for workers compensation. They have to be activated by the Town and we have to inform the State that we have activated them. The Charter presented here is more of bylaws on how we are going to be governing this process. We are setting up training files on everybody and if they do not participate on an active basis, they will be dropped from the program. He also reported this is part of the Homeland Security Act and is something we would not have initiated but there has been a lot of press coverage and a lot of encouragement from the federal and state government to form these bodies within the community. We also have a group in Farmington Woods that is basically focused on Farmington Woods. He reported this could be a valuable support tool if we have an emergency like a hurricane and have 400 to 500 people at the high school, we will need people to help and they will be trained. The Town Manager reported only himself, as the Emergency Management Director, or Jamie DiPace, as his deputy, can activate this group during an emergency.

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

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council approve the Churches of Avon Community Emergency Response Team.

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

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**06/07-65 Award Bid: Dump Truck to Tri-State Diesel**

Alex Trujillo, Fleet Manager/Superintendent of Operations reported we went out with an RFP early, hoping to avoid paying an incremental cost for 2007 engine emission on a new truck. We received one bid from Hine Brothers, Inc. and a bid from Tri-State Diesel, Inc. for a Heavy Duty Dump Truck with Snowplow, as follows:

Tri-State Diesel, Inc; Kenworth Model T-800	\$ 162,391.48
Additional Options:	<u>5,863.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 168,254.48</b>

Hine Brothers, Inc	2 bids; Truck 1, Model 7500	\$145,870.00
	Truck 2, Model 7600	\$122,890.00

Mr. Trujillo reported Tri-State Diesel: Kenworth Model T-800 does meet the minimum specifications. Hine Brothers International: submitted two trucks for our consideration. Both trucks did not meet the minimum specifications requested by the Town of Avon. Director of Public Works recommended that the Town Council accept the higher bid from Tri-State Diesel, Inc because they met the minimum specifications.

Mr. Woodford voiced disapproval that only one bid came in according to the towns' specifications, which implies that the town specs are too narrow. Mr. Trujillo reported it is because we were requesting a specific engine to save money on the emissions, and there is a very limited supply out there. Vendors do not have vehicles like this on their lot just to see if they can sell them. The Town Manager reported we were basically trying to find out if there were any 2006 trucks out there, so we would not have to buy the higher priced engine, and this is what we got back. He further stated, we can reject these, go out with the environmentally approved engine and we would probably get more bids, but they would be \$12,000 - \$13,000 higher in cost.

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

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Council award the bid to Tri-State Diesel, Inc., for the purchase of a dump truck for a total cost of \$168,254.48

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

**06/07-66 Road Acceptances: Bluestone Lane, Brighton Way, Clearwater Court, Wildwood Drive**

The report from Deputy Town Engineer stated all legal instruments to convey title to the roads and storm drainage have been submitted. The Engineering Department has inspected these roads during all phases of construction and found them to be constructed in accordance with Town of Avon standards for road construction. The Deputy Town Engineer recommends acceptance of the following roads into the town road system as follows:

- a. Bluestone Lane, 450.00 linear Feet, 0.09 miles
- b. Brighton Way, 436.42 linear feet, 0.08 miles
- c. Clearwater Court, 288.37 linear feet, 0.05 miles
- d. Wildwood Drive, 3,087.00 linear feet, 0.58 miles

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

**RESOLVED:** That Town Council accept on behalf of the Town of Avon Bluestone Lane, Brighton Way, Clearwater Court, and Wildwood Drive, into the Town of Avon Roadway System, based upon the recommendation of the Deputy Town Engineer.

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

### **VIII. TOWN MANAGERS REPORT/MISCELLANEOUS**

The Town Manager reported you have a copy of the latest agenda and minutes for the regional dispatching effort with Canton and we have had good attendance at the meetings with several people from Canton along with our police department and our fire department came for a while but had to leave because of a call, we also had the Executive Director of CRCOG and two of their staff people. They are very interested in the effort and are very willing to work with us. He reported five to seven years ago, the Capitol Region Council of Governments got a grant from the State to hire an outfit called Concept Operations, out of Maryland. They prepared a Master Plan for two regional dispatching centers, one east of the river, and one west of the river. There was a follow-up technical study that was done by a different consultant. At that time, communities began to fade away from participating in the program and two years ago Avon, Farmington and Burlington, because they are part of the Farmington Fire dispatching system, were the only towns left of this mega effort that was started back in 1995. Then Farmington backed out also and we have been in a dormant stage for two years, but have now found a partner in Canton, and it was the consensus of the group, with the help of CRCOG, to get the study that was done, updated for Canton and Avon- and to apply for a grant. We can get up to a \$15,000 grant through the Office of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications. There are conflicting stories as to whether they are giving out grants or not. Our understanding is they will not fund new studies but we are asking for support to fund the update of an existing study.

Chairman Carlson questioned if Avon becomes the lockup, does that mean twice the number of prisoners, and do we have to start that now? The Town Manager reported the issue of the lockup came up at a meeting earlier this week and it has not been 100 percent resolved. The potential jurisdictional issues, not so much from the standpoint of who is going to do it, it is more the interplay between the Police Department and the minimum staffing requirements in the union contracts. Canton essentially has two people on most shifts; some shifts have only one person. We have three people on most shifts, but some shifts with two, and if you run into a situation where you have one person on their shift and two on ours, there could be a problem because their minimum staffing requires you to have two people inside the building. The dispatcher, because of the camera, is focussing on the lockups, which satisfies one criteria. That way, they can have an officer in the back room booking someone, if there is a dispatcher, through a video, watching the process, who can call for additional help, if necessary. He reported if we have a situation and there is no dispatcher in Canton, and Canton has a prisoner, that means they will have to bring them to Avon, which is a longer trip, and if there is only one patrol officer in Canton, that means Canton will not have coverage while their officer is in Avon processing a prisoner. We have not resolved that but we did feel we could work with the Police Chief of both Canton and Avon to try to address that. He reported this all has to be costed out and we have to come up with an equitable arrangement. Essentially, the model that we are looking at is that we would be the dispatching center and the lockup and Canton would pay us, we do not know how much yet, because we do not know the staffing pattern, the cost per prisoner per hour, the number of prisoners. Once

this information is obtained, it must go to the Board of Selectmen in Canton and the Town Council in Avon. He reported it may not work but we should explore the possibility.

The Town Manager reported the number of citizens complaining about speeding enforcement is down, although, we are still working on Country Club Road, between West Avon Road and Lovely Street. Mrs. Hornaday suggested putting up signs warning people because it is a steep hill coming down to West Avon Road to remind people to ride their brakes when they travel that area, and eventually, we will also need a light at the intersection of Country Club Road and Lovely Street.

The Town Manager reported we have had a much larger cleanup operation this time than usual, with the flooding problem, because of the extent of the water. I have discussed with the Director of Public Works the need to schedule some overtime to do the cleanup after hours, with the hope that the Governor gets a FEMA declaration. If we can qualify, we will get 75 percent reimbursement for the overtime and the equipment etc. If that does not happen, we will be hustling to try to come up with the money to pay for it, but there is some money left in the snow removal fund. We have had the fields closed down because of water damage and have just recently reopened and residents have been understanding about the problem, but you may see this show up in the fall with supplemental transfers and such, when we are closing out the audit and the year.

The Town Manager reported you may remember we contributed \$5,000 to the Art Council to start their west-side office and a letter saying they hired Lauren Miller as Director, and she is out doing a lot of work, some of it is included in the brochure.

He reported according to the Quarterly Financial Report; we are running short of funds in the hydrant area and also in the fee's to CRRA. CRRA will not be lowering their rates because of a pending court case. We anticipated that was going to happen, so we have a spending review process going on at this time to control year-end expenditures to try to make up for potential problems we are going to have in hydrants, which is a DPEC timing issue, in terms of the rate increase for both water companies. We are looking in the neighborhood of \$100,000 - \$125,000 problem, which we hope to be able to make up, but if not, we will again be looking at year-end transfers, we may have to make in the fall when we are closing out the audit.

He reported we are way ahead on the revenue side of the budget and there are no problems with that. There is conveyance tax money, which we did not include in the current years budget, and other revenues, like the \$67,000 for the street light rebate, we are getting \$55,000 for the closeout of the Thompson School, after the state audit. Our state grants in the current years' budget were below what we expected. In terms of an operating surplus or deficit, it will definitely be an operating surplus, but we are having some issues within the expenditure side of the budget.

**IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Litigation/Negotiation**

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

**RESOLVED:** That Town Council go into Executive Session at 9:30 p.m.

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

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

**RESOLVED:** That Town Council come out of Executive Session at 9:45 p.m.

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

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

**ATTEST:**