

1999-2000 ANNUAL BUDGET

PUBLIC HEARING

APRIL 20, 1999

6:30 P.M.

A Public Hearing on the 1999-2000 Annual Budget of the Town of Wallingford was held by the Town Council in the Robert Earley Auditorium of the Wallingford Town Hall and Called to Order by Chairman Robert F. Parisi at 6:39 P.M. Councilors Centner, Farrell, Knight, Papale, Parisi, Renda, Rys, Zandri and Zappala answered present to the Roll called by Town Clerk Rosemary A. Rascati. Mayor William W. Dickinson, Jr. And Comptroller Thomas A. Myers were also present.

A blessing was bestowed upon all by Trudy Brady, Diocanol Minister, United Methodist Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given to the Flag.

Mayor Dickinson welcomed everyone to the public hearing stating that the budget book contains a letter at the beginning which outlines the salient or important points. In summarizing, let me say this; the budget is a document that allows us to provide services. The quality of life in the community depends upon the quality of the services and the affordability of those services. The budget is built around a long-term view of the community and its ability to finance the various programs and projects that we all like to see come to completion and fruition. The budget, as proposed, seeks to maintain the fiscal health of the community and preserves the AA credit rating of the community. ON the revenue side; 2.78% of the increase comes from the Grand List increase and that amounts to some \$1,582,000. In addition, we have appropriated approximately \$3 million from reserves; an amount similar to the amount that was used to fund this year's budget. On the expenditure side; the budget increases \$1,850,000 for a total of \$95,315,594. The increase in money for education is the equivalent of 2.9%. On the General Government side it is .07% increase. The increase on the general government as well as education side of the budget is not done by magic; certain capital expenditures drop out of the budget such as the communications system of the Police Department. As a result, those costs do not repeat and allow the budget to show a lower increase overall. Our budgets also include the utility budgets; electric, water & sewer. The Electric Division is showing a 4-5% rate decrease....I should not say rate decrease, it is a decrease in the chargeable amounts due to adjustments in fuel costs. It really is not a rate change but there should be a 4-5% reduction in the charged amounts. The projects there include the East Street Substation and the possible relocation of the business office to the John Street Office. In the Water Division, the North Main Street Extension and the new computer system....and the new computer system is some \$290,000.....in Sewer the

Quinnipiac River siphon project and again, the computer system at \$275,000 are the principal capital items. Neither the Water or Sewer Division is anticipating a rate increase however, in Water there is some concern about the revenue stream and we could be seeing in the near future, a rate increase there. With those briefs comments, I turn the meeting back to you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Parisi stated, I would like to remind the public that, tonight, the public speaks. Tomorrow night and Thursday evening will be the time when the Council will ask questions of the department heads. It is the same procedure we have used last year and the year before and the year before.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Robert Sheehan, 11 Cooper Avenue asked, what is your projected surplus for this year?

Joseph Cirusuolo, Ed.D. , Superintendent of Schools responded, at this point we are projecting an end of the year balance of \$1,016,773.

Mr. Sheehan asked, I noticed in your Contingency Account you had requested \$1.1 million and the Mayor cut it down to \$600,000. Why did you feel you needed the \$1.1 million?

Dr. Cirusuolo answered, there are a number of things in the Contingency Account; we are in negotiations with four of our bargaining units so money was put in to cover possible costs of settlements or arbitration awards. In those areas there was money put in to cover what we had anticipated would have been an increase in cost of transportation because we went out to bid. Fortunately the bids came in in a very favorable fashion so we have \$160,000 in the Contingency Acct. that we will not need next year. We can reduce that account by that amount. The low bid for transportation was the present vendor and, except for some very slight items, there is no increase in cost next year. There is also some money in the Contingency Account for anticipated increases in transportation for special education students; every year we experience an increase in that line.

At this time Dr. Cirusuolo introduced Linda Winter, the Board of Education's new Business Manager.

Dr. Cirusuolo continued, we also put in some money (into the Contingency Acct.) for special education staffing that generally occurs.....when the Board puts the budget together, we have not done all of the annual reviews for our somewhat 800 special education students. Frequently, as a result of that, it has been our experience that we need additional staff so we put the money in for three

additional special education teachers. We have a new Compensatory Education program and we are anticipating needing two additional teachers for that program, so we put that in contingency as well. We put in some slight amounts for special education equipment and in case we break our contract with the cleaning service.

Mr. Sheehan asked, do you take into account any monies that you may derive from state and federal grants?

Dr. Cirsuolo replied, yes we do. The largest state grant does not come to the Board of Education; the Equalized Cost Sharing Grant is revenue for the Town. I am sure the Mayor has taken that into account in his budget deliberations. Any of the money that we get is what they call categorical and has to be spent for a particular purpose. For example, under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act we get federal funds that has to be used for compensatory education. We get a grant from the federal government; the IDEA grant; which helps to offset the cost of special education. We are anticipating a 10% increase in their grant for next year and our budget reflects that. We also receive from the state, a grant for any outside placements for special education students. We have gotten the best estimate we can as to what that grant will be and we have reduced our special education tuition account by that amount. Any place where we have a grant that could have a budgetary impact and we are fairly comfortable with that, that has been taken into account in the budget.

Mr. Sheehan stated, the Mayor has cut \$1.6 million out of your request. You are down to \$55 million and change. Do you fee that is adequate to maintain all of your current programs or are you going to have to make cuts in certain areas?

Dr. Cirsuolo replied, at this time it is a little too early to say. IF we take the end of the year projection that I gave you, \$1,016,773., and if I can say to the people behind me that I will leave this information with you when we leave the podium, and you add to that the \$160,000 that we can take out of the budget because of the transportation situation, we would have to find either an additional surplus this year or additional savings next year; an amount of \$467,500 for the Board to be able to do next year everything that it wanted to do when it put the budget together. It would be pure speculation on my part at this time to say to what extent we would be able to meet that amount.

Bernadette Renda, 753 North Main Street Extension asked, are you planning on cutting any of the special education programs or any of the programs for children with special needs if you don't get the money that you do need?

Dr. Cirsuolo stated, no, we are not. I am not planning recommending that to the Board. It would be illegal to cut any special ed programs. They are all there as a result of both the state and federal mandates.

Mrs. Renda asked, if you don't get enough additional teachers to help out in the special education programs, would you have to cut them (positions)?

Dr. Cirsuolo answered, no. Anything we have to do to meet the special education mandate, we have to do. We would have to cut in other areas to do that. We spent 20% of our budget; about \$11 million to meet special ed mandates. That is about as fixed as anything in our budget.

Mrs. Renda asked, how about children with special needs? Would that be considered the same area?

Dr. Cirsuolo replied, if we are talking about the same thing, we are talking about kids who are identified as needing special education of one sort or another. It is a broad stroke definition and any children who are found to have a learning handicap, as defined under law, services must be provided for those children. There is a whole process that you go through to determine that. Once you determine that, you can't cut those services, you can cut other things.

Mrs. Renda urged the Board not to cut any services for children with special needs.

Mike Brodinsky, 45 Valley View Drive asked, does Lyman Hall High School need any renovations/improvements/upgrades and, if so, what is in the budget to handle that and what is your vision for what is going to happen in the future on that?

Dr. Cirsuolo answered, there are two ways we are addressing that building by building. One is within the regular operating budget and the other is in the capital plan the Board has under consideration. In that plan, at this point, the Board has not taken any final action, there is somewhere around \$7.5 million worth of items for Lyman Hall alone.

Mr. Brodinsky stated, you mentioned a figure of \$7 million; in what budget would we see that begin to appear?

Dr. Cirsuolo answered, you would not see that anywhere here. If the Board decides to propose it, it will be a separate capital project that will have its own process of consideration.

Mr. Brodinsky asked, what will the timing be as to when you would propose that?

Dr. Cirsuolo answered, the Board has scheduled a special meeting May 6th to take action.

Board of Education Chairperson Patricia Corsetti responded, the Board has one more Special Operations Committee Meeting to discuss this project and then we have a Special Board meeting on

May 6th which will be held in the Board room downstairs to decide where we are going and if we are moving forward with this project.

Gerald Powers, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds for the Board of Education stated, we are planning to spend \$36,700 on various items for Lyman Hall High School. Unfortunately, there are no

huge projects going on at Lyman Hall but we are doing various painting and blinds and water treatment for boilers. We are also hiring an engineer to write specifications for a section of the roof that has to be replaced for the following year. All total, we are spending about \$40,000 at Lyman Hall.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville stated that there is a chronic problem with speeders in the school zones. Wouldn't it be smart to hire part time workers and place them in the most important areas where children are being dropped off by relatives at the schools?

Dr. Cirsuolo stated, no one has mentioned the problem to me. We have, at a number of our elementary schools, congestive situations in the morning and in the afternoon at 3:00 P.M. Those schools were not designed, in terms of how they were placed on the land and how the roads are designed around them, they were not designed for large numbers of personal vehicles coming there to drop children off or pick them up. The assumptions behind them and these schools were built a while ago, was that the children would either be transported by bus or they would walk. Times have changed and we now have people, staff members at each of those schools outside in the relevant areas to make sure that no child has been hit by a car. Where we have been able to, we have changed the driveway situation so that the cars use one driveway and the buses use another. That has helped a lot where we can do that. When Yalesville was renovated, they planned it that way. When Dag and Moran were renovated, we planned it that way as well. The children are safe, we have staff members out there watching that situation and I don't think the principals would have any reluctance bringing to my attention and I would not have any reluctance bringing to the Board's attention any additional staff we might need to keep children safe. Safety is the most important consideration before you deal with anything else.

Mr. Melillo next asked about seat belts on the school buses; is there any legislation on the horizon that will mandate them?

Dr. Cirsuolo answered, I don't think that there is any chance in the near future that state legislature is going to mandate seat belts on the large vehicles. They are already mandated on the smaller buses. The reason there isn't much momentum behind that is that this whole issue of safety on buses has been looked at a great deal across the country. The general conclusion is that seat belts would not add anything on those large vehicles to child safety. The buses were retro-fitted, by law, many years ago. The children are, more or less, surrounded by a padded atmosphere and, in addition to that,

school buses are remarkably sturdy vehicles, by law. They have to meet certain specifications. Every now and then when we have a fender-bender with a school bus, the car that hits it has to be towed away and there is very little jostling of the kids on the bus. There does not seem to be any evidence of additional safety. There is some evidence, especially with the younger children, seat belts can be problematical. If, God forbid, there is an accident and there is a need to evacuate the bus very quickly.....also, you can put seat belts on buses but before they are going to do any good the children have to use them so now we have to put monitors on all the buses to make sure that they did. For all those reasons, the main one being that there does not seem to be any evidence that there would be much of an increase or any increase in a margin of safety, I don't think there is any momentum at the State level to mandate the seat belts on the big buses.

Mr. Melillo stated that he felt there ought to be alternate drivers hired and in attendance on each school bus in the event that something happens to the primary driver of the vehicle.

Dr. Cirsuolo stated, in looking at the record there have been negligible situations nationwide where a driver became incapacitated so much in the course of his or her responsibilities that anyone got hurt.

Mr. Melillo asked, what about the federal and state grants? Has there been any change in that area?

Dr. Cirsuolo replied, if the news that is coming out of Hartford is accurate, the Equalized Cost Sharing Grant will be somewhat higher than it was last year. That is revenue for the town and I am sure the Mayor takes that into account. As far as the federal programs are concerned, it is even early to speculate about that, but there seems to be quite a bit of momentum in one way or another to increase federal spending for education. Where we are fairly confident that those increases will occur, we have reduced the local appropriation in the budget. Finally, the federal government does pay 10-15% of the cost of education across the country and the state pays approximately 35-40%, depending on which year it is. There are probably going to be some increases there but nothing that would have a very significant impact.

Jim Vumbaco, 81 High Hill Road asked, I understand there are major enhancements or renovations that are needed at some of our elementary schools; can you speak to the cost of that?

Ms. Corsetti replied, the Board is going through a fact-finding mission for themselves right now to identify what needs to be done at the schools. The Board, itself, is looking at its schools and deciding where it might need the renovations. It is moving forward and at this point I would urge you to attend the special operations committee meeting and the special Board of Education meeting and maybe we can answer your questions a little better.

Mr. Vumbaco stated, with the \$7.5 million we are talking about potentially for Lyman Hall High and I heard a number greater than \$10 million for potential renovations to the elementary schools, I am

wondering if we should now be starting to look at putting money in our current budget to start being able to handle the planning, the clerk-of-the-works or what ever you have to do to get this project going instead of going through a fact-finding and then we have no money, then we have to go through the whole deciding.....we could be one, two or three years down the road. Once that happens, then we are going to decide what schools we have to work on and, before you know it, the children entering grade school now will be graduating from Lyman Hall before we even start up the project. My question is, would that be part of the Board of Education's responsibility, the Town's responsibility, or both? If, in fact, we do have these large surpluses in our surplus account right now, why aren't we starting to allocate some of that money towards this education building project?

Mrs. Corsetti answered, the Board needed to do what it needed to do as far as fact-finding to identify where we think the work needs to be done. The Board will then have special Board meeting to decide whether or not to go on with the project and then we will approach the Town for funding for engineers and architects. Our first step was to tour the schools and identify what we thought were renovations that needed to be done. Now we will have our last Operations Committee meeting and a special Board meeting to decide whether to move forward or not.

Mr. Cirsuolo stated, the process we use is conditioned by the State process as well. We are estimating that the State will pay 50% of this project but you have to go through certain hoops for that to occur. If the Board decides to propose a project on May 6th, it will be forwarded to the Town on May 7th with a request that the Town Council allow the Board to apply for State funding; we need permission to do that, and to request that a building committee(s) be established and a request that some amount be set aside for the committee or committees to incur architectural fees and so on. Best case scenario, which is almost an impossible case scenario, would be that of all that occurs and the architects and engineers are hired and they could have drawings ready to be reviewed by the State Department of Education in the Fall, that would be an extremely ambitious time schedule, given the magnitude of this project, if everything that is being considered is included in it. If it is not this fall, it will be next fall. What ever year it is, the State Department of Education will assign a priority to the project, they'll get a number one priority because it meets that definition; it would be forwarded to the General Assembly the following Spring, so it will either be the Spring of 2000 or 2001; the General Assembly has not yet rejected a priority one project and if that holds, it will approve funding for that project, either by the end of June of 2000 or 2001. Depending on where that goes, which year, in the Spring of what ever year it is addressed by the General Assembly, I am sure there would be consideration by the Town Council and the Mayor as to whether the project will go forward or not. If it is decided that it should go forward, an ordinance would be passed to authorize the bonding, etc. This is a complex project, it could involve eleven schools.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, if it is more than one school that needs work, would you go for a piece meal approach or would you go for a clean sweep and try and get them all done at once?

Dr. Cirusuolo answered, the administration presented to the Board of Education a comprehensive proposal covering all eleven schools. It is now really a matter for the Board to decide as to whether it is going to be handled that way and beyond the Board, it is up to the Town government to decide that.

Bernadette Renda, 753 N. Main Street Ext. stated that Lyman Hall High School has been the subject of most of the discussion. It seems to require a lot of work. If and when you do get this money, will that be the first school that renovated and after the work is done is there someone who will be checking the work to make sure it was done, signed off and everything that needed to be done was actually done?

Dr. Cirusuolo stated, the building committee will established the time schedule through the architect, engineers and contractors. The building committee also has the responsibility of making sure that appropriate measures are taken to ensure that the contractor does what the contractor is supposed to do. The responsibility of the school system in that is to work closely with the building committee because when the building committee says the project is over, the Board of Education has to certify that it is finished. Our staff monitors the situation closely so that we can say to the Board or not say to them that they should certify the project as being completed. There are a number of steps to be taken and all of the things that are mentioned are taken into consideration. I can't tell you which building will be addressed first.

Mrs. Renda stated, I would hope that you would get to the worst building to repair that one first before they all start falling apart and become like Simpson Street School.

Dr. Cirusuolo stated, to clarify this situation, the buildings are not falling apart; that is not why this administration presented this project to the Board of Education. We have spent over \$2 million in the last nine years doing an awful lot of maintenance. If you were to compare our schools with schools across the state, they would compare very favorably. None of our buildings.....including our oldest one, Moses Y. Beach, are in poor condition.

This concluded questions pertaining to the Board of Education's budget.

ELECTRIC DIVISION

Robert Sheehan, 11 Cooper Avenue stated, the Mayor's letter on the budget refers to the upgrading of the East Street Electrical Substation. Since we are in negotiations with a firm to erect a generating plant there, I assume that plant will have to make some adjustments to that substation. Is the upgrade due to the anticipated increase of power that will leave the proposed new plant or is it a scheduled maintenance upgrade regardless of the new plant?

Raymond F. Smith, Director of Public Utilities responded, that project was started and identified several years ago. It is to upgrade our electrical distribution system, regardless of whether or not a generation project goes into that site. This is for our own internal requirements. Some of the equipment that is there is thirty to forty years old. It is being re-positioned and up-sized. The bulk of

the funds for that project were allocated from the power supply settlement that was a result of the new arrangements with CEEMC (CT. Electric Energy Municipal Cooperative) and Northeast Utilities. This is the balance of the funds to finish the project which is scheduled for 2001.

Mr. Sheehan asked, could this upgrade be negotiated as part of the proposed new plant that they will incur the costs for? I assume they are going to have to make some adjustments, themselves, to that station, true?

Mr. Smith answered, maybe not. No, they may decide to connect their entire facility to the 345kv line. At that point they would just bypass the existing substation. If they have to connect into it, they would be required to make any improvements necessary to make it work together. We have an eye on that.

Mr. Sheehan asked, and that would be at their expense?

Mr. Smith answered, absolutely.

William Cominos, General Manger, Electric Division stated, it is important to note that it improves the reliability of our system, the work that we are doing on that substation. I just wanted to add that in.

Mr. Sheehan stated, I wanted to make sure that someone else was not benefiting from our good work at our expense.

At this time Chairman Parisi stated, David Gessert, Chairman of the Public Utilities Commission, is out of town and could not re-arrange his schedule to be in attendance this evening. I think this is the first time this has ever happened.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville stated that the continuing maintenance of the overhead electrical lines should be a top priority of the division.

WATER DIVISION

Wes Lube, 15 Montowese Trail asked for an explanation of the construction that is taking place on Cheshire Road. Is it part of the utility department?

Raymond F. Smith, Director of Public Utilities replied, that is the pump station which is part of the project on the tankage upgrade on the west side (of town).

Mr. Lube asked, when did the Water Department buy that land?

Mr. Smith answered, that is Town property; it has been Town property.

Mr. Lube asked, what department?

Mr. Smith answered, it is all in the name of the Town of Wallingford.

Mr. Lube asked, isn't that a park over there?

Mr. Smith replied, at the top of the hill (Lufberry Park).

Mr. Lube asked, is that part of the park land?

Mr. Smith answered, I don't know what the boundaries are of the park.

Mr. Lube asked Roger Dann, General Manager of the Water & Sewer Divisions if he knew.

Mr. Dann answered, yes, that property is part of the park.

Mr. Lube asked, does the water company have to reimburse the Recreation Department for using Recreation Department land that is owned by the taxpayers of the Town who may or may not be customers of the Water Division?

Mr. Dann answered, at the point in time, my understanding is that this property was being purchased the future possibility of constructing a pump station was taken into account. In fact, some of the initial piping connections were actually placed there at that point in time in the anticipation that a pump station would be constructed at a future date. When our project moved forward into a final design phase, one of the things that we did do is make contact with the Recreation Department with regard to our ability to utilize that property. They found no problem with it and did not request any sort of compensation for the use of it.

Mr. Lube asked, "they" being Mr. Dooley (Director of Parks & Recreation)?

Mr. Dann replied, I believe so, yes.

Mr. Lubee asked if Mr. Dooley here, this evening?

Mr. Parisi answered, no.

Mr. Lubee stated, it is an uncomfortable situation where a department head is giving away the rights to the use of land which belongs to the general taxpayers of the town to the Water Division that is not enjoyed by many of those taxpayers.

Mr. Parisi stated, the land is not being given away to anyone. It is all Town of Wallingford land and it is being used by the Town. It is a water line from the new water tower and it is going to be used to stabilize the water pressure on the west side of town.

Mr. Lubee asked, for the benefit of the customers of the Water.....

Mr. Parisi continued, for all the residents that are on that water service.

Mr. Lubee stated, not all the taxpayers on the west side of town are going to be benefiting.

Mr. Parisi replied, those with public water will be benefiting.

Mr. Lubee stated, that is my point. We are taking something that belongs to the general taxpayers and we are using it for a select group. I am wondering, in view of the fact that you are enjoying that most water companies would have to pay for, would it not behoove the Water Division to make a compensating contribution to the general taxpayers in town in the form of sprinkler systems in our parks such as Wallace Park?

Mr. Parisi stated, that is a philosophical question. That is like charging your wife to use your washing machine. This is not a budget item.

Mr. Smith answered, I would agree that it is a philosophical question; it is a policy call as to how you allocate costs amongst different departments. They are all part of the Town of Wallingford. The Public Utilities Department is a department of the Town, all operated under the jurisdiction of the Town. If you want to start doing that, right now we don't charge fire hydrant service. The Water Division, for years, has paid the taxes on the land in Durham even though the land is owned and controlled by the Town of Wallingford. There is some quit pro quo that has been going on. If you want to start dissecting that, then that is a policy issue and we will have to deal with it.

Mr. Lube stated, this happens to be a major item and it is now fresh on the table and worthy of discussion. I hope you will bring it up; I know I am going to.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville referred to an account within the department's budget that is titled, "Misc. and O.S.H.A. expenses". Are we having problems with O.S.H.A.?

Mr. Dann answered, no, we are not. That account contains a number of miscellaneous expenses and O.S.H.A. expenses would be one of them but there are no anticipated O.S.H.A.-related expenses.

Mr. Melillo asked, what about the residents who have had problems with e-coli? Is it possible that the Water Division may be faced with a lawsuit due to the problems they had?

Mr. Dann asked, are you referring to the Seiter Hill area?

Mr. Melillo answered, yes.

Mr. Dann answered, we do not anticipate any difficulties that would affect us. That project is proceeding. Quite a bit of construction was done going into the winter season and, in fact, the majority of the residents have been able to connect up to our system to this point in time. Recently, the remainder of the pipe that had to go in that was not able to go in due to seasonal considerations, has started up again. We are expecting within the next month or two to complete that project.

Michael Brodinsky, 45 Valley View Drive stated, it appears that there is an operating surplus of \$1.2 million, does it need to be that large? I am on page 84.

Mr. Dann answered, that number that you are referring to is the operating income, if you will. After you have taken in your revenues and accounted for your operating expenses. There then if you continue to read through that budget you will see that there are other sources of revenue, non-operating revenue, there are other non-operating expenses and those funds are used in conjunction with the operating income or loss to fund other portions of the budget, specifically, the capital expenditures. When you look at the full allocation of funds throughout the budget, the line that you would want to look at would be the net appropriation to cash.

Mr. Brodinsky asked, the \$1.2 million shows up as a source of funds in another line item?

Mr. Dann answered, that is correct.

Mr. Brodinsky asked, can you just point that out to me and that would answer my question?

Mr. Dann stated, if you take the \$1.2 million and follow that down through the non-operating revenue and non-operating expenses...see the \$753,309? That results from both adding and deducting those to the \$1,211,000. You see a net income/loss after deductions of \$753,000?

Mr. Brodinsky answered, yes.

Mr. Dann continued, if you follow that over to the following page under "sources of funds" you will see that number then picked up as a source of funds, \$753,309.

Mr. Brodinsky stated, that is not the \$1.2 million. The point I am trying to make is whether or not there is room for a rate reduction if the operating income was less or you worked the numbers so that the operating surplus was less; would there be room for a rate reduction?

Mr. Dann answered, if you look at the use of those funds throughout the remainder of the budget and go all the way down to the bottom of the column on page 85, you will see the next to the last line is an appropriation to retained earnings. That is the number that we are showing at this time as being cash in excess of all the expenses that we anticipated. Within that, of course, there are also some items that we will need to cover during the course of the year. For example, we have an unresolved labor contract that has not been funded elsewhere within this budget. If and when it is resolved then the funds necessary to cover those contractual increases would have to be taken from that 98,000 that you see on the bottom line. I think we are fully allocated with the funds of the division and, in fact, in order to make that number come out where it is, we are actually bringing cash in from prior year's earnings, not generating additional cash.

TOWN COUNCIL

Wes Lube, 15 Montowese Trail stated, over the last two years while I have been coming to the Town Council meetings one of the things that has bothered me is the, no, not bothered me but has embarrassed me, a lot of times you have out-of-town people here to speak to the Council or to the Town and they have to resort to "mickey mouse" visual aides because the Council is so poorly equipped. You have an excellent speaker systems but your visual aides, your screens, etc., is very obvious in its absence. I wondered if you might not want to add something to your budget. It does not take a large increment to accomplish a very professional appearance where you can have, at the push of a button, a screen come down from the ceiling. You ought to begin to put the Town forward in a better light to our guest speakers.

Mr. Parisi replied, that is a fair comment. Normally, most of the time when these companies like Pennsylvania Power & Light, they do bring most of their own equipment.

Mr. Lubee replied, not screens.

Mr. Parisi answered, a screen is possible; I don't know if we can have what you are suggesting. We can have a screen that will probably work back here. I don't know that it will pop out of the ceiling but we can have a screen that would be adequate for projection. Your comment is noted.

ENGINEERING

Vicky Maloney, 40 Danny's Way, referred to page 50, Small Capital Projects, Curbing Repairs. She asked, you have no expenditures so far this year in the account, do you plan on having any curb repairs done?

John Thompson, Town Engineer replied, we just bid the contract for curb repairs and sidewalk work and the contract was awarded three weeks ago and the contractor is scheduled to begin his work next Monday.

Ms. Maloney asked, are they separate contracts or are you putting them together?

Mr. Thompson answered, the concrete curb and concrete sidewalk are now in one contract.

Ms. Maloney asked, what happened to the money from last year, the 1997-98 budget? There is a discrepancy in that amount, I feel. We had a balance in the 1997-98 budget in the sidewalk repair, handicap ramps of \$154,000. There was a balance in that purchase order as of January 29, 1999.

Mr. Thompson answered, that is correct.

Ms. Maloney continued, in here (budget book) it says that the entire \$260,000 was expended.

Mr. Thompson answered, that is from last fiscal year. The previous balance was rolled-over and it is now being included in our construction budget this year for the ongoing work. We have approximately \$481,000 of scheduled sidewalk and curb work right now including that previous carry-over for 1997-98 and 1998-99.

Ms. Maloney asked, is there a list of the sidewalks and, if so, how many are on the list, approximately?

Mr. Thompson responded, I believe that there is about eighty street locations that are scheduled as a result of public inquiries to have work done.

Ms. Maloney asked, what happened to the list years ago that went with the purchase order for 1997-98? There was a list of approximately between 400 and 600 locations to be repaired attached to that purchase order.

Mr. Thompson answered, to the best of my knowledge, the sidewalks that were not addressed on that list have now been carried over to the list of sidewalks to be repaired under our curb program.

Ms. Maloney asked, that means there are approximately 600 locations?

Mr. Thompson answered, that is possible. I don't know the number that was on the previous list. It was never updated.

Ms. Maloney asked, what about the guard rail account? There is nothing with the guard rail account so far expended this year.

Mr. Thompson answered, since January 31st when this was updated, we spent the entire guard rail account and we are waiting until next year's budget to continue our guard rail program. We are going to be at zero in that account within the next several weeks.

Ms. Maloney next referred to the Capital and Non-Recurring budget.

Mr. Parisi asked that the department budgets be addressed first.

Ms. Maloney stated that she had only one question regarding the Capital and Non-Recurring Budget and Mr. Thompson is the person to answer the question. Since he is present and in position to answer she would like to ask the question of him now.

Mr. Parisi asked that she wait until that budget is presented for discussion.

RE-EVALUATION

Robert Sheehan, 11 Cooper Avenue asked, regarding the Mayor's budget letter which states that there is \$1.2 million in the event of any tax impact from re-evaluation. Where do I find that in the budget book? I haven't found it on any line.

Mayor Dickinson stated, it is not in the budget, it is not an appropriation but a designation of funds to be used for a purpose which would be offsetting the effects of re-evaluation.

Mr. Sheehan asked, it is not an expenditure?

Mayor Dickinson answered, at this point it is not appropriated for the budget, no.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Robert Sheehan, 11 Cooper Avenue stated, I noticed that the Mayor has cut your budget request by \$7,000. in the Health Promotions account. He asked, how bad does that limit your department?

Maryann Lexius Cherniak, Health Director replied, the money that we were requesting to use, the \$14,520 would be coming from a per capita block grant from the state. Through a lot of discussion with the Mayor, we agreed to assign \$7,650 to that line item from the grant. It became a discussion of whether we would use grant money or town money to fund the Health Promotion line. There are a variety of options available to the Town of how we can make use of the per capital block grant. The total per capita block grant for next year, the Town will be eligible for is \$41,000. An acceptable use of those funds is actually the assignment to the salary of the Director of Health, to myself, when the Town went from a part time Director of Health to a full time director. What we discussed was how we could use some of those monies aside.....instead of using just all of it for salary, how we could best use the sum of those monies in other ways for, in this case, health promotion. The understanding I came away with from the Mayor was that, in this year, what we will do is to apply for the state per capital block grant. That total amount will be assigned to the salary to dissuade the cost of going from part time to full time. We put in for town funds of \$7,650 and if, in fact, we find another health promotion program in the year, then I will go to the Mayor and make my request at that time. We have a specific use for this money right now for a health screening clinic. This does not have any impact on the regulatory work that we are mandated to do. This is the beginnings of a new program that is possible because of my position being made full time, a health promotion program, it is a brand new program.

Jim Vumbaco, 81 High Hill Road asked the Health Director, you put in a request for \$14, 520., what were you planning on spending that money on? And now that it has been cut back to \$7,650., what are we cutting out of the \$14,520 to get to the \$7,650.? I know there are mandated programs and then there are health education programs out there that we can be doing, and to me \$7,000 to promote the health of the Town of Wallingford, to me, is....it is a pittance. I think it should be even greater. What is not going to be done? My suggestion to the Council is to restore the funds because nothing is more important than promoting the health and welfare of our people.

Ms. Cherniak-Lexius stated, replied, one specific program we have lined up for the Fall that is being conducted in conjunction with the Visiting Nurses is a cancer screening clinic. That will be a specific use for those funds. Other types of clinics have not been developed yet as far as what we would be doing. We talked about doing, for example, a health education for lead poisoning prevention. That is something that I have been concerned about educating homeowners. We don't have specific places that the money was going to be utilized. We knew the money was going to be coming through with

the grant and my agreement with the Mayor at this time was that as those came up, I would present my ideas to him and if we could get the funding we would go through what was necessary.

Mr. Vumbaco stated, then the \$14,500 was a best guess estimate and you could only come up with a specific for \$7,650. and will there be availability if you come up with another need for another \$7,000 to go back and get it?

Ms. Cherniak-Lexius answered, that is correct. That is our understanding; we discussed that.

Mayor Dickinson added, I think what occurred was, the \$7,000 really did not have specific programs associated with it. There was sum estimation but it had not been spent yet in this year so for us to go from \$7,000 to \$14,000 without any history of any programs or expenditures, I did not think was justified.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, if the Health Director comes up with \$7,000; there are millions of dollars worth of programs that are out there but if Ms. Cherniak-Lexius could come up with a program that is beneficial to this town, would it be funded?

Mayor Dickinson answered, we will have to evaluate that at the time. Certainly, we have to spend \$7,000 at this point. Whether we spend more than that is another question. I don't urge any department to spend every dollar that happens to be in their budget.

Rick Hillegas, 3 Promontory Drive asked, your Spring program that has been funded is for cancer screening of what group?

Ms. Cherniak-Lexius answered, for the general public; the residents of Wallingford. We are developing it right now and it will be targeting at least four.....

Mr. Hillegas asked, prostate, breast....

Ms. Cherniak-Lexius continued, lung, skin, prostate, breast and colon.

Mr. Hillegas asked, who are you going to be doing this with?

Ms. Cherniak-Lexius replied, with the Visiting Nurses and it will be in the Fall.

Mr. Hillegas asked, as I understand it Mr. Mayor if, in fact, other.....you all agree to....programs that would benefit the town would be considered at that time?

Mayor Dickinson replied, we would have to consider it at that time but I am interested in knowing what other programs were. When we were presented with it, we had not spent \$7,000 for this year so it was very hard for me to say that we would go to \$14,000 for another year.

Mr. Hillegas explained, I am not arguing about the amount; it is just that you are open to looking into other programs that would benefit the town?

Mayor Dickinson replied, oh, yes.

Ms. Cherniak-Lexius added, we had also gotten the additional grant money late in the fiscal year, December if I recall.

Mayor Dickinson stated, that is correct. It was not a whole year.

Ms. Cherniak-Lexius stated, we had a "windfall" as it were, past the mid-point of the year.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville asked, do you feel that you need more money to get everything organized better in the area of local, state and federal levels pertaining to performing a service to the Town?

Ms. Cherniak-Lexius answered, this year has been a challenge. We have gone from a part-time Health Director position to a full-time one. We are going through and organizing the office and updating recordkeeping systems in all. Going through it methodically, as far as the money at this time, looking at what we have in the Town right now as far as the inspectors, the potential for how many man hours they can work to accomplish what the tasks are that the state and federal government mandate that we accomplish. It may be that as we go through....we may find that we need additional assistance. We have not looked for it in this budget before us right now but there is a lot of work to be done. I am satisfied as to the staff that I have right now to try to accomplish the regulated and required inspections. As I say, as time goes forward and I get my statistics back in, which I am still in that place right now; I am gathering data from my field people about, for example, how many inspections can we really get through to do a thorough job when you are doing a restaurant inspection. At first is, how many inspections the State is saying we have to do a year. We are pulling

those numbers together right now. We will be sure we give adequate coverage and good coverage for the town.

Mr. Melillo asked, if an emergency situation develops, do you have the power you need to react without having to consult the federal and state authorities? A lot of times they will present a lot of red tape and make it difficult.

Ms. Cherniak-Lexius answered, there is a system, very clearly established especially in environmental law; who is responsible for what. There are certain emergencies or crisis that would come up that fall clearly with D.E.P. and maybe our Fire Department, for example, an oil spill on a roadway. I am notified when that happens in case someone has a well nearby. Using that as a description, the law just as clearly indicates what falls under the jurisdiction of the local people when something happens; a food borne illness, for example, is clearly ours and we are offered help from the State Health Department and they will come to our assistance as far as providing us experts in epidemiology and computer time from the State Health Department and link us up to the Center for Disease Control. It is a systematic method that we have to follow. Yes, there is red tape some time but, over all, when we get into a crisis situation and everyone does what they are supposed to do, it does work.

Mr. Melillo asked if the Health Director feels her department needs more funds to address the e-coli problems that may arise in the future?

Mr. Parisi asked Mr. Melillo to try and stay on the topic.

Ms. Cherniak-Lexius replied, on May 3, 1999 there will be a state-wide symposium on wells and wells that are contaminated with bacteria like e-coli. The State Health Department has looked at and was active with what we went through here, last summer. We were not the only town that had such problems. There is a state-wide symposium that has been called and several of us from Town will be presenting at this meeting. The ultimate goal is to encourage the legislators who will be invited to consider going to the Governor to get task forces together to study it and take it to the next step and look at why these things are happening and do we need to change regulations. It is going to be out of our hands locally and it is being addressed state-wide.

TOWN CLERK

Robert Sheehan, 11 Cooper Avenue stated that the Mayor cut \$8,800 out of the Town Clerk's budget for the account entitled, "Update Computer System". There is a lot of talk about the year 2000 and computers, is this that upgrade or is this new equipment or additional computers?

Town Clerk Rosemary Rascati stated, this is an additional computer that I requested for use in our vault and it is only for a service; it is not going to affect our records any. It would be a service to the people who come in and perform title searching. When we put our deeds on our old computer which we have been doing since 1984, it would now be hooked into the one in the vault and if someone wanted to go in and just bring up a name, they could do that. It is really just a computer that would service the public. It would make it faster. It is not a necessity and it is not going to affect my day to day operations.

Mayor Dickinson explained, it is a lot of money as far as I am concerned, for that capability. It raises another question which is, the indexing and the liability created by now another index of properties. What happens is the books that now cover the indices, someone takes that information and programs that into a computer system and the title searcher has a right to rely upon now a second form of title index. Who is going to verify that? It creates a whole new area of exposure and, at the time we went over this, there were not answers to those questions. I would want to be very assured as to the reliability, the security, a number of questions on putting a computer system there on top of the books because we would still have the books. It is a duplication of the system with the books.

GOVERNMENT ACCESS TELEVISION

Andrew Kapi, 6 Deme Road stated, my concern in the past, as you well know, has been the televising and the coverage of special meetings. I noticed that you have a salary increase this year and there is nothing listed for overtime. Either that is not an avenue, to televise special meetings and since it is not listed then I assume that is the case. Is the increase in salaries to be reflective of any change in policy regarding the covering of special meetings?

Don Roe, Program Planner responded, the change in that line item reflects an interest in addressing three concerns; one is to provide additional hours to do studio productions, we are now very close to having the studio up and operational so it was in anticipation of the fact that some of our time is going to need to be spent on studio productions. The second interest was to try and solve, by reducing the number of hours that Scott Hanley (Manager, Government Access Television) works at night; reducing his night load. The third was again, on a budget basis, to provide for additional meeting coverage. On a policy and practice basis, however, I don't think there has been closure on it. I can think of three meetings within the last twelve months or so that were not televised; a couple on the power plant and one on Seiter Hill. That might seem like a small amount; a number of three to six. Six meetings might be the absolute outside number than anyone might contemplate planning for. But those were topics of extreme interest and I would have liked to have seen them televised. One, in fact, I had attempted to cover myself on Channel 18. I would prefer not to have to go that route, even though I understand there is now a second sound jack that would make the sound quality for that type of effort easier from now on. In this Chamber where we take actions and are sometimes subject to

flights of hyperbole, for me, participatory democracy and the information that we disseminate to our people on those key and critical items like the power plant, and those very personal items like Seiter Hill, those are the occasions when I hear the sounds of babbling brooks and leaves rustling in the trees, that rings my bell. I would like to see those meetings covered. You and I may debate next year on procedures but I would like to know that we are not limited by budgetary constraints to making those decisions possible. He asked Don Roe, is there some leeway in the budget so that we can assume, when we have special meetings, Mr. Hanley might at least begin to prepare for the coverage

subject to one by one decisions that may come from the Council? Do we at least have that basis in place with the monies that we have allocated?

Mr. Parisi stated, sometimes the meetings, as to whether or not they are televised, are determined by the Council, actually on most occasions, by the Chairman. That is a discretionary judgment of the Chairman.

Mr. Kapi replied, that is obviously a discretionary power that I have debated.

Mr. Parisi stated, the last Pennsylvania Power & Light special meeting I had televised, which I thought would be of the utmost interest to the public was redundant of the meeting beforehand. So sometimes you pick wisely and other times it is at the discretion of the presenter; not always is it as good as you would like it to be. That is in consideration with the administration; all things rolled into it, the budgeting, the availability, the work load, all those things are part of the equation.

Mr. Roe stated, from the administrative perspective, the difficulty that special meetings can raise for us is the fact that we rely upon part timers and scheduling can be a problem, particularly on short notice. This is not anything that we haven't said before. By far, the thing that I was most concerned about addressing this year is the amount of night work that Mr. Hanley has been accumulating. I was very interested in seeing that change. We are looking to do that with some of our existing staff. I don't know whether it is going to play out that way but that is how, that is the direction that we proposed to follow this next budget year.

Mr. Kapi stated, my recommendation would be to have the procedure be, immediately upon the announcement of the special meeting, for Mr. Hanley to begin to see if, in fact, he can assemble the crews and schedule. If there is a countermanding order from the Council or anywhere else then, fine, so be it. With regards to Chairman Parisi's remarks about his discretionary power, the (Town Council) meeting procedures do not address the issue of television coverage as I have recommended that they should.

Mr. Parisi stated, it does not have anything to do with running a meeting. The meeting rules are for conducting a meeting.

Mr. Kapi stated, allowing access to the public via the television avenue is part of the presentation of that meeting, staging and delivery of that information.

Mr. Parisi replied, it is a number of things that are considered. It is not totally my decision, I am part of it as is the Mayor and as is Mr. Hanley.

Mr. Kapi stated, I would like to see that next January addressed to whomever the majority might be, I do think this has to be written into the meeting procedures, whether it is discretionary or otherwise. I would argue at that time, as I always have, that it should not be discretionary. That is my view.

ENGINEERING

Jim Vumbaco, 81 High Hill Road stated a list of unsafe bridges was recently released by the State of Connecticut. I understand there are five from Wallingford that are on that list. I would like to know there are any dollars available or is there any money planned in the budget to fix, work on, analyze, what ever those five bridges?

John Thompson, Town Engineer responded, yes. We have seven bridges that are currently in various stages of design. We have all types of funding scenarios available for them. Some are 100% local monies, some are cost-sharing with the state and others are cost-sharing with the state and federal government. Every bridge that has been identified by the D.O.T. as being, in some way, deficient, whether it is the abutments, the superstructure, the deck or the approach roadways, we have identified and we actually have design programs under way and they are all in various stages of where they stand in terms of percentage complete.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, do you have any idea as to when you might be addressing them or how you will go about addressing them?

Mr. Thompson answered, we have engaged a design consultant through a competitive selection process, the part A/part B procurement process. We have a designer working on each one of them. Each project has run into a myriad of problems, whether it is right-of-way acquisition, whether it is inland wetlands permitting or D.E.P. permitting. If you have a particular bridge in mind I might be able to.....

Mr. Vumbaco stated, no, I just know that there is a list.

Mr. Thompson replied, yes, we have seven (bridges) and they are all under various stages of design and they have all been funded.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville asked the Town Engineer, have you been able to check all the bridges in Wallingford for safety problems or would-be safety problems?

Mr. Thompson replied, the Department of Engineering has not done that check. The CT. Dept. of Transportation is responsible for the safety inspection of all the bridges and they have done it. We received, fairly regularly, letters from the D.O.T. telling us that we need to take certain steps to protect the integrity of the bridges and we do do them whether it is posting weight restrictions or narrowing the travel way, they advise us on a regular basis exactly what we need to do and we do it.

PUBLIC WORKS

Jim Vumbaco, 81 High Hill Road asked, what monies have been appropriated in the budget to maintain these properties, and, is there any plan on selling or doing something with those properties?

Henry McCully, Director of Public Works explained, the water has been drained down and the heat shut off in Simpson School. We are maintaining some electric and the fire system. That is it. There is a minimal amount of money to cover the electrical costs for the fiscal year as long as we own that property.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, is there any money that is being spent on the Wooding/Caplan property at all?

Mr. McCully answered, no, not from my department at all. The existing building has been drained down and we are maintaining fire service and electricity there. We maintain the road in and out of there periodically.

Mr. Vumbaco asked the Mayor, since it is an asset to the Town, what are our plans for those properties?

Mayor Dickinson answered, there are currently discussion going on regarding Simpson School. The Housing Authority has expressed interest and we are anticipating in the near future that there will be public discussion about that. The Caplan/Wooding properties, there is also discussion going on amongst private owners as far as private development involving that property and in having the local

Government make improvements to allow those other private improvements to occur. At this point there is nothing reportable as a direction.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville stated that he noticed that there are no requests in the budget for the infra-red helmet equipment that helps the firefighters find their way through smoke.

Fire Chief Wayne Lefebvre stated, it is not something that I have requested in this budget but will consider in the future. It is a nice-to-have-type of thing; it is not a need-to-have at this time.

Andy Kapi, 6 Deme Road asked the Fire Chief if there are any bridges in town that the Fire Department personnel are hesitant to drive their heavy equipment over?

Chief Lefebvre answered, no, there are no crumbling bridges in the Town that would prohibit our trucks from transversing. They are in need of repair but the current conditions are not that hazardous that we would not go over them.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Robert Sheehan, 11 Cooper Avenue questioned the "Replacement Pay" amount requested in the upcoming budget. What is the balance in that account in this year's budget to date? How many vacancies are there in the department that are not filled? Is the replacement pay, all of it or part of it, for positions that are not filled in the department?

Police Chief Douglas Dortenzio explained, it is effected by positions that are not filled but it is actually used to replace labor that is lost because of either sick time or vacation. We have employees that are out on vacation, obviously someone needs to patrol the town and when we fill that cruiser, this is the account that is charged. With respect to your question regarding vacancies, we believe we have seven police officer vacancies at the moment which is a fair number for us.

Mr. Sheehan asked, do you budget for any of those vacancies in the course of a year where you may get a candidate, one or two or what ever to fill one of those?

Chief Dortenzio replied, we do fill all of the positions, we fund all of them; we have a great deal of difficulty timing access both to civil service eligibility list and the state's training academy which is a residential program now in excess of three months. We are on a waiting list for seats at the academy

in the next six months. We do have two people who are already selected, have been essentially hired but will not start the academy until next month.

Mr. Sheehan asked, how did you do on your budget this year? Do you have a little surplus?

Chief Dortenzio answered, it is too soon to tell. Some of the accounts are actually very close to running out of money right now, particularly things dealing with building maintenance. We generally

have some surplus left over, predominantly in wages, based on the timing issue I previously described.

Vincent Avallone, 1 Ashford Court asked, what portion of your budget is set aside for training police officers?

Chief Dortenzio answered, next year that will be \$97,005.

Mr. Avallone asked, what type of training does that entail? Being brought up to date on the law?

Chief Dortenzio answered, yes, it is a combination. The State requires that all police officers be re-licensed every three years. They have a fixed curriculum that must be complied with in order to achieve that re-certification. We do exceed that. It is a minimum threshold that you need. We do exceed that, we do send employees with specific job task responsibilities to schools that are appropriate for the skills that they utilize on a daily basis, maybe in forensics. We bring in outside instructors, attorneys, some of which are the same folks who handle our civil litigation that brief all of our employees on changes to the General Assembly and Acts each year and how that is going to effect the work that we perform. It is a wide range of programs.

Mr. Avallone asked, specifically in the area of searches and seizures, what type of training does that entail? Will all officers, every year, go through what is a legal search?

Chief Dortenzio answered, you start off with that instruction at entry level, the police academy that is residential for three months. We include in the annual training that we do for our employees, all of the state and federal court decisions which have occurred in the previous twelve or six months depending on the cycle that have now modified what you have previously been taught. That is how we keep the employees abreast of the most recent development in that particular field of law.

Mr. Avallone asked, will every officer be educated annually in that particular area?

Chief Dortenzio answered, yes, we bring people in from outside, we use folks that are internal and we subscribe to a lot of legal publications that are disseminated widely throughout the agency. We have a number of "briefing services" if you will that we subscribe to and membership in professional organizations which sends us newsletters on legal revisions that have come out very recently.

Mr. Avallone requested that the department give as much instruction as you possibly can in that particular area because I personally know, and this has nothing to do with my law practice, I have heard a great deal of complaints that there are some searches and seizures that are going on,

especially with young children, and I would hope that the officers would be educated as much as possible in that area.

Chief Dortenzio replied, on juvenile law or young adults?

Mr. Avallone answered, young adults, high school age. I think there should be a good rapport, a respect both ways, children for police and police for children. The best way to do that is for the police to set a good example. I would ask that as much education as possible be given to those officers.

Andy Kapi, 6 Deme Road asked, with regards to the computer and software systems that the police and fire departments were putting into place; how was the performance of the vendors, the cost projections and the way this thing has played out? Was there any carryover to this budget or did it go fairly well as was expected?

Chief Dortenzio replied, it is too soon to tell. It is on track. As we speak the system is being staged and implemented. The contractor was present in town last week starting the initial start-up for both departments. They are due back again next month and it will not be implemented. The cut over is now forecasted for June. So far everything has gone well, we are pleased. It is a little behind schedule but one of the vendors that we were doing business with, the principle contractor, had a corporate strike for several months last year which slowed everything down but there have been some advantages that have come out of that so we are not altogether displeased with it.

Pasquale Melillo, 15 Haller Place, Yalesville asked, do you have enough funds for bullet-proof vests?

Chief Dortenzio answered, yes we do, we have supplied them for several years.

Mr. Melillo asked if the Chief needed any additional funds for the protection of the policemen?

Chief Dortenzio answered the he has everything he needs to do the job.

Mr. Melillo stated his concerns with regards to what he perceives to be an increase in the number of speeders in town, especially in the vicinity of schools.

Chief Dortenzio stated that the traffic safety in town is probably the department's largest single complaint from residents in the community; essentially, speeding. In the last year or so the department has added additional radar and laser units so that they can be permanently installed in some of the cars that are used daily. In this upcoming budget there is also a request for another laser that will allow the department to put more units on the road and address the neighborhood complaints

that we get. We keep somewhat of a rotational list and any resident that has concerns about speeding in their neighborhood, if they call the department and ask for a traffic unit, they will cycle that particular street through the rotation list and address the problem.

Mr. Melillo asked if funds should be budgeted for part-time auxiliary police?

Chief Dortenzio responded that he has not seen the use of part-time police officers to any great extent in any large communities for the reasons that he cited earlier; the hiring and training process. The department invests almost twelve months between the selection process, the training at the police academy, and the three and one-half months of tutoring an officer. The learning curve in the business is extraordinarily long; it is very costly and is increasing in length as the General Assembly, each year, begins to add additional hours of mandated instruction. There are several more bills before the General Assembly this year to add to the instruction that is required of every police officer. I don't see it being at all practical to try and maintain a part time constabulary force and then force them into training programs that are full time requirements. You immediately set yourself up for a conflict with the labor law between trying to hold onto someone who can only work nineteen hours a week and force them into a program that requires their presence for forty hours.

Mr. Melillo asked, are you getting enough funding to coordinate the 9-1-1 with the fire department?

Chief Dortenzio answered, yes. I am very pleased with the funding that we have received in the last year. It is allowing us to achieve virtually everything that we sought to do. While it has not been implemented yet, I am getting daily requests from other municipalities to come to town and view what it is we are about to implement.

Ms. Lube, 15 Montowese Trail asked, was Rick Doll part of your budget?

Chief Dortenzio answered, yes.

Mr. Lube asked, when he was our traffic expert, there was some talk that we needed somebody with more expertise, they were not satisfied with Rick. I wondered if there has been any decisions made about replacing him?

Chief Dortenzio answered, he held the rank of police officer. So to the extent that we would look to hire another police officer, yes, his position will be replaced. But he was rather a unique officer. I don't know very many in the State of Connecticut that had developed his depth and breadth of traffic engineering which he amassed not only through self-study over twenty years.....it was outside the scope of what most police departments could muster in terms of talent. In most communities that is a

function that is vested in either the Engineering Department or an outside firm. I do not envision the police department having anyone on the horizon with the level of expertise that he had, or the interest in it, quite frankly. The difficulties with being a police officer and maintaining state certification is essentially to take you away from the type of duties that he was performing for us. Traffic engineering is not taught in our traditional training programs.

Mr. Lube asked, what are we doing in the interim?

Chief Dortenzio answered, the Town Engineer is taking over the traffic engineering and road design work. I believe that is his particular expertise.

Mr. Lube asked, should our problems in that area be brought to Mr. Thompson (Town Engineer)?

Chief Dortenzio answered, there are some duties vested in my office by statute but in the last few months Mr. Thompson and I have a good working relationship, I rely on his expertise when it comes to traffic lights and engineering issues. There are matters that we will continue to handle within the police department with respect to signs and the mounting of the regulatory signs dealing with traffic regulations. In terms of maintaining the traffic lights, that is a contracted service, it always has been but Mr. Doll used to try and intervene before we called that contractor out to do the repair work and, in some cases, he was able to address minor issues himself. We know fully rely on the contractor to handle those issues with respect to blueprints and engineering that is related to traffic layouts or road engineering. We will rely on the engineering department.

Mr. Lube asked, what about negotiations on large projects like Exit 64, the lighting system which was an ongoing battle between Rick and the State?

Chief Dortenzio stated, Rick and Mr. Thompson shared a dialogue between them as well as with the state. It was not a matter of one agency representing one issue before D.O.T. and another Town department representing a slightly different variation. We spoke with one voice, we had a good

working dialogue and the heart of that teamwork is now missing. Work will definitely go forward and I don't anticipate any significant problems.

Mr. Lubee asked, is Officer Doll's position one of your seven vacancies?

Chief Dortenzio answered, at the moment, yes.

Mr. Lubee asked, who is going to be advising our Planning & Zoning Commission as Rick used to on traffic matters?

Chief Dortenzio answered, it is my understanding that the Engineering Department has done that since Mr. Doll's departure.

PARKS & RECREATION

Tom Dooley, Director of Parks & Recreation was unavailable due to a previous commitment. John Gawlak, Superintendent of Program., and Michele Koziy, Asst. Superintendent of Program were present to answer questions on his behalf.

Mr. Lubee regretted that Mr. Dooley was not in attendance to address an issue they had previously discussed. He apologized for having to refer to that discussion but needed to do so for this was the appropriate time to speak to it. Mr. Lubee stated that he had grown up in a town that was in the province of what was formerly known as the New Haven Water Company. And all of the parks in Mr. Lubee's hometown and all of the ballfields were outfitted with sprinkler systems. He has moved to Wallingford which has a town-owned water company and none of the parks, with the exception of Johanna Manfreda Fishbein Park, has a sprinkler system. He specifically asked Mr. Dooley about the possibility of installing a sprinkler system in Wallace Park because of its significance as the western entrance to our community. Mr. Dooley had made assurances that the Mayor would be receptive to it being in this year's budget; a sprinkler system for Wallace Park. Was he successful?

Mr. Gawlak replied, I don't think so but just to go back a little bit, there are other parks that do have irrigation; West Side Softball Field (Darlene Falconieri Memorial Field), Pragemann Park also has irrigation on the soccer fields.....

Mr. Lubee asked, if this is not something new then why aren't we doing it to Wallace Park?

Mr. Gawlak answered, I don't know; I can't answer that.

Mr. Lube asked, has Mr. Gawlak, in his relatively short career with the Parks & Recreation Department, ever encountered how the Town came about Lufberry Park? Was it by gift or deed or purchase?

Mr. Gawlak answered, I don't know but it is an area that, given the grade of that property and it is outside of the boundaries of what people would permit out the park for recreational uses, we would not use that area anyway.

Mr. Lube stated, if it was deeded to the Town, it may have had deed restrictions.

Howard Greenberg, 9 Gina Lane asked for an update on the lights at Pragemann with regards to where the project is?

Mr. Gawlak answered, in talking with Henry McCully (Director of Public Works) last week, it is going to take at least....we are looking to re-schedule five additional weeks of our adult softball games there.

Mr. Greenberg asked, what is the price to repair the lights at Pragemann?

Mayor Dickinson answered, at the last Council meeting....\$149,000.

Mr. Greenberg stated, last summer there was talk that there would be additional lights put in Pragemann. When we ran into the situation with the electrical problem, that was put on hold. Is that still on hold?

Mr. Gawlak answered, as far as I know Mr. Dooley has put it on hold until the problem is corrected.

Mr. Greenberg asked, where did the \$149,000 come from?

Mayor Dickinson answered, \$100,000 is from the endowment trust fund at Pragemann and \$49,000 is from the Public Works Department.

Mr. Lube stated, about three or four months ago there was an article in the newspaper about one of our civic organizations who were intending to make a substantial gift in the form of recreation for Wallace Park. Are you familiar with that gift?

Mr. Gawlak replied, Tom Dooley mentioned something about the Rotary Club.

Mr. Parisi stated, it is the Rotary Club.

Mr. Lubee asked, is there anything in the Town's budget that has been reduced because of this gift?

Mr. Gawlak answered, I don't think so, no.

Mr. Lubee asked, is there anything that has been added to the budget in anticipation of this gift, to compliment it?

Mr. Gawlak answered, not knowing what the gift is, I could not give you a definitive answer for that.

Mr. Lubee stated, that Town should be carrying its share of this burden. We should not depend solely upon the charity of the Rotary Club. This property is very important to the Town. It is our first impression to people are coming in from the west and we ought to do the job right.

Mr. Parisi stated, the Rotary Club does have a fund which is specifically designed to do work within the community. It is not that it is a charity thing or anything. It is part of their purpose as an organization to contribute to the community. They do it in many other ways.

Mr. Lubee stated, I believe that Wallace Park has been targeted and we should target it too.

Mr. Parisi stated, I think that we have and I think that we will . There could be money in other budgets set aside for this. For instance, there is going to be a new sound system in the Chambers here. The money is in the Public Works Department budget. I am giving you an example that might help you.

Mayor Dickinson stated, at this point I am not aware of any money in the budget for Wallace Park beyond the work that is being on the Quinnipiac Corridor.

Mr. Parisi asked, how much did we spend on that?

Mayor Dickinson answered, in the millions. Off-hand I am not going to guess at the figure. There is quite a bit of money being spent on the Quinnipiac Corridor and that project is proceeding as you are aware. I am not aware of any funds beyond that at this point.

Mr. Gawlak stated, we do have some playground equipment that is out to bid currently to replace the old equipment that was there.

Mr. Greenberg asked, when the announcement was made about the additional lights at Pragemann last summer or fall, there was a lot of excitement around for the adults because they would have additional fields for them to play in. There is no way to come up with the additional funds to light those other two fields?

Mayor Dickinson answered, Mr. Dooley reported to me that he, at this point, is not supportive of the additional lights and wanted to complete the lighting, the repairs to the existing lighting system and then assess the whole situation again, once that is working. He indicated to me that he was abandoning his purpose of lighting those additional fields.

Mr. Greenberg stated, it would just make sense with the equipment, electricians and staff being there to include the other lights.....

Mr. Gawlak stated, one of the reasons is that we have experienced another decrease in adult participation. We have lost ten men's teams and two women's teams.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Andy Kapi, 6 Deme Road had questions of the building department, however, Carmen Spiteri, Building Inspector, was not in attendance.

Mr. Kapi had a question pertaining to the revenues generated by the department's activities.

Mr. Parisi asked that Mr. Kapi hold his questions for the time being, the revenue side of the budget will be taken up later in the evening.

GENERAL FUND - REVENUES

Andy Kapi, 6 Deme Road referred to page 12 of the budget book, specifically the line entitled, "Building Permits". For year ending June, 1998, the Town realized \$839,000. We budgeted only \$400,000. for this current fiscal year which we have already surpassed eight months into the year. With one-third of the year to go, it looks as though the revenues may come in at \$600,000 by the end of this year. Yet, we budgeted conservatively for the coming year again at the \$400,000 level. While these accounts don't have to follow a line.....they can go up one year and down another, but I am curious as to why you are being so cautious in your estimates of the revenues coming in from building permit activity and, if someone were looking at this information they would not get a clear view of what kind of building activity is actually going on. Why are we estimating only \$400,000 for this coming budget year when the real occurrence seems to indicate that it would be higher?

Mayor Dickinson answered, generally it is because it is a totally unpredictable revenue stream. I believe the \$839,000 is most probably the result of Bristol-Myers' "F" wing. Depending on what projects do or do not go forward, that has a significant impact year by year. There is virtually no

predictability and for us to budget higher amounts of money and then not receive them, creates other problems in the budget.

Mr. Kapi asked, is there any way in this formulation of setting aside major projects....another phase of development from Bristol-Myers or a generating plant or anything large along those lines? How can anyone know how much home-building activity, the amount of development, the number of parcels that we are allowing in various ways to be developed has been on the table many times this past year. I would like to have a better idea as to what is really going on with that activity.

Mayor Dickinson explained, that information is available. It would be the specific tabulation of building permits issued as well as Planning & Zoning reports that are available regarding number of houses that are approved, building lots that are approved, subdivisions approved, etc. That information is available from those departments. It isn't part of the budget. This is just a revenue estimation. But the particulars on what the daily work is and where they stand at any point in the year is available from the department.

Jim Vumbaco, 81 High Hill Road asked the Mayor, the \$1.2 million that you said you are setting aside for the tax that is not part of the budget, is that a reserve against your reserve fund or savings account or what ever you call it?

Mayor Dickinson stated, it is just a designation of some of the reserve held for offsetting revaluation.

Mr. Vumbaco asked the Comptroller, what is the balance of the reserve account right now or as of the end of 1998?

Comptroller Thomas A. Myers replied, we hold 5% of our budget in the reserve for our credit rating which is approximately \$4,450,000.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, do we have any other funds that are in like a savings account or something? I was doing some research on some of the audit reports and I come up with a figure of something like \$12.5 million sitting out there that is either not applied money or part of your 5%. I am a little confused because I am looking at an account that, over the years since 1990, started out with \$7-8 million and is now \$12.4 million cash available. I am not sure what it is called, there is a bunch of different accounts.

Mr. Myers answered, the \$12 million is the general fund balance; retained earnings fund balance. It has similar connotations. Of the \$12 million, some of that money is committed, it is not all available. There are outstanding encumbrances or commitments on it. What is available of the \$12 million on June 30, 1998 is approximately \$8.6 million; I am going from memory. Of the \$8.6 million, \$4.5 million is used as a retainer for the Town's Aa credit rating.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, so we are sitting on approximately \$4 million of un-applied or available monies.

Mr. Myers agreed.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, of that, is the \$3 million of F.Y. 1999-2000 coming out of that \$4 million if, in fact, it is needed?

Mr. Myers answered, yes.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, what is our anticipation for this year's left over? It is April 20th and we have one and one-half months to go in this current fiscal year's budget. Are we going to have money left over at the end of the year?

Mr. Myers answered, yes.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, do you have any idea how much that will be?

Mr. Myers answered, it could be as.....I can't recall it off the top of my head. I can get the figure for it. I do anticipate a favorable result at the end of the year.

Mr. Vumbaco stated, less expenditures than revenue?

Mr. Myers stated, from the expenditure side and the revenue side of approximately \$2.5 million.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, and not taking into account the amount you used from the fund last year to balance the budget?

Mr. Myers answered, that is correct.

Mr. Vumbaco asked, this is over and above that?

Mr. Myers answered, that would just be this year's operations.

Mr. Vumbaco stated, I went to the Library and went back to 1995 on some of these items and there seems to be a consistent pattern here and I am sure that if I went back to the year 1900 there would be a consistent pattern but we have a tendency in this town, at least over this five year period, is to underestimate our revenues and over-estimate our expenditures. I developed a schedule that I will walk through with everyone here; in 1995 when I compare from the budget book the actual results was \$1.8 million in more revenue than what we planned; in 1996 it was \$2.1 million; 1997 it was

\$2.3 million; 1998 it was \$2.8 million, so there is a pattern that has developed and it is slowly creeping up where, in fact, that once the final budget is approved our incoming revenues are averaging from 2.3% to 3.3% greater than what we think was coming in. On the flip side, when you look at the expenditure side which is the tendency in any budgeting scenario, I do it for a living too, where at the proximation of our actual expenditures from 1995 going forward have been under the budget amount for 1995, \$1.3 million; 1996, \$1.4 million; 1997, \$1.4 million and \$2.2 million in 1998 where we had the greatest results. If you add the two together, we are talking approximately \$3 million between over revenues than what we planned on doing and less spending that I perceive to be an over-taxation in this town. What has been happening is, we have slowly been building this un-applied reserve fund by taking these "surpluses" or what ever they are called and building up a cash balance for future use. I personally think that that future use should be.....we have some major projects coming up in this town; we have the senior center, we have open space purchases, school renovations and the Community Lake restoration. I think we should start, not in this budget but going forward in this upcoming year, to start using some of these un-applied dollars towards some of these major projects instead of just going out and bonding which, in turn, ultimately costs the taxpayers more money. We should be able to do a better job of projecting what our revenues are going to be and a better job of projecting what our expenditures are going to be. We are consistently under-estimating our revenues and over-estimating our expenses and I think that ultimately ends up being over-taxation.

Andy Kapi, 6 Deme Road stated, given the kinds of performance we have had in recent years; assuming things would stay the same which may or may not be the case, we may be approaching \$20 million in that savings fund in a matter of four years, conceivably. I understand the use of the savings fund in a process you apply to guarantee a balanced budget. I do think we are too cautious in our projections on both ends. At what point is that savings fund too high? The folks have already paid their taxes and some of that money is still sitting there. Supposed you wanted to send a message to the Board of Education that they could contemplate doing the Lyman Hall project separately as a piece in and of itself sooner than the rest of the project involving all of the elementary schools. If we earmark some funds out of the savings fund in the capital budget and maybe one time give the folks a project that is really needed and necessary and already paid for. It seems that the accumulated weight of the purchases that we have been making and the bonding that we have been doing, at some point, it is going to have the folks in the future really paying for projects that we did way back when. We would like to think at some point that we would catch up with what we are spending, with what we are doing and that we do it now. My question is, whether it is Lyman Hall or the school project as a whole, when the savings fund hits \$20 million or \$22 million, at what point do we have an obligation to the folks to say to them that we are not over-taxing them, that we are not salting away at amounts and levels that are higher than required to maintain our bond rating. At what point do we owe taking some of that money and doing something in the immediate now?

Mayor Dickinson stated, first of all there is not an \$18 million savings fund. The Comptroller indicated that it was \$8.6 million; \$4.5 million of which is the Aa credit, leaving some \$4.1 million, \$3 million of which we are proposing using in this proposed budget to offset taxes, leaving approximately \$1.2 million and that is what we are proposing as designated to offset the tax impact when revaluation which will occur in another year and one-half to two years. We aren't accumulating large amounts of cash. The \$3 million is being used in this budget. With regards to bonding, we don't bond everything. There is a very healthy effort to offset borrowing costs with paying in cash and I think Mr. Myers has done a very good job of managing the finances of the town and I look to reports of the objective sources to determine whether or not that is true. The auditors, the credit rating agencies and the government finance officers association with the awards provided the town are indications that the finances of the town are managed well and we are fortunate in many ways but one of them is that we have received good advice from the Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Myers, and he continues to give good advice. I would not look to change in any significant way, the way we handle the finances in town.

Mr. Kapi responded, I understand the job he is doing with the investments and I certainly would not quarrel with that but you just indicated that we might be adding another \$2 million of what most folks would refer to as true surplus to our savings at the end of this year. It seems to me that it aggregates continually, at what point it hits \$12 million and stays at \$12 million, despite your other designation for \$4 million set aside....at some point it gets rather large and if we continue on to the future with this process, don't we, at some point, have an obligation to do more with the capital expenditures? Put some of this back in? Is there a ceiling level that you, yourself, would contemplate that we are just accumulating too much?

Mayor Dickinson answered, the \$2 million is not added to the \$18 million. The \$2 million, in effect, replaces the \$3 million we are appropriating into this budget. That is my understanding of it.

Mr. Kapi asked, did I misunderstand Mr. Myers? I thought Mr. Vumbaco asked you if that was going to be the difference between expenditures and revenues this year, \$2 million. That is my definition of a surplus.

Mayor Dickinson explained, \$666,000 of that is appropriated in this budget but ultimately becomes part of an audit and replaces the \$3 million that is appropriated from the audited cash balance for this year. It covers a multi-year period. In terms of our use of the funds, the number of capital projects we are doing, including the buying of open space is the return of that value to the people in town with a tax rate that is stable. That is where the truth of the good finance administration comes to the floor. We maintain a stable impact upon the community but are able to return that value in improvements. The school project will be one of those improvements. Until the school board determines exactly what they want in the way of a project and we go through the process of architects costing it out and

Receiving the state approval, it is difficult to move forward with any more speed than receiving the information necessary to make judgments on the project.

Mr. Kapi stated, the school board will move ahead with their plans at their own pace but you can send a signal and if we learned anything from the last school project, the longer we put it off, the tremendous increase in the total eventual costs. Therefore, I would think there would be a premium.

Mr. Parisi stated, that project was not put off. It was not put off. It wasn't put off, let's be accurate.

Mr. Kapi stated, then let's forget whether it was put off, the longer you delay on projects like this, they will end up costing you more. I would think there would be a premium even on doing one component at a time and you (Mayor) as the leader of the town can send them that signal that when we have those funds accumulated, they can contemplate doing one key piece first, being Lyman Hall, and that that is an option they may care to pursue.

Mayor Dickinson stated, until they define their project and what they want to do first and have the state approve the project, we are in a situation of not being able to move any quicker than what the Board of Education is able to put on the table before us. The project has just been raised in any real discussion since this Spring and for us to appropriate funds now without any knowledge of what is involved, where the location is, is way ahead of where we should be.

Mr. Parisi stated, I think we are bordering on philosophy now. I would like to get specific so we can....

Mr. Kapi stated, I understand bonding, the only difference is when you bond you pay one and one-half the times the cost. What I am talking about is placing a premium when you can on using some of your accumulated savings and putting that back into the capital fund and knocking off a project without raising taxes and without deferring payment and achieving it in an economy.

Mr. Parisi replied, we do do that to an extent. The benefit of having the cash is that you can do things for cash and some things don't get bonded. What you are saying should be done is done, on occasion, now.

Mr. Kapi asked, if the school board wanted to move ahead now with the Lyman Hall project, would you indicate some favorability to that type of strategy?

Mayor Dickinson answered, we need to have in place estimates on cost, we need to have the state approve it as a project and then we can move forward on our side of it. I don't think we would move forward without knowing that the state was approving the project. The general concept of making improvements to the schools, I think everyone is in agreement with that but, until we have details and

Various factors are costed out and the bureaucratic components are satisfied, we can't just say, "here a couple of million dollars".....

Mr. Kapi stated, I am not suggesting it for this year but as they plan I think a component approach, saving money as we go by knocking off a piece as soon as possible, is a way to consider and you could effect their decision.

Mayor Dickinson answered, we will do what ever we can.

Mr. Parisi stated, I doubt that we will effect their decision.

Robert Sheehan, 11 Cooper Avenue referred to page 15 of the budget book, "Non-Operating Revenue", "Miscellaneous", \$488,000. He asked, would I be correct in assuming that is a contingency fund for that heading? In the present budget it is \$1 million and now it is \$488,000. Why did you need \$1 million last year?

Mr. Myers explained, that is money coming in, not an expenditure. The reason it is classified as a non-operating revenue is, those items will not repeat themselves in the future. It is a one-time revenue; one-time money the town will benefit from.

CAPITAL & NON-RECURRING BUDGET

Vicky Maloney, 40 Danny's Way asked, in the F.Y. 1999-2000 Capital and Non-Recurring Account shows that the Town Engineer put in \$200,000 for North Farms Road re-construction. Last year you appropriated \$440,000. What is the status of that project right now.

John Thompson, Town Engineer, stated, I believe the Mayor has meet with Henry McCully, Director of Public Works, and I believe that Mr. McCully is ready to start the re-construction of that project within the next two weeks; fairly soon.

Ms. Maloney asked, who is designing the project?

Mr. Thompson answered, it is being designed by Engineering and constructed by Public Works.

Ms. Maloney asked, are you, personally, designing it?

Mr. Thompson answered, no.

Ms. Maloney asked, who is?

Mr. Thompson answered, it is being laid out by department staff; by surveyors in the field and Bill Clark is a draftsman preparing a plan. It is a cooperative effort by.....

Ms. Maloney asked, you, personally, are not designing it?

Mr. Thompson answered, no.

Ms. Maloney asked, what is going to be done out there?

Mr. Thompson answered, there is going to be new roadway surface, there is going to be new drainage, curbing in some sections, some minor widening and some narrowing of the road in other spots. There is going to be complete re-construction.

Ms. Maloney asked, how long is that part of the road from Grieb Road to Route 68?

Thompson answered, I don't know the distance.

Ms. Maloney stated, North Elm Street was last year, is there anything being done with that?

Mr. Thompson answered, Henry is constructing that as part of that project right now.

Ms. Maloney asked, and the Engineering Department is doing what as far as design?

Mr. Thompson answered, assisting in the layout for construction purposes.

Ms. Maloney asked, at the end of this project there will be prints in the file showing the design of the project with catch basins and manholes and curbing and all that? There will be a design in the file in the Engineering Department?

Mr. Thompson answered, there will be record drawings of what was constructed.

Ms. Maloney asked, Chief Dortenzio said that your expertise was in traffic engineering. Are you not an expert in doing the actual drawings for the Engineering Department? The previous engineers for past forty-two years, the actual Town Engineer, has done the design. Is Mr. Clark qualified?

Mr. Thompson answered, no, he is not.

Ms. Maloney asked, he is not qualified to do the design?

Mr. Thompson answered, no, he is not. He is a draftsman.

Ms. Maloney asked, but he is doing the design?

Mr. Thompson answered, no he is not. He is preparing drawings based on survey information brought in from the field by our survey crew.

Ms. Maloney asked, those drawings will then be put in the file in Engineering?

Mr. Thompson answered, as record drawings of what is being constructed, yes.

Ms. Maloney asked, what is the status on the Quinnipiac River Linear Trail?

Mr. Thompson answered, the design of Phase I is about 90% complete. It is going before the Inland Wetlands Commission at their next hearing. We are scheduling the advertising and bidding of that for June with July 1999 construction.

Ms. Maloney stated, Milone & McBroom did the design for the Quinnipiac Trail?

Mr. Thompson answered, for Phase I, yes.

Ms. Maloney asked, is it going to go out to bid for Phase II?

Mr. Thompson answered, both. Phase I construction will go out to bid.

Ms. Maloney asked, and that is that \$500,000?

Mr. Thompson answered, yes.

Ms. Maloney asked, if your expertise is traffic engineer then why did the traffic light for Pent Highway and Industrial Road go out to a consultant?

Mr. Thompson answered, it is one of those areas...Rick Doll was the one who originally conceptualized that as a safety improvement project. Because the preparation of contract documents that satisfy the state criteria are fairly cumbersome, it would have been an all-consuming effort on my part to undertake another design project and try and satisfy the state's criteria. It was one of those things that I did not have additional sufficient time to undertake.

Ms. Maloney stated, Rick Doll and our construction inspector designed the traffic light for the Barnes Industrial Road.

Mr. Thompson answered, that is not entirely correct. It was designed by Greiner Engineering.

Robert Sheehan, 11 Cooper Avenue stated, I will make my yearly statement on this; I am tired of seeing year in and year out that the six year budget plan is nothing but roads. We have a lot of other projects in this town.....the Linear Trail, yippee. That is the first time anything other than a road has been on it (the list). I consider a road improvement part of the everyday business of this town. We have a Public Works Department that is supposed to maintain our roads. The only time I figure it should hit this particular budget is if it is a project in coordination with the state. We know we are going to build a senior center, we bonded some of the money, you know you are going to have money left and yet nothing shows on this over six years. We know it is going to be built within that time. I keep saying this every year but nothing changes. Next year it will be roads again.

This concluded the public hearing on the F.Y. 1999-2000 budget of the Town of Wallingford.

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

NOTE: All ayes; motion duly carried.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:41 P.M.

Meeting recorded and transcribed by:

Kathryn F. Zandri
Kathryn F. Zandri
Town Council Secretary

Approved: *Robert F. Parisi*
Robert F. Parisi, Chairman

5-12-99
Date
Rosemary Baccati
Town Clerk

5-12-99