

**WEST HARTFORD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 9, 2016
LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER**

ITEM #1 - MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 7:37 P.M.

Vice-President Cantor: I call the Council Meeting to order. We'll start with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM #2 - PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-President Cantor: Roll call, Ms. Labrot.

ITEM #3 - ROLL CALL: MAYOR SLIFKA WAS ABSENT.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you. Before we start. Mayor Slifka is traveling on business so we're, we've all moved down a seat. And I, I just wanted to remark because I think it'd be weird if I didn't that he announced a couple of weeks ago at the Chamber meeting that he was for, he had a received a promotion for Deputy General Counsel for LEGO and he will be resigning from the Council some time later spring around the, after we do our budget. And I just wanted to say you will hear a lot more and you will have many, many chances to say thank you for his service. And, so listen for more but we're all a little rocked at the table by the, by the surprise announcement and we are just thinking about him and hope his travels are safe. And, and again, more to follow. Thank you. Okay, number four, Mr. Davidoff.

ITEM #4 - APPROVAL OF MINUTES: RECEIVED

Councilor Davidoff: I move we approve the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting of 1/26/2016; the Public Hearing of 27 Park Road, 1/12/2016; and the Public Hearing 1 Chatfield Drive, 1/12/2016. I move we adopt.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: Motion's been made and seconded. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed? Motion passes. Number five is the Public Forum.

ITEM #5 - PUBLIC FORUM

Vice-President Cantor: And I'm just going to read the guidelines that we have or the rules that we have for the Public Forum. The Public Forum section of the Town Council Meeting provides you, our citizens, with the opportunity to address items on the Town Council Agenda, those items that we will act upon on tonight's meeting. To ensure that everyone has an opportunity to

be heard and that the Council can efficiently administer its business, certain rules have been traditionally followed by the Council over the years. They are fairly simple. If you are to speak at the Forum, please state, please first state your name and address for the record. In the event that you are not from West Hartford, you are not a taxpayer or a resident, just tell us and we will entertain a motion to suspend the rules to allow you to speak. You have up to three minutes to speak and you are allowed to speak to any item that is on the Agenda, which is not the subject of a public hearing. If you represent a group, you can speak for five minutes. So thank you and I have the signup and the first person that has signed up is Dave Calibey.

Mr. Calibey: I'll start again. Good evening, Dave Calibey, 10 Ferncliff Drive. I am the Vice Chair of the West Hartford Chamber of Commerce and I'm here tonight representing the Chamber and its members and, to support the Resolution concerning a high-speed public wireless internet service. You know, the, many of you might not know the actual goal of the West Hartford Chamber of Commerce is to encourage the development of business and enhance the quality of life in our community. And we believe that gigabit Wi-Fi in town, especially a public-accessible one, would help with those goals. It could do that in a couple of ways. First, by attracting new businesses, actually enabling maybe new business models, enabling existing businesses to develop different ways to do business within their businesses and maybe even driving down costs, making West Hartford a more desirable place to, to conduct business and locate your business. It also can attract new, what I call lifestyle residents, people that're coming here for the lifestyle, especially maybe younger or connected residents. It can attract them into town, but more importantly, can attract existing residents and consumers into our public spaces and our shopping districts if we make it available there. You know, a lot of, a lot of communities across the country and around the world have already done this, have already kinda put in public Wi-Fi in a lot of places. And that's a good thing for us for a number of ways, for a number of reasons. First, you know, the, if we conduct this study, we can learn from their experiences. We're not striking out into the dark. We can look at models that have worked in other places. We can avoid problems that they've encountered and, you know, benefit from their learnings. And secondly, the technology and administrative practices are no longer cutting edge. You know, I'm an old IT guy and we used to call the cutting edge the bleeding edge because the, the person that was out there first made all the mistakes, spent all the money, and the, the quick followers learned from that was able to replicate their successes without spending all that money and enduring all that pain. So the fact that those communities have done that means we're not on the cutting or bleeding edge. But you know, the fact that they've done it also poses a risk for us because as public Wi-Fi becomes more pervasive in other communities, you know, it brings a risk that through inaction we fall behind and become relatively less desirable as a community. So I urge you to embrace this Resolution to study how we exploit the fiber we already have in place for the benefit of our residents and businesses before it ages and diminishes in value as technology assets always do over time. Thank you for your attention.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Calibey. The next person that signed up, Elliot Ginsberg.

Mr. Ginsberg: Members of the Council, my name is Elliot Ginsberg. I do not reside in West Hartford, although I grew, grew up in West Hartford. I now reside in, in Bloomfield and my office at the Connecticut Center for Technology is in East Hartford, CT.

Vice-President Cantor: We are going to make a motion to suspend the rules for, to allow Mr. Ginsberg to speak.

Councilor Davidoff: So moved.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: Okay. Motion's been made and seconded. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed? Okay. Mr. Ginsberg, you're up.

Mr. Ginsberg: Thank you. Again, members of the Council, I'm pleased to be here this evening to support the Resolution introduced to evaluate the opportunities and technical potential of installing high-speed wireless internet service. Internet connectivity is no longer something we just like to have or need to have. It's something that has absolutely become critical. It's how we live. It's how we work. It's how we bank. It's how we shop. Frankly, it's how we communicate. It's how we share the things in our interests, things we buy and things we eat, things we like, things we don't like, things we rate as high-quality, and things we assess as customer service. Without good data connectivity, most of this is impossible. Yes, our smartphones, our iPhones, and Android devices have internal capabilities to connect data services, though it is often limited by specific plans of each individual person. But we are also into a new generation of devices; laptops, tablets, devices that allow us to balance our rushing around with the ability to linger and work in places different than traditional offices to create a direct virtual connection in order to get approval or rejection of items that we are planning to purchase. These devices typically do not have built-in data capabilities. These devices need reliable, cost-effective connectivity versus Wi-Fi. I believe that this capacity is becoming, if not already arrived, a metric of a successful community, a community that recognizes not only the economic power of such a network but, both to its merchants and their customers but also the recognition of a cultural acceptance of this asset. As we all understand, when evaluating any potential technology program, one should always look at the risk and the benefits. What is the worst case scenario if we do nothing? What is the best case if we make the change? Will it solve our problem? Will the change provide opportunities? If we do nothing it seems likely the people visiting Blue Back Square and West Hartford Center trying to use their technology will continue to have a mixed level of experiences when trying to log onto free Wi-Fi. It may be a good experience or they'll experience dropped connections, annoying logons, possibly excessive fees but certainly no absolute, positive consistency of experience that need a venue. As community leaders, you recognize that business owners' desire to certainly accommodate their customers but running their businesses, it may not be their priority to manage their own wireless network and assure that it's optimized as to security and speed. West Hartford Center has become a brand that promises a consistent, top tier shopping and dining experience. The entire area is designed to want people to shop, to stroll, to linger, to communicate with each other. And today, technology and the access to data are critical for that experience and that expectation. Also as community leaders, you want to accentuate this experience. You want people to come and to stay. Creating a positive technology structure shows your commitment to supporting this

experience. The technology suggested in this Resolution is proven technology. And as such, there's little risk for its implementation. But there are costs, of course, that must be looked at as any shared service. As the Resolution suggests, these costs are to be evaluated as the value of consistent experience to enhance your community's brand. Supporting this Resolution is an appropriate first step in exploring the options to which you can find success. Thank you for your attention.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Ginsberg. The next speaker, Barbara Lerner.

Ms. Lerner: Hi, Barbara Lerner. I live at 37 Middlefield Drive and I have a letter I'd like to read to you that we received from one of our members. "Dear Members of the West Hartford Town Council. Barbara Lerner, the Executive Director of the West Hartford Chamber of Commerce shared the Resolution regarding free Wi-Fi in West Hartford. My understanding is that the Resolution will come before you tomorrow night. I own RLM Co., a commercial property brokerage and management company in West Hartford Center. As a business owner and the manager of many West Hartford retail and office buildings, as well as one apartment building, I strongly support this Resolution. Bringing free Wi-Fi to all of West Hartford should be the goal of our town. It would help businesses, residents, and patrons to our town and would further differentiate us from other towns in the area. The first step in achieving this goal is the evaluation of the opportunity and the costs surrounding such a network. I encourage all of you to cast your vote in favor of this study and evaluation. Respectfully, Michael Mahoney, RLM Co." Thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Ms. Lerner. Andrew Bachmann is signed up but was that already...I think we're all set? Okay. Okay. Thank you very much. So that closes the Public Comment section of our meeting. Is there, well, it doesn't until – unless there's anybody else here in the audience that would like to speak to something on the Agenda that is not the subject of a public hearing? Okay. Now we'll...all right. Number six, the Reports from the Town Manager. Mr. Van Winkle.

ITEM #6 - REPORTS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Van Winkle: Thank you, Councilwoman Cantor. I was going to call you Mayor, Mayor. It snowed. I don't know if anybody noticed that. After a warm winter, we were all hoping to make it to spring before we saw the first snow and we're going to probably see snow every day this week. But it's February and spring is closing in on us so we're not so worried. Our, our crews have been out doing a great job in the town, keeping our streets clean so everything's looking really good. Last week, we sold bonds. We sold \$14 million of AAA-rated bonds. We got an interest rate of 2.029 percent which is, you know, certainly if not the lowest, one of the lowest rates we've seen in decades. Our paper as they call it is highly valued on the street. We had seven bidders and got a great response to the sale and got a great interest rate so that was a very successful thing. We also at the end of January produced, as all towns do, our Grand List. Our Grand List is the value of all the property in the Town of West Hartford, whether it's automobiles or equipment and businesses, homes, and our Grand List grew by 0.58 percent. Now that doesn't sound like a lot for a Council that's been working so hard through zoning hearings but a lot of what you have approved in the last 18 months is now just getting built. Our

hotel, the steel is going up this week at the hotel. When that gets done and on our Grand List fully built, it'll be fully valued. A lot of the things that we've seen are coming onto our Grand List in the coming months. But 0.58 percent is twice what it was last year and about what it was in the year prior. And recognizing we have a Grand List in the Town of West Hartford that is larger than the City of Hartford. We have the 9th largest Grand List in the State of Connecticut. So West Hartford is a town that is fully developed and hard to add value to our Grand List but always an important issue. And I know you understand that to grow that Grand List because it offsets increases in expenditures that we might have in other areas. So it was not a bad number but we should see even a better number next year on our Grand List. Monday is President's Day but we're going to still pick up garbage on that day so you can take it up to the curb and we pick up garbage on time on Monday regardless of the holiday. I'd be glad to answer any questions if you have any. Otherwise, that's my report.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Van Winkle. Mrs. Hall.

Councilor Hall: Have we gotten any response yet from the DMV and the corrections to the property list from all the missing buses and cars and what do you expect that will, will do to the Grand List? Have you already adjusted it for that?

Mr. Van Winkle: Well, first, one of the obvious things to us when we got the list of automobiles and buses and vehicles in West Hartford, there wasn't a single school bus on it and the assessors started talking to each other and the assessor from Ellington wrote everybody and said I've got over 1000 school buses on my list. Where'd, how'd that happen? And so somehow all of those vehicles got assigned to Ellington. We were able to identify them. Those have been transferred back to our list, those big yellow buses. But when, when you look at the number of vehicles in West Hartford. This is about 43-, 44,000 vehicles in West Hartford. You, we see that it's pretty stable. It doesn't go up dramatically or down dramatically but it grows actually over time. And we are off 500 vehicles. So we suspect that there's more to come from DMV. They're working on it and so hopefully we will see, recover some of those missing vehicles that we have. So we are waiting for and the Department of Motor Vehicles to figure out what happened to all those cars. There was also an issue about mislabeling some vehicles that may have been built in 1995 but were given a 2015 construction and so that value would go up a lot. Your car that might be paying a few hundred dollars on, you might have a few thousand. So we're trying to go through our list to make sure what we have on our list compared to last year's and make sure those are but the assessor is spending a lotta time chasing this data, unfortunately. It may end up being a correction that we're going to receive later in the year so it, we may not get it in time for this Grand List. But we'll have a better feel for how large that error might be before you adopt your budget without question.

Councilor Hall: Thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you. Hopefully they filled the buses up with gas. No. Is there any other questions? Yes, Mr. Barnes.

Councilor Barnes: Thank you. Ron, last fall we had, we had a public hearing or we had a hearing in the auditorium relating to a proposal from Tennessee Gas and Kinder Morgan to

install a gas pipeline that would go through the MDC property in West Hartford. And I was just wondering if there was an update as to the status of that proposal?

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes. I'm going to ask our Corporation Counsel to comment on that.

Mr. O'Brien: Either of us can of course give you an update on that. We, I have here a copy of a letter sent by the Metropolitan District to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission dated January 14, 2016, which expresses very serious concerns about the, the route of the pipeline, the inadequate planning that's gone into it, the multiple studies that need to be done to decide if this is truly going to be safe for our watershed lands. And although the letter, which is six pages long, does not take a position directly in opposition to the pipeline, it certainly expresses grave concerns and asks quite a number of detailed questions of, for, to pass on to the company so they should respond to this. So this, this does show that the MDC is on, on top of the issue and is very concerned about the quality of their water. It'll be, there are some 320 comments that have been filed with FERC but this is one of the most important. This is our water bureau and they're, they're right on top of it.

Councilor Barnes: Okay. Thank you. I'm familiar. I have a copy of the letter as well. I know that Mr. Alair sent it out just over a week ago. I guess it was filed as of February 1st with, with FERC but I just wanted to make sure that people in the community were aware that, that we're following it. I'm sure not everybody is checking the FERC website to find out what the status is and so it's important that they know that MDC is taking it very seriously and asking the, what appear to be the right questions. So thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Barnes. Anybody else? Yes.

Councilor Wenograd: Speaking of MDC, there have also been issues raise about another threat to the water supply in the other direction actually from MDC regarding the Niagara bottling plant in Bloomfield. And I know that our relationship with MDC is as more of a customer than control. We have appointments to it but if you could explain our relationship to them and whether they've communicated to us in terms of, I think the legitimate concern is about taking money, taking water out of the watershed to, for the bottling, bottling plant and whether we have any say in, in that transaction.

Mr. O'Brien: Yes, we have, the Town of West Hartford has four Commissioners on their Board of Commissioners. Each member town is assigned a number of Commissioners based on your population. There's eight member towns and ultimately they control the direction the District goes, whether it's, you know, a decision to sell water to Niagara or not to sell water to Niagara. So our influence with MDC would be through our Commissioners. You know, I mean, you can also adopt resolutions if you want to express approval or disapproval but our direct relationship is through the Commissioners who, who each have a, a vote on the Board of the Commissioners, which is the same as a Board of Directors. So that would, that's our relationship with the MDC. They themselves are the equivalent of a municipal corporation under state law so they have the same obligation, same liabilities, very similar to the Town of West Hartford.

Mr. Van Winkle: And I'd, I'd just add to it. You know that they send us a bill that can be sizeable in the last few years because they're making enormous investments in their sanitary sewer system to try to ensure that the Connecticut River isn't receiving the pollution that it has in the past. And, you know, literally are spending billions of dollars. They don't come and ask you if it's okay to spend billions of dollars. But the Town of West Hartford in fact even guarantees those bonds. Should they fail, that liability comes back to the towns, the eight towns that are part of MDC. MDC, to just talk about water, is in the business of selling water. And so when someone wants to buy water, whether you're a small manufacturer, a big manufacturer, or a homeowner, they'll be happy to sell you water. This is quite unusual in that they're selling water to someone who's selling water. And I gave them a call to ask some questions about the, their ability to supply this much water to any single entity. And they said to me that the consumption of water in the Greater Hartford area has fallen dramatically over the past several decades, literally billions of gallons less than what it was only a few years ago. And just to give an analogy, the, the person I spoke with said that if it doesn't rain for 21 months in Connecticut, we still have water. So it would be unusual, they believe, that they would run out of water. And of course, as we sort of described here, they're in the business of selling water and their decision is not ours to say don't sell water. You could certainly, as Corporation Counsel suggested, do a resolution if you had some concerns in those areas but this is really under their authority and not under our authority.

Councilor Wenograd: Okay, thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Wenograd. Anybody else? Mr. Barnes.

Councilor Barnes: Could I just ask a followup question on that? You mentioned that billions of gallons of water less over the last couple of years in terms of consumption?

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes.

Councilor Barnes: Did they suggest any reasons why there's been such a drop-off?

Mr. Van Winkle: We didn't go into the details. There's, there's several things that go, are going on; low-flush toilets, your dish-, your clothes washer. People go from the top-load to the side-loads that drop water consumption dramatically. And there's also been a loss of businesses that use lots of water. That seem to be the kinds of things they were talking about when they were referring to it as just conservation has meant...and as you know, we've seen in an increase in water prices in the last few years because of the work they're doing on their systems. Higher prices generally result in you water lawn a little less or you take shorter showers or you put restricters on faucets. And I think that's really what's probably driving that.

Councilor Barnes: Very good. Very good. Can I follow up with one question?

Vice-President Cantor: Yes.

Councilor Barnes: With respect to the UConn property, are there any updates? Any reports for people that're following that?

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes. Well, UConn has sent us a letter saying that they would be interested in sitting down with us to talk about, talk to the Town of West Hartford about the possibility of us acquiring that property. We are still in the process of looking at the property and trying to figure out whether there are issues we should be concerned about. I got today the first wetlands map. We hired a soil scientist to go out and measure soils and he produced a wetlands map, so we have a wetlands map. We have a complete property boundary. We hired surveyors to go out and measure the property so we know what we're talking about. We are now doing the floodplain analysis and putting floodplains so we can see what portions of this property is usable other than for the absorption of rain if you will. And that property has a substantial portion of it that is constricted by either wetlands or floodplains. Even though it's 57 acres of land, it still has a substantial amount of, of wetlands on it so there would be less. If you look at the, the west side of the property, where those buildings are, are really where buildings could be. There's not much more of that property that you can use outside of where the buildings are right there. So we're compiling the data so that we can come back to you and give you a better understanding of what it might be that you would purchase. Once we get that data and sit down, we're going to need to reach out to the neighborhood to talk to them. I'm sure we're going to, the Community Planning Committee's sort of in charge of taking a look at this. We'll need to reach out to the neighborhood and have those discussions. We'll have to talk about price, the cost of the property and how you would purchase that. You would need to appropriate funds to purchase that but always with an eye and this is just the Town Manager speaking. I know you know it's the Town Manager but we've got to look at how, what we're going to do with this in the end. If you wanted to make a public park, it would be a wonderful thing but this is a, our initial estimate's in the millions of dollars. Those are buildings filled with asbestos and problems. Just demolition is in the millions of dollars. So we just need to be cautious. It'd be nice to do some things but we just need to be cautious about those things before we get all the data in.

Councilor Barnes: Okay. And so, so I understand it as part of that process we'll consider or we'll discuss what the potential uses or level of interest is and the different ideas for the use of that, that property?

Mr. Van Winkle: Yeah. Staff is looking into the basic underlying use of single-family homes. So once we have what areas can be built on then we can do a quick analysis and say you could get this number of single-family homes if you did that. You could rezone it to a multi-family. You could rezone it into some commercial use that, you know, that's a pretty residential area. Unlikely we would do a Home Depot there, right? I mean, that's just not going to be in the cards but, so staff will take some look at that and see what kind of yield we might get from that. We're beginning to have some interest from outside persons who most of them are saying, are the developer type saying what can I build? Well I don't know an answer for that. I don't, even when we finish our analysis, I don't know the answer to that because that's your answer, right. That's not the administration's answer. It's your answer, what can we build. And so we're going to have to spend a lot of time trying to figure that piece out.

Councilor Barnes: Okay. All right, thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Barnes. Okay, number...I'm sorry, Beth. I'm sorry, Mrs. Kerrigan.

Councilor Kerrigan: Hi. I'm confused with respect to the, to the water issue so bear with my naivete here. We have four representatives that represent the interest of the residents of West Hartford, our voice to the MDC. It's my understanding that it's the residents who actually fund the cleansing of this water so we can drink it and use it, it's potable water and we don't end up like Flint, Michigan. So we all invest, we're paying for this water so it can be consumed. And then a company comes and they're going to take the resource that we've made usable and, and then they're going to sell it to someone else for less because we've paid so that they can sell it because it's now usable. Okay. You can, you can address that but my question is this. The four individuals who supposedly represent us made a decision on our behalf but I don't remember ever even hearing anything about this at all. So what forum does that take place in?

Mr. Van Winkle: I read about it in the newspaper. I did not receive any direct communication from the Metropolitan District Commission concerning the sale of water to this company. They have, in fact, never informed us of the sale. They're in the business of selling water so they do not...

Councilor Kerrigan: So those that, it's my understanding that they, they provide us with water and we pay for that service so that we have ample water to consume...

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes...

Councilor Kerrigan: ...not for the profit of MDC.

Mr. Van Winkle: Well, MDC is a, not a profit-making organization to the degree they make more money, which they will off the sale of this water. They would then reduce our rates. Everyone else's rates would go down. They don't make a profit and then pay some, some of their stockholders. They have no stockholders. They don't pay someone that. That just comes back in the form of income to them, which means that the increase in water rates should be lower than they would be had they not sold that water...

Councilor Kerrigan: And the operative word is should.

Mr. Van Winkle: ...so we would benefit.

Councilor Kerrigan: I guess I'm...disappointed, disturbed, really confused as to how they could make such a huge decision, a huge decision without the input of those that pay for that water. That's all. Is that how it usually happens?

Mr. Van Winkle: I've never been asked the question of whether we should sell water to someone. They have never communicated that to us. They send us their budget but that's really just a part of their business. Their business is to sell water. That's the business they're in, to sell water. And so if someone wants to buy it, they're delighted because, again, it does pay for that enormous infrastructure that they have to deliver water. And so if someone wants to buy more of that which comes out the end of the pipe, they've got lots to push through that pipe and it pays for the cost of that water. But they have never...

Councilor Kerrigan: So are, are you implying and I don't mean to get argumentative but are you implying that if the residents of West Hartford were only willing to spend a certain amount of money and somebody else was willing to spend a whole lot more, being a smart businessman, they could take their water and sell it to the person that's willing to pay a whole lot more. And quite frankly, West Hartford residents would be without water.

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes. I don't want to get argumentative but if someone had a, made beer and we have many of those around. They take water from the MDC and turn it into beer and sell it for more.

Councilor Kerrigan: So we have no protection... West Hartford has no protection to be sure that we always have water?

Mr. O'Brien: Let me just, just interject. If think if, if, if they were selling so much water to private providers that they could not adequately provide their region, that'd violate their Charter.

Councilor Kerrigan: So there's a Charter in place to protect the residents of West Hartford.

Mr. O'Brien: Yes. Yes. They could only sell water if it's excess, more than they need. You know, they have to protect the needs of the region, the eight member towns. And there's a couple other areas they, they serve that're not actually part of the MDC. That's their mission and that's their, their Charter requires that. So they have to find, in essence, that the sale to Niagara is excess water and will have no effect on the provision of water to the, to the public area that they serve. And that's in their, their Charter.

Councilor Kerrigan: Is there anything in the Charter that says that they're about to make a, a business decision that would, in fact, affect the residents that they are supposedly supposed to be providing water to, that they have a bigger say than reading something in a newspaper that says the decision's been made?

Mr. O'Brien: Well, the Charter gives us our representatives but, you know, beyond that...

Councilor Kerrigan: Okay.

Mr. O'Brien: ...okay, beyond that, it's up to them or the MDC itself to communicate with us about these issues, okay? They're not required to communicate necessarily about these issues since, in their determination, it'll have no effect on the provision of water, okay? It should have an effect of...by generating a stream of revenue into the MDC, it should have the effect of reducing rates or at least reducing rate increases in the future. We can track that via their budget, which is a public document and they're subject to the FOI laws too as a, as a town is.

Councilor Kerrigan: I wish I shared your optimism.

Vice-President Cantor: Okay. Mrs. Casperson.

Councilor Casperson: Thank you, Deputy Mayor. So just to piggyback on that comment. So in my understanding, this is sort of, like MDC is their own entity. They serve us on a regional level, correct? And anything that they do that can create revenue streams for themselves as a business, they would do in order to either upgrade or maintain themselves and, and create more of an infrastructure for themselves to create a revenue stream so that they would then, you know, be able to invest more in themselves and hopefully, in the long-term reduce our costs.

Mr. Van Winkle: Yeah. I would just caution, you said anything so I think...

Councilor Casperson: No, not anything.

Mr. Van Winkle: ...it's not quite anything.

Councilor Casperson: No.

Mr. Van Winkle: But, yes. I mean, that's certainly their intent. Their intent was to sell water to reduce the cost to the consumers and support the infrastructure that they have to build and maintain. And as long as they have sufficient water, Corporation Counsel says that's a, a criteria in their Charter. And they expressed to me that they believe they have sufficient water to do this. They are not, they're not at all particularly concerned about their ability to supply this water.

Councilor Casperson: Yes. And, and it would seem that with the things that they're trying to do in reinvesting or raising revenue, that perhaps that would become an income stream to then produce more water in the long-term.

Mr. Van Winkle: Yeah. They actually have a lot of water they don't, we don't drink.

Councilor Casperson: Right. I understand.

Mr. Van Winkle: And so, you know, they, that water could be certainly cleaned and used. I mean, this is mostly surface water that we drink. The Barkhamsted Reservoir is enough so, yeah. Certainly, they could create even more supply if there was a demand for it. You know, there was a year and a half, two years ago, a whole discussion about them supplying UConn, building a pipeline all the way out to UConn to supply water. Their intent was to sell UConn a substantial amount of water for the students out there. UConn decided to go in a different direction but that wasn't really any different than selling it to another customer, if you will.

Councilor Casperson: Thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mrs. Casperson. Mrs. Hall.

Councilor Hall: Also on the MDC, thank you. So I know there's sort of two ways that we make payments to MDC. So either our residents are paying per usage or consumption and then all of MDC's budget is then divvied up to the eight member towns based upon our Grand List. So...even if we had the exact same consumption between East Hartford and West Hartford, West Hartford will have a bigger portion of MDC's budget because our Grand List is greater and the

value of our homes might be greater and it doesn't relate to actual consumption. So do we know for a fact if MDC creates this new business of selling water to Niagara whether their profit from that endeavor will go towards reducing the ad valorem tax for the town or would it go towards reducing the water rates for consumption?

Mr. Van Winkle: Let me say I'm not the MDC just so everybody knows.

Councilor Hall: Okay. But, but that does affect their budget...

Mr. Van Winkle: And I don't...

Councilor Hall: ...and what would be coming back...

Mr. Van Winkle: ...I mean that is, that's an interesting question. I don't know the answer to that question. I can, I can get that answer to that question. My guess is it probably goes to water rates and not to, the ad valorem tax is considered kind of a sewer tax alert. And, and it's important in our budget. It's been a driver in our budget over the last few years, primarily because of the investments they've been making in their sewage system, not at their water system. So but I can check with them and find out how that income, where it goes. Does it go to the tax that we pay as, all our taxpayers or does it go to the fee that we pay for the usage of water. So I can find that out.

Councilor Hall: Thank you. Because I do think the way West Hartford bears a heavier burden than other towns is unfair, so if this is an opportunity to raise that issue with them and have it based more upon population or usage instead of the value of our homes, that, that would be a good bargaining issue. Thanks.

Vice-President Cantor: Good point. Okay. Anything else? All right. We always think it's going to be so quick. Everybody has such good questions. Okay, number seven, Mr. Davidoff.

ITEM #7 - CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT CALENDAR: ITEM 18 TO RECEIVE.

Councilor Davidoff: I move that we place Agenda Item No. 18 on the Consent Calendar.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: Motion's been made and seconded. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed? Sorry, I didn't give you that in advance. Yes, okay. All right. Now no new, no Unfinished Business. Number nine, Mr. Davidoff.

NEW BUSINESS:

ITEM #9 - ORDINANCE PERMITTING INCREASED DENSITY IN THE CENTRAL BUSINESS (BC) ZONE

SET FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON MARCH 22, 2016, AT 7:15 P.M. AND REFERRED TO TPZ AND CRCOG

WHEREAS the continued interest in commercial development opportunities within West Hartford Center has caused the Town to reevaluate current ordinance limitations; and

WHEREAS the desire for grand list growth within West Hartford Center must be balanced against the need to avoid expansion of the commercial center outward into residential neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS there is a particular benefit to encouraging further residential development within West Hartford Center in order to ensure continued year-round vibrancy and pedestrian activity within that area; and

WHEREAS limited increases in the permitted density of development within the BC zone may promote development of sites which are currently underutilized but efforts should be made to avoid triggering the demolition of valued existing buildings which help make up the character of West Hartford Center

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF WEST HARTFORD THAT section 177-16.6 of the West Hartford Code of Ordinances is hereby repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

§177-16.6 Alteration of Standards in BC and CBDH Zones

- A. The Town Council of West Hartford, through adoption of the Plan of Development, [finds that areas zoned CBDH are characterized by physically and economically underutilized properties from the perspective of a suburban central business area and that these areas are also appropriate for residential development. It further]finds that areas zoned BC and CBDH are conducive to expanded building intensity use if the impact on the Town's infrastructure, traffic circulation and parking, residential neighborhoods and community facilities is addressed satisfactorily. Accordingly, within the BC and CBDH zones, the height of buildings, maximum lot coverage of all buildings and floor area ratio may be increased as follows, provided that the requirements of subsection B are met:[the height of buildings may be increased to six stories, the maximum lot coverage of all buildings may be increased to that area remaining after provisions for yard requirements and parking are met (unless said parking and/or yard requirements are waived by the Town Council) and the floor area ratio may be increased to 4.00 upon application to the Town Council for a special development district, provided that the following criteria, in addition to the criteria of § 177-44, are met:
- A. The Town Council must find that adequate parking exists to meet the needs of the proposed development.

- B. The Town Council must find that adequate street capacity exists on Raymond Road and on adjacent streets to accommodate the traffic projected to result from any increased intensity of use above that allowed as of right.
- C. The Town Council must find that appropriate pedestrian amenities, such as but not limited to park benches and pedestrian walkways, are provided.]

<u>District</u>	<u>Maximum Floor Area Ratio</u>	<u>Maximum Lot Coverage of all Buildings</u>	<u>Maximum Height of Main Buildings</u>	
			<u>Stories</u>	<u>Feet</u>
<u>BC</u>	<u>1.75</u>	<u>That area remaining after provisions for yard requirements and parking are met (unless said parking and/or yard requirements are waived by the Town Council).</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>No limit</u>
<u>CBDH</u>	<u>4.00</u>		<u>6</u>	<u>No limit</u>

- B. The alterations in standards set forth in subsection A shall be available upon application to the Town Council for approval of a special development district plan and further provided that the following criteria are met in addition to the criteria of § 177-44:
 - (1) The Town Council must find that adequate parking exists to meet the needs of the proposed development.
 - (2) The Town Council must find that adequate street capacity exists on adjacent streets to accommodate the traffic projected to result from any increased intensity of use above that allowed as of right.
 - (3) The Town Council must find that appropriate bicycle and pedestrian amenities, such as but not limited to bicycle storage and/or parking, park benches and pedestrian walkways, are provided.
 - (4) Within the BC zone, maximum floor area ratio may be increased from 1.25 up to 1.75 if the floors above the ground floor are used for residential purposes.
 - (5) Within the BC zone, maximum building height for buildings containing residential units on upper floors may be increased from three (3) stories up to five (5) stories provided that if the ground level building façade is adjacent to a public street right of way, the corresponding 5th story façade shall be set back at least fifteen (15) feet from the façade of the story directly below. The Town Council

may waive this setback requirement in situations where the building otherwise incorporates alternative architectural design features which adequately mitigate the impacts of building height and mass upon users of the public streets below.

- (6) Within the BC zone, the area of a private parking garage which provides dedicated parking spaces for the use of residential tenants, commercial tenants and their patrons/guests shall not be included in the calculation of maximum floor area ratio provided that all sides of said garage are enclosed by landscaping, architectural screening, active commercial and/or residential tenant spaces excepting those portions which provide vehicular and pedestrian access thereto.

Councilor Davidoff: An Ordinance Permitting Increased Density in the Central Business (BC) Zone. I move we set for public hearing on March 22nd at 7:15 in the legislative chambers and refer to TPZ and CRCOG.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: The motion's been made and seconded. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed? Okay. Motion passes. Number 10.

ITEM #10 - ORDINANCE REVISING THE COMPOSITION OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

SET FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON MARCH 8, 2016, AT 7:25 P.M.

WHEREAS the Historic District Commission oversees regulation of the Town's three historic districts and also oversees regulation of the Town's eight individual historic properties which are located outside the boundaries of the historic districts; and

WHEREAS Connecticut law requires at least one member of the Historic District Commission to be a resident of a historic district but section 5-57 of the West Hartford ordinances requires two members to be residents of such districts; and

WHEREAS this requirement leaves only three positions available on the Historic District Commission which may be filled by residents of individual historic properties

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF WEST HARTFORD THAT Section 5-57 of the West Hartford Code of Ordinances is hereby repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

- A. There is hereby created an Historic District Commission, consisting of five members and three alternate members, of which at least [two members]one member and one alternate member shall be residents of an historic district within the Town of West Hartford if such

residents are willing to serve on the commission. Members and alternate members shall be electors of the Town holding no salaried municipal office and shall be appointed by the Town Council.

- B. The initial appointments to membership on the Commission shall be so arranged that the term of at least one member shall expire each year, and their respective successors shall be appointed for terms of five years.
- C. At the first meeting of the Commission, and annually thereafter, the Commission shall elect from its own members a Chair, a Vice Chair and a clerk.
- D. In case of inability to act because of absence, sickness or self-interest on the part of any member, the Chair shall designate an alternate member to serve in such member's place.
- E. The Town Council may remove any member for cause and may fill any vacancies for the balance of any unexpired term.
- F. Members and alternate members shall serve without compensation.

Councilor Davidoff: Number 10, an Ordinance Revising the Composition of the Historic District Commission. I move we set for public hearing on March 8th at 7:25 in the legislative chambers.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: The motion's made and seconded. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed? Okay, motion passes. Number 11, Mr. Davidoff.

ITEM #11 - RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE, ISSUE AND SELL GENERAL OBLIGATION REFUNDING BONDS

ADOPTED

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 7-370c of the General Statutes of Connecticut, Revision of 1958, as amended, any municipality which has issued bonds may issue refunding bonds for the purpose of refunding prior to maturity all or any part of such bonds, and

WHEREAS, an analysis of such refunding has demonstrated that such refunding bonds shall achieve net present value savings after comparing total debt service payable on the refunding bonds to the total debt service payable on the refunded bonds, after accounting for costs of issuance and underwriter's discount.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD THAT:

Section 1. General Obligation Refunding Bonds of the Town of West Hartford (the "Town") in a principal amount not exceeding \$17,600,000 (hereinafter, the "Bonds") are hereby authorized to be issued, and the proceeds thereof appropriated, in such amount or in such lesser amount as shall be necessary to refund all or any portion of the Town's outstanding General Obligation Bonds, including but not limited to the Town's outstanding General Obligation Refunding Bonds, Series 2005, dated and issued June 9, 2005; General Obligation Bonds, Series 2008A, dated and issued February 7, 2008; General Obligation Bonds, Series 2009A, dated and issued July 21, 2009; General Obligation Bonds, Series 2010B, dated and issued November 4, 2010; and General Obligation Bonds, Series 2012A, dated and issued March 8, 2012 (the "Refunded Bonds"). The Bond proceeds may be expended to fund the escrow account provided for in Section 3 hereof, to pay an underwriter's discount on the Bonds and to pay all costs of issuance related to the Bonds.

Section 2. The Bonds shall be issued and sold in such principal amount and in such manner as shall be approved by the Town Manager and Director of Financial Services. The Town Manager and Director of Financial Services are authorized to determine the Refunded Bonds to be redeemed and the amount, date, interest rates, maturities (provided that no Bonds shall mature later than the final maturity date of the last maturity of the Refunded Bonds), redemption provisions, form and other details of the Bonds. The Bonds shall be sold on a competitive or negotiated basis and if sold on a negotiated basis, the Town Manager and Director of Financial Services are authorized to execute a bond purchase contract or similar agreement for the sale of the Bonds. The Bonds shall be executed in the name and on behalf of the Town by the manual or facsimile signatures of the Town Manager and Director of Financial Services, bear the Town seal or facsimile thereof, and be approved as to their legality by Shipman & Goodwin LLP, bond counsel to the Town. The Bonds shall be general obligations of the Town and each of the Bonds shall recite that every requirement of law relating to its issue has been duly complied with, that such bond is within every debt and other limit prescribed by law, and that the full faith and credit of the Town are pledged to the payment of the principal thereof and the interest thereon.

Section 3. The net proceeds from the sale of the Bonds, after payment of underwriter's discount and other costs of issuance, may be deposited in an irrevocable escrow account and invested in a portfolio of non-callable direct obligations of, or obligations guaranteed by, the United States of America, including United States Treasury State and Local Government Series ("SLGS") securities, Federal National Mortgage Association ("FNMA") securities and any other securities permitted by Section 7-400 of the Connecticut General Statutes, all of which shall not be callable or prepayable at the option of the issuer thereof ("Government Obligations") in an amount sufficient to pay at maturity, or to redeem at the redemption price prior to maturity, the Refunded Bonds. The Town Manager and Director of Financial Services are authorized to appoint an escrow agent and a firm of certified public accountants to verify the sufficiency of the Government Obligations and to execute and deliver any and all escrow and related agreements necessary to provide for the payment when due of the principal of and interest on and the redemption premium, if any, on the Refunded Bonds.

Section 4. The Town Manager and Director of Financial Services are authorized to prepare and distribute a Preliminary Official Statement and a final Official Statement of the Town for use in connection with the offering and sale of the Bonds and are further authorized to execute and

deliver a Continuing Disclosure Agreement in connection with the issuance and sale of the Bonds on behalf of the Town in such form as they shall deem necessary and appropriate.

Section 5. The Town Manager and Director of Financial Services are authorized to execute and deliver a Tax Certificate and a Tax Compliance Agreement for the Bonds on behalf of the Town in such form as they shall deem necessary and appropriate, and to rebate to the United States Treasury such amounts as may be required pursuant to the Tax Certificate and Tax Compliance Agreement for the purpose of complying with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

Section 6. That the Bonds, or any portion thereof, may bear interest which is includable in the gross income of holders thereof for Federal income tax purposes pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, as the issuance of such taxable bonds is hereby determined to be in the public interest.

Section 7. The Town Manager and Director of Financial Services are authorized to appoint a certifying, transfer and paying agent and a registrar for the Bonds; and to execute and deliver any and all additional agreements, documents and certificates necessary to effect the issuance, sale and delivery of the Bonds and the refunding of the Refunded Bonds in accordance with the terms of this resolution.

Councilor Davidoff: Number 11, a Resolution to Authorize, Issue and Sell General Obligation Refunding Bonds. I move we adopt.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: The motion's been made and seconded. Mr. Van Winkle.

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes. It seems like I just talked about selling bonds, I know, but this is a, a different issue. We are refinancing. It's refunding when talking about bonds. But we are refinancing bonds that we have issued in the past. We have done this several times. In 2009 and 2010, we refunded bonds. We, we called those bonds in, paid them off, and issued new bonds to cover that cost by, and thereby lowering our interest rate. Bonds, when you sell them, have a call provision in them so if you sell them today and a year later interest rate drops, you just can't call them in and say I'm going to pay those off and I'm going to give you, I'm going to sell new bonds. And so as you move through time, more bonds become available for us to refinance. And so we are looking to, by this Resolution, to refinance up to \$17.6 million worth of outstanding bonds. At this point in time, we have identified about \$10.6 million of outstanding bonds. And, you know, given the rates that we are paying now in those bonds and the rates that we would expect to pay in the refinanced new bonds, we should save about a half-million dollars over the 10-year life of those bonds.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you. Any comments or questions? And there is a, a benchmark that you, where you, it becomes worth it to do that and...

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes. There's a benchmark and we're, we are trying to refinance everything we can right now. Again, as I mentioned, we had a really low interest rate. This is a good time for us to be in the market. And so with this passage, we'll be able to get out and refinance these bonds in the next month, which would be good for us.

Vice-President Cantor: And with the current rating, that carries over so we don't have to repay for the rating...

Mr. Van Winkle: Yup.

Vice-President Cantor: ...so it makes a little more...

Mr. Van Winkle: Yup. We will...

Vice-President Cantor: ...efficient, right.

Mr. Van Winkle: ...keep our AAA rating as we just go so it gives us that opportunity.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you. Okay. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed? Okay, the motion passes. Number 12, Mr. Davidoff.

ITEM #12 - RESOLUTION TO APPROPRIATE A \$75,000 TRANSIT-ORIENTED PLANNING GRANT FROM THE OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT IN THE FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 BUDGET OF THE CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND

ADOPTED

WHEREAS, the Town of West Hartford applied for and was awarded a Transit-Oriented Development Planning Grant in the amount of \$75,000 from the State of Connecticut's Office of Policy and Management, and

WHEREAS, the Town of West Hartford's Plan of Conservation and Development promotes integrated, balanced and "complete" transportation systems and principles of Smart Growth, and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement, the Town will utilize grant funds to complete an analysis of the New Park Avenue area as a means of encouraging transit-oriented development,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD does hereby appropriate grant funds of \$75,000 for transit-oriented development planning and the fiscal year 2015-2016 budget of the Capital Projects Fund is hereby amended as follows:

Estimated Revenues

41-891550-80003-9071	State Grants	\$75,000
----------------------	--------------	----------

Increase Appropriations

41-891550-80003-3025	Professional Services	\$75,000
----------------------	-----------------------	----------

Councilor Davidoff: A Resolution to Appropriate a \$75,000 Transit-Oriented Planning Grant from the Office of Policy and Management of the State of Connecticut in the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Budget of the Capital Projects Fund. I move we adopt.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: The motion's been made and seconded. Mr. Van Winkle.

Mr. Van Winkle: Yes. We applied to OPM for a grant to do some economic development planning. In this case, it's called transit-oriented development because it's being done around mass transit stations. As you know, we have two FasTrack stations that were built in the south end of town. Those stations were built and everybody was wondering if they were going to get the ridership and it turns out the problem is they ran out of parking places, actually. There're so many people using it coming out of West Hartford. They actually on the New Britain Avenue station expanded the station itself the, the parking for that station. It was a property that they had owned where the planned expectation at some year they would need it. And now they found out they needed it right away. So around those transit nodes are opportunities for development, whether it's for multi-family development that people might live, not own a car, and be able to take FasTrack to New Britain or to Hartford or Newington and go to work there. Or whether it's a business that will have its workers come into that area, take FasTrack and get off at that station and walk to the business. This TOD planning grant is going to allow us to do some planning about where we might see growth in relationship to these stations, where we might see improvements to bicycle facilities and walking facilities in those areas. And so this requires no funding from the Town of West Hartford and we will use existing staff to assist us in this analysis.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Van Winkle. Yes, Mr. Barnes.

Councilor Barnes: Just one question. Has the project already started? I know that we've talked about it in Committee, this \$75,000 grant for transit-oriented development, but my understanding was we were already in the process of, of working on this project.

Mr. Van Winkle: We have been looking at this question of, of development in the New Park area. We've had some meetings with the City of Hartford. They're, they're right on that border. That, that station is right on the border of the City of Hartford, the Flatbush Station. So we've been meeting with them, talking about what they're looking at doing. We haven't started this project to be able to charge to this project yet. But we've been looking at what our options might be. We, you've seen some bicycle facility drawings that we've considered and whatnot, so we've been thinking about this as an effort to increase development opportunities in this area of town. This planning grant will let us put together some more specific information, draw some

plans, produce some documents that might be useful. If we're to sit down with someone who's looking to invest and we could show them, well, if you invest in this section this is the kind of benefits we think you'll see. So there'll be a number of things that'll come out of this but we haven't started spending on this yet. But we will once you approve it.

Councilor Barnes: Okay. And have we started, will this include the trains, the West Hartford train station that's being considered on the Springfield to New Haven line? I know the Governor's talked quite a bit about it. Do we know where it could potentially be located and is it part of this planning project?

Mr. Van Winkle: I sent out a, a document to you last week about the planning documents that the state is putting together. They are looking at improvements in various train stations that exist along the Hartford line, Hartford/Springfield line. The West Hartford, the, I'm just going to say the potential West Hartford station, which I believe we will see, is not yet funded. There is no state or federal money to construct a station in West Hartford. But it is in the plan to do so. It's probably later in this decade that we'll see those dollars begin to appear in that planning to be developed. They do something that's called 10 percent documents, so they spend 10 percent of the time needed to develop all this and kind of look at what their options might be. And for the West Hartford station, the Department of Transportation has looked at a site, which is on the opposite side of the tracks from the Flatbush FasTrack station. So that's the site that they think might work for them. They haven't done anything more than that, just sort of looked, said that might work as a site. And so there's a lot more work to come and if they get some planning money, we'll be able to get, get onto that and show what can be. I think it would be a real benefit to the town to have that kind of train station. That way you can go to New Haven or New York or Boston fairly quickly and have a, live in West Hartford and perhaps travel much farther.

Councilor Barnes: Okay. Great. Thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Barnes. Any other? Okay. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed? Motion passes. Number 13, Mr. Davidoff.

ITEM #13 - RESOLUTION TO APPROPRIATE A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$21,870 AWARDED UNDER THE FEDERAL INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES (IMLS) NATIONAL LEADERSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

ADOPTED

WHEREAS, the City of Santa Ana, California was awarded a Memories of Migration grant under the IMLS National Leadership Grant Program, and

WHEREAS, the Town of West Hartford has partnered with the City of Santa Ana and entered into a Consultant Agreement (the "Agreement") for the collection and archival of community memories from new immigrants to the community, and

WHEREAS, the Town will train interns and teen historians in conducting oral history interviews, actively solicit pictures and personal migration stories of recent immigrants, and conduct a series of memory collection events, and

WHEREAS, per the terms of the Agreement, the City of Santa Ana will make a payment of \$21,870 to the Town of West Hartford for services provided, and

WHEREAS, the Town desires to appropriate said funds to conduct these memory collection and archival services,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD, that the IMLS National Leadership Grant is hereby appropriated and the budget of the General Fund is amended as follows:

Estimated Revenue

01-410301-40303-9074	Miscellaneous Grant	As received
----------------------	---------------------	-------------

Increase Appropriations

01-410301-40303-1007	Temporary Payroll	As received
----------------------	-------------------	-------------

Councilor Davidoff: A Resolution to Appropriate a Grant in the Amount of \$21,870 Awarded Under the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) National Leadership Grant Program. I move we adopt.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: Motion's been made and seconded. Mr. Van Winkle.

Mr. Van Winkle: A lot of grants. Our, our public library found this grant online and it actually comes from, as you said, the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services. And through the City of Santa Ana, California, which is just the conduit for the money. You know, they're, the one who solicited this. The purpose of this is to train interns and teen historians to conduct oral history interviews, solicit pictures, personal immigration stories of recent immigrants and conduct a series of memory collection events. You know, there's a lot of history that's in books but there's much more histories in heads. And I did this with my father before he died. We sat and kind of talked about what it was like to grow up. My father was born in 1899, had me late in his life. And it's just really a refreshing thing to go back and kind of listen to that story that he tells about growing up, which would've been a piece of history lost to me. This history will be great for future researchers, future people that will want to go back and look at what, what our mayor, Scott Slifka, his life was growing up perhaps and wonder why did we keep him so long as the Mayor, you know? Something along those lines. There'll be a whole, a whole lot of West Hartford history that we will know more about. So that's the purpose of this.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you. That's very interesting. I'm looking forward to hearing the results of this. That'll be very, very interesting. Okay. All those, oh, I'm sorry. Mrs. Hall.

Councilor Hall: I, I just wanted to point out that our Human and Leisure Services Committee had a tour of the library recently and had a chance to view a lot of the collections, a lot of the history, and just want to thank you for overturning this leaf and finding this grant to help increase our ability to continue to add to those projects and material at the library. We've got a great library. So thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Great input. Thank you, Mrs. Hall. Okay. Thank you for coming, too. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed? Okay, the motion passes. Congratulations. Number 14, Mr. Davidoff.

ITEM #14 - SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION CONCERNING A HIGH SPEED PUBLIC WIRELESS INTERNET SERVICE

ADOPTED

WHEREAS, internet service has become an integral and essential part of our daily life, and

WHEREAS, widely accessible high speed internet service through public wireless internet hot spots has been a valuable and almost necessary service that is often needed for successful commercial development, and

WHEREAS, West Hartford has unique assets including a data center and a fiber network that is connected to almost all of the public buildings creating opportunities, and

WHEREAS, all of West Hartford Center has retail, restaurants and commercial businesses that would benefit from the creation of multiple wireless access points and this amenity would assist with business retention and attraction and strengthen the growth of existing commercial market in the Center.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD THAT the Town Manager is requested to evaluate opportunities and the technical potential and need as well as the cost of installing state of the art high speed public wireless internet service in West Hartford Center with the eventual goal of creating similar Wi-Fi hots spots across our community.

Councilor Davidoff: The Substitute Resolution Concerning a High Speed Public Wireless Internet Service. I move we adopt.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: Motion's been made and seconded. I'm going to start my, the comments with this. I think, there, there's been a little bit over, over time on, on this discussion. But we,

I'm just going to give a little history for the record. About, oh, correct me if I'm wrong maybe 11 years ago, Arnold Chase, who is a remarkably bright and innovative entrepreneur and West Hartford resident, had the vision of doing a fiber network for the Greater Hartford community and built a data center and the, the skeleton backbone of a, of a fiber network. And he, he actually was so discouraged because he hit so many obstacles in the buildout of this, potential buildout of this network that he knew was going to be the future for moving data at the speeds and the amount that were necessary for the next generation. They, they were not, there were many, many obstacles and it became, it just became impractical for him to continue. And so he was looking at what to do with it and donated the data center and the beginnings of the fiber network to the town. And over time, the last, that period of time, we were, we've been investing in fiber buildout to our public buildings. We had some, we had leased fiber for our school system for the, for the fiber going into all of our schools and replaced it with our own fiber. The lease, so the investment that we, we were paying for the investment to build out the fiber but the savings that we got, we received from leasing, from eliminating that lease payment of about \$200,000 a year made it beneficial for us to continue the buildout. We now have a pretty, an extensive network within our community that has fiber. And it is high speed. It has the ability to be a high speed fiber and allow our schools to do some pretty remarkable things in their buildings. We also have it in the library. We have it in other public buildings as well. We, we all thought we were all that and we applied to be a Google town in, I think it was about six years ago. Google put a, a RF- it was a weird, it was an RFP I guess and asked communities to respond to having their community built, be built as a Google Fiber community. And we had this asset and we weren't sure actually what, how we were using – well, we knew we were using it but we weren't sure, we thought, well, of course, nobody else really has the, quite the level of, of fiber that we have. So we're going to, we're going to get this. So we actually, no. We submitted it. We were very excited about it. We did not get it. Kansas City was, became the first Google city and received this, this grant. I actually, on my own curiosity, went out to Kansas City to see how it was working and it was pretty remarkable. I'm actually going out again for a personal, a wedding and I, and I've heard anecdotally, I have a relative that lives there, anecdotally that they, they're doing some remarkable things and there's a lot of innovation, a lot of incubators. They solved a health problem actually by webcasting. They had a diabetes crisis. There's a, a big income disparity. There's some areas that are, are pretty impoverished and there was a, in particular areas, they had no internet and they extended the internet to these areas and they had webcams or web programs with doctors to regulate diabetes and saw an incredible turnaround in the health of a number of residents. So and that was a number of years ago and I'm sure there's many more things they're doing with it now. But as we heard some of, I think, our speakers say and I'm, I'm pleased that people came and spoke in support of this, of researching the capability of doing a Wi-Fi network. The fiber to home is a different discussion but this is a public Wi-Fi and we have this asset that is available to us to capitalize on. It would require an additional investment but like a road and like allowing, like...sidewalks and, and public, public rights of way that allow businesses to be successful in our community, this is potentially that same idea. You know, it's a requirement now for businesses to function. They need to be connected by communicating over the internet. And it can't be, you know, we, we have, I think all of us have seen unreliable internet and when it started it was, you know, you'd have the spiral of death, that rainbow spiral going and ah! And I, and, and we hear anecdotes of people, you know. I, I remember my kids applying to college and the pushing that button close to the midnight time when the applications need to be sent and

everybody's doing it at the same time and it, you, you lock up and you can't get through or a teacher that is sitting and trying to upload Google Docs from their home towards the end of finals and it's, it's taking a long time for them to upload all these history documents. Many, many things that we do require fast, reliable internet. I also, you know, we, we talked about the phones. Everybody thought, you know, who needs, when we had flip phones, who needed a smartphone. Now, nobody can imagine having, you know...I remember saying, there was a movie I just saw recently where they had the, the flip phone and it was like, huh! You know, what was that? So there is, they, we've moved on and now we, we are looking at the next 10 and 20 years of what our community needs to provide businesses of the future, residents with what they need to, to, to really prosper and to want to be here. It, the world is becoming more and more competitive. We all know about the, you know, challenges that retail have with Amazon a click away. And we're trying to figure out how we can best serve our community so we don't have empty storefronts, so we don't have empty homes and empty apartments and we, we attract that next generation of investor to West Hartford. So I am, and I, you know, and I also, I think I, I think it was Mr. Ginsberg that talked about the fact that, you know, we can, we talk about people being disconnected but there's something about being all connected that can be very, very enriching. Imagine a TED Talk in Blue Back Square and having a discussion about a TED Talk or a cooking class from France from a new cook shop that, that arrived that everybody can kind of see as they're, as they're walking around or a, or a yoga class from a guru in, in India that happens in the streets or in the public square. I think it could be a, a truly bonding experience and make us a very unique community as we, as we already are but improve it to be a little better. And again, these are, we have challenges, security and cost are two of them, and speed, making sure that people have the, that they understand and they're not frustrated. They may be using a device that may be out of date but what's available. And I think we don't even know the capabilities of what we may be able to do with it. I know some communities are using it for messaging for emergencies. I know, two of my sons lived in Boston and they have sayings or of the day or a joke of the day and they always thought it was so funny on, on these little smartboards that were around that they would, they would pick up, weather warnings, announcements of upcoming events could be a lot quicker and rotating. So there's a, a lot of potential. So I say let's study it and let's see what we can build on to make our community cutting-edge and continue to, to be, be a leader in our, in our area. Anybody else? Mrs. Casperson.

Councilor Casperson: Thank you, Deputy Mayor. When this was first presented and we were listening to the different facts about other communities that had done it successfully and talking to some of the leaders in Hartford who were saying, you know, they had thought about it but they would never be able to at this point in time do it at the same rate that we already have the infrastructure to be able to build on. Looking at the cost, there is a cost involved, which was one of the things that gave me pause until I thought about it a little deeper and thought about not only the businesses, which of course being involved with the West Hartford Business, Center Business Association is a great benefit to them, as well as the community surrounding it. But the ability to have seniors walk into town or be in town and have access to the internet when they might not be able to have that as a monthly fee in their homes if they're on a fixed income or students who would have more of the ability to be in the Center and have access and be able to do their homework more effectively and not always, you know, the library is amazing but, you know, it, it, finding study space all the time because it is amazing isn't always the easiest thing,

but being able to have a place where people could have more access. So it really opens up a lot of just trains of thought of how we could be more creative and how we could be more connected and how we might be able to give something to those who might not be able to afford that on a regular basis is also something that I would like to shed light on. Thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mrs. Casperson. Mrs. Hall.

Councilor Hall: So, you know, Deputy Mayor and, and Mrs. Casperson, I, I agree with a lot of what you're saying. I, you know, all of this sounds wonderful and wouldn't it be great. But I also go back to, you know, sort of the first statement of, you know, Mr. Chase not being able to make it work and, you know, are we saying this could work just because we have the ability to tax people to pay for something to get it to where, you know, we want it. And so, so that worries me. And I also have to say that, you know, in my six-plus years on the Council, never once has anyone approached me to say access to Wi-Fi is a problem. I, I do think we have a wonderful library that, you know, provides the connectivity and I worry about once you get into this, I, I think of the question or the point about the cutting edge because you constantly have to reinvest. So we can look into it and say, wow, this is, you know, however many millions we have to spend to get started but it doesn't end there. You have to constantly be reinvesting as technology changes. It's not secure so I wonder, you know, really are, are businesses going to want to partake in this if it's not secure. I know as a banker the amount of time and resources we put into dealing with fraud, and, and DDoS attacks and all this other stuff, which is...so I just don't think it's as simple as saying, okay, let's just offer this up. There, there's going to be a lot more involved with it. I know that, you know, the thought was there could be future money from the state but I think I just read this weekend that the Governor has cut the funding to the Office of State Broadband, so if we were counting on getting some resources there, I, I don't think that's going to be, you know, the solution. So...and then I just plain look at our resources. And I, I say, okay, you know, Ron, you and your staff, what're, what're you working on? We've got to figure out the UConn situation and this is, you know, when our Mayor's traveling a lot. You're in a position where being affiliated that's, you know, so you've got a lot on your shoulders there. We've got a budget that we've got to, we're starting off at 4.2 percent increase where we, we still have the issue of over 225 million in unfunded pension liabilities, another 120 million in unfunded OPEB liabilities. You've got negotiations with all of our contracts. We're looking at changing the zoning in the Center. We're putting in a new public radio system, all new financial systems. We've got re-eval going on. We've got to figure out how we're going to pay for the, for the MS4, the Municipal Solid Separate Storm Sewer System that's an additional 500,000 to 600,000 in capital for equipment and then probably another 500,000 every year to do everything that the state's requiring under that. We're going to have a hotel that all of a sudden we're going to have to find parking for all of that. There's a lot going on there. You know, that's just...there's...I don't know that we have the resources and time and staff let alone the money to do this. And then I look at it and I'm back to, you know, what is the role of government? And I believe our job is, you know, to public safety, education, our, our streets and as soon as I think of streets, I go, oh my god. Our streets are a mess. So I feel like there's a whole lot of things that we really need to be focusing on both in time and money. And if we divert and decide to do this, I don't, I just, I don't think that's the business we're supposed to be in. And I, I did look at a number of places that have tried to do it and heard a lot about things that went wrong and failures left and right and that's not to say that maybe some towns can do it right. But I don't think West

Hartford is in a position where we're lacking connectivity. A lot of the towns that it was a big benefit to were ones that really needed someone to come in, that they didn't have any access. So you know, I, I don't think this, if we had it in West Hartford, is going to actually connect people that were unconnected. I think most of us are already connected. And I think it just means that we would be competing with the private sector. We do have a number of private companies that, that do this. And I think the best thing we can do is not only not try to compete unfairly with them but do whatever we can to make it easier for businesses to get licenses, you know, get out of their way and let them do business. And if we, if we set the tone and say, no, the government's going to take over this, then that just encourages them to go somewhere else, to a more business-friendly environment. So while I believe in the goals and I think those are all admirable, I just don't think that it's, it's the role of town government to provide these services. So, so while I applaud you and the work and understand the reason behind it, it's just philosophically I don't think it's what we should be doing.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mrs. Hall. Mr. Williams.

Councilor Williams: Thank you, Mrs. Cantor. As Mrs. Hall just mentioned, I appreciate the desire to maintain West Hartford as a cutting edge town and keep it as sought-after place to live, work, and play as the phrase goes. That being said, I do not think that this Resolution accomplishes that goal and could in fact have the opposite outcome. This Resolution would require the town to divert valuable resources to consider an investment that, by its very definition, would be an additional cost to residents. It would not be free for residents. It would be included and reflected in their taxes. It would effectively be, create a situation where residents would be subsidizing Wi-Fi services for visitors and, and businesses in the Center. I believe that this Resolution represents a policy trajectory that adversely impacts the affordability of this town. In fact, if the town were to create a Wi-Fi system in the Center, which was accessible by businesses and restaurants as this Resolutions ultimately contemplates, it would have the somewhat perverse outcome wherein West Hartford residents would be subsidizing the cost of doing businesses for major companies like Starbucks. Given this potential adverse outcome, I do not support this Resolution. And like Mrs. Hall just mentioned, there are communities like Charleston, South Carolina, Chicago, Dublin that have had to modify or otherwise what's the word I'm looking for...supplement their plans for municipal Wi-Fi primarily because of cost concerns. And so it's for that reason I cannot support this Resolution. Thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Okay. Mr. Barnes.

Councilor Barnes: I don't have anything to add. I concur with my, my colleagues. The, the one interesting point that was made was Mr. Chase facing obstacles to get this done and it makes me think, you know, whether they're, you know, regulatory obstacles that he was confronted with which, you know, impacted, you know, or, you know, impacted the level of competition, you know, in the marketplace. And if we removed those regulatory obstacles, whether the private marketplace would provide a solution for us in the form of public Wi-Fi perhaps in the Center. For me, it's, I'm not sure if it is a need right now but we're going to study it and I look forward to, to reading what the results are.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you. Mr. Wenograd.

Councilor Wenograd: Thank you very much. And I want to thank our Republican colleagues for an interesting perspective on, on this bill. And particularly I think it does raise some sort of fundamental issues. You mentioned the role of government. And I actually think that's a really interesting thought. And I do think we advocates for this position need to support or to confront sort of that question and talk about what role we do see. In this particular case, we are talking about fundamentally infrastructure. And I, I don't think it's a, you know, again as Deputy Mayor Cantor mentioned, you know, we build roads. We build sidewalks. We also indirectly provide water through our MDC. And...more than that, though. We also provide educated population through our schools. We provide the...a type of community that encourages business growth, that encourages the type of activity that we want to have and that keeps our community fresh and thriving. So I mean, I see this, you know, not as some big government takeover of a private sector activity as much as our local government trying to help some people, both our residents and our businesses, exercise their own energies into improving our society. So it's interesting that we have the, the Chamber and local business people supporting this because I think they see this as a not quite the opposite of a business unfriendly place but they actually see this as a sign that we are friendly to business, that we want to have more growth and that we want to provide those kind of amenities that we can perhaps provide in a more efficient manner than the private sector has done so far with Wi-Fi. I will say I don't think this is anti-business. I do think it is favoring, with the Starbucks exception I understand, but, you know, favoring our small businesses against some big utilities that really have done not a great job of providing accessible Wi-Fi and internet access. The bills are pretty expensive and lots of our citizens don't have these. And a lot of our businesses, if they have internet access, it's too slow for some of the purposes that they have. So I think the, in a lot of ways the market has failed or at least has not been as successful as we'd like it to be and if it's affordable and that's of course what this is a study to find out whether it is, but if it's affordable and we can build upon the generosity of Mr. Chase to have some infrastructure in place, add to that the expertise of our staff that I'm, I'm quite confident that they can walk and chew gum at the same time, that let's see and let's see whether or not we can provide this service in a way that really could do some good for our community.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Wenograd. Mrs. Kerrigan.

Councilor Kerrigan: I do believe to the, that the future belongs to those with vision and, you know, some of you know I was on my way here, I was coming from Bridgeport, took the ferry over from Long Island, and I was trying to get to this meeting and I'm going from the high-speed lane to the low-speed lane to the middle lane, trying to get here on time. And I realized I was like a piece of data, like, oh my goodness, I need to get there. And I realized the value of speed. I was like, oh my goodness, this is so important. I wanted to get into the house, get changed, and get here. And it led me to thinking, just so you know how my mind works, like, wow. Like when the planes first started, when they first started having planes, can you imagine a state saying you know what? Let the airlines build an airport and right now we're just going to sit without an airport. And we all can envision what that would be like for Connecticut if we didn't have Bradley. I think about Jackson Lab and I think about employees there wanting to buy a house and saying, you know, we really do a lot of work out of our house. We'd love to buy a

house in West Hartford but quite frankly, we can't get the job done. My spouse, Jody, works at *The Hartford* and every time she came home from work at night when she did some work, she would look at me and say, I don't know how you do it to deal with how slow this is. And it's all I knew because I worked out of the house. My kids, Super Bowl, I was not at home for their Super Bowl party. They were at a house where their TV room and the living room had two different speeds of the Super Bowl. And they started joking because they happened to be in the living room, which was faster than the TV room, and so they started saying, yeah, good play and all the adults were thinking something was happening but it wasn't going to happen. But all of it says to me that speed is so important. But you don't want to speed. But so it brings me to reading the Resolution, which is allowing our trusted, respected, beloved Town Manager, Ron Van Winkle, who we hold to such high esteem, is requested to merely evaluate opportunities and the technical potential and need, as well as the cost of installing. I don't think we're making a decision. We're just saying, yo, dude. Maybe we should look at this because it's happening around us and if we don't get on this, we don't get on it, we may be left in the dust. That's all I have to say.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mrs. Kerrigan. Mr. Barnes.

Councilor Barnes: Just a followup on that point. You know, the, the idea of, of broadband and data and, you know, volume, that's a bigger question. My understanding of this Resolution is about whether we should provide Wi-Fi connection in the Center, very limited concept that we're talking about here. And so when we talk about that and we think, well, what's the benefit and what's the cost? Who are we going to help? Is there a need? Are there people that walk through the Center and say, jeez, I wish I could get onto Wi-Fi right now and stream a movie as I walk down LaSalle. Or is it I just need a little bit of information. I can get it on my phone through my data plan. It's kind of a quick transaction. They can get on and get off. And so when I look at it in those terms, I think I don't know if there's a need. I don't think there's a need for that specific thing, which this Resolution provides for. Broadband policy is a lot bigger question throughout the state, where the town fits into that. And that's a, you know, a debate we should have. But the things that I'm hearing don't really relate to this Resolution. This is about providing Wi-Fi in the Center. And I think, you know, the, kind of the critique of it isn't that we're unfriendly to business or that we want to see empty storefronts. It's whether this Resolution has any impact on that. And we're just not, at least for myself, I'm not sure that it does. I can add and so I know that we're going to have this worked up and we're going to, you know, have a report on it and so I look forward to, to reading it to see if that is, you know, what the cost is but also the need. You know, whether there's a need to provide that. And then also long-term kind of the rest of the Resolution talks about maybe having other Wi-Fi hotspots in town, you know, what that would mean in terms of, of buildout as well. So the Resolution provides or, or contemplates something a lot more limited than since what some of the comments here indicate. And as I said, I look forward to a, a larger discussion about, you know, broadband and capacity but that's not really contemplated by this Resolution.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Barnes. Mr. Davidoff.

Councilor Davidoff: Thank you, Mrs. Cantor. I would first like to commend you for giving a very thorough and accurate history of Wi-Fi and the growth of internet here in town and the

obstacles and the challenges that have faced our community for a very long time. I think what this Resolution this evening is asking is to study the impact of Wi-Fi hotspots in our Center, in Blue Back Square, the traditional Center, to understand the cost, to understand the technical requirements. And once we're more educated, we can make a thorough evaluation as to whether or not it's a good idea, bad idea, or an idea in between. And basically that's what it's doing. I think a lot of us are hoping that we're going to find the study is going to show that Wi-Fi hotspots in the Center are something that would be beneficial to our community. And I'd like to point out that we received a correspondence from the Connecticut Technology Council from a Mr. Bruce Carlson, the President and CEO, and I just want to read some of the points that he made. He says, "This opportunity provided by having high-speed broadband service available goes beyond economic development and has become an important factor in attracting and maintaining a workforce of young adults. As the millennial generation's attachment to wireless devices grows and with it the demand for capacity and speed increases, they are looking to live, work, and play in areas that offer higher internet capacity and speed that's affordable. Since this is a workforce that many of our businesses are actively seeking, offering the public wireless internet is a significant arrow in any town's economic development quiver." He further goes on to say, "West Hartford with its mix of places to socialize, commercial space as well as residential, seems like it would be a perfect place to establish a public wireless internet network. With that idea, when successful, the network could become larger with ripples on a pond." So I don't know if, if that's the case but that's, in his professional opinion, what the, what the scenario is. But I know that internet was something that was not available when I was a child. I know that the teenagers and young adults that live in my house are much more savvy about the internet and the devices and how to hook them up and make them work and, and do things. And I think their biggest complaint that they always say is, well, we're using up a lot of data on our plan, dad. Do you think you can increase the plan? And I'm like, no, I don't really want to spend any more money on this. And they're like, well, why can't it be like Starbucks, dad? Why can't you just go somewhere in America and can't it all be internet wherever you are? And I, I tried to explain that I think the internet's the new frontier. When Edison was inventing the, the lightbulb and working on that, America was like, well, what can do with this? Oh, we can put lighting in our homes and we can put them on streets and we wouldn't even think today of not having lighting within our, our buildings or on our street corners. And maybe this internet is very similar to electricity. Maybe that's where, where we are. And the younger generation knows a lot more than I think I know in terms of this new technology and new demand and their expectations. And I really don't have a problem with, with studying this issue. I, I think it's great and, and the other thing I want to point out that's been mentioned here. There is a digital divide in this community. There are people who don't have smartphones. There are people who don't have internet at home. And it's not something that's really talked about in a lot of social circles. And I see it with some of my daughter's friends, who are less economically advantaged than we are. And they come over and they say, what's your wireless code so I can get into your data plan? So that's a real concern to me. As we move forward, I think there will be a lot more discussion on this topic but I think we need to be cognizant of where we are in today's economics in terms of West Hartford Center. A lot of our social media and I watch social media and engage in social media and people have pointed out there seems to be a lot of turnover in West Hartford Center. There seems to be empty storefronts. They're commenting on social media. They're not getting all the data, all the information. There's so much information. There's incorrect information and there's correct information and there's no information. So

yes, I think it would attract employees, younger employees. It would attract businesses that we probably don't even know could possibly exist yet. And yes, there could be an opportunity for somebody in the private sector to capitalize on this and say and bring a proposal to us and say, yes, this is a great idea. I think I can do it at a less cost and more efficiently than the Town of West Hartford. But if we don't explore these opportunities, we're not going to be able to find out about them. So obviously, I'm pretty fiscally conservative. I'm going to look at the numbers, the cost/benefit to see if it, it adds up. So what we're asking this evening is let's do that. Let's, let's take that next step. Let's evaluate this idea. I've always encouraged people who've had ideas. You've got an idea, put it on the table. Let's see where it is. Let's see if there's community support for it. And let's, let's move forward that way. Not to do that, I think, would be a mistake. As, with respect to whether or not the Manager has capacity, our Manager is a very busy guy. No, no ifs, ands, or buts. I, I totally agree. And there's a lot of issues facing our community. But we have resources and individuals in, in town that can assist him in making these assessments. We have a Director of Information Technology, who's very competent and does his job very well and has helped us bring internet to, to all our school buildings. And if you ask any kids who are in the school buildings, it's not the greatest. It can always be better. That's the first thing they tell me when I ask my daughter why her usage is up and she says, well, the Wi-Fi at Hall could be, it's not as good as being on our own private data plan, dad. I'm like, okay, whatever. But these are the things that you hear from people who are using the system. And I think anything that's going to improve the quality of life here in West Hartford I'm anxious to, to look at and, and to review. I think it would be a great day in West Hartford to say that we are maybe the first community in the State of Connecticut that has several public Wi-Fi hotspots, that we're known for that. I think that's a good thing, especially in light of the fact we keep hearing a lot of negative news about Connecticut and the different towns and its people. Let's rise above that. Let's look for things that're positive, things to get excited about, things that make our lives in Connecticut better and really make the lives of our children better than our lives that we as adults have. And so for that reason, I'll be supporting the Resolution and as I stated several times, we're studying the issue. We're, we're not doing any more than studying it. We're not committing any financial resources to it. And let's just see where it is and we'll discuss it in Committee and we'll involve our community. And I think that is a positive step in the right direction. Thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mr. Davidoff. I did just want to mention that the, the landscape has changed substantially since Mr. Chase went out and started to build this network so the world is very, very, very different than the, and I've met with him a number of times on other, on greater issues and it's, we're, we don't think that we will hit obstacles legally or, and the...well. Also, I guess that's it. All right. All those in favor. Oh, I'm sorry. Mr. Williams.

Councilor Williams: Can I just add something? I'd just like to respond to Mr. Davidoff's comments. The reason Connecticut has so much bad press is because of the cost of living here. And what this Resolution projects is a fundamental policy where we would shift and explore the cost of free Wi-Fi to the Center businesses onto residents. It dovetails precisely with the bad press that Connecticut gets and precisely what, the reason why people my age are leaving West Hartford. There's a lot made about young people and how they use the internet and it, it's an attractive tool for them. But as a young person who's living in West Hartford, I can tell you that what I'm concerned about and what my friends are concerned about and what my neighbors are

concerned about is the cost of living in West Hartford. And we want to be able to raise our kids here. But the more we put a tax burden on residents, the less encouraging we are to young people to come here. I would finally note that, you know, there's a, there are people in our community who do not have Wi-Fi and that's true. But that's why we offer it at, we offer the internet at the library so people do have access. I think this Resolution tries to address a problem that doesn't exist and risks a, a basic cost shift to, you know, a tax base that is already feeling pressure. Thank you very much, Mrs. Cantor.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you. I, I don't, we don't know that, the base yet either and we, there's, there's models and other communities that have said there's a free and then there's a commercial opportunity to pay for an increased service that covers the cost of the free so it isn't necessarily a shift to the taxpayer. We also have an asset that we've been paying for, the taxpayers have been paying for and to not capitalize on that and sort of finish that last little bit to benefit the community could, and increase the Grand, the tax base of businesses coming in and hopefully increase the Grand List with potential commercial opportunities, as well as increasing the value of our, of the real estate that is in the Center in Blue Back Square, I think, I'm not sure that the shift would burden the taxpayers. It could be a benefit to the taxpayers. But that's something we have to look at and study and that's the whole, that it wouldn't be a shift. The, the last thing any of us want to do is to burden our taxpayers with, with more, with more costs. That's not what our, our goal is at all. It's to increase the, the quality of life but also to be very frugal and capitalize on our investments and make our, our living as, you know, as competitive and as beneficial to our residents as possible. So, Mrs. Casperson.

Councilor Casperson: Thank you. One of the first things that I, I said was that the cost gave me pause because I am very fiscally conservative in thinking about what's important to all of us in town. We don't need another expense. We have a resource that I would like to investigate to see how it can be utilized, how it might be monetized, how it can add value both to our community and to our tax base. So those are the things that're most focused for me in this Resolution, just to investigate those concerns and to be able to take advantage of a resource that we have as Mr...oh, I'm thinking Dave Calibey said regarding utilizing a resource before it's obsolete. How can we capitalize on that? Thank you.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you, Mrs. Casperson. Mrs. Kerrigan.

Councilor Kerrigan: Yeah. I'm, I gotta say I'm, I'm blown away that it wouldn't be unanimous to explore something like, you know, youth sitting there must be saying, like, wow. Why wouldn't they want to look, like, don't keep your head in the sand and go we already know the answer. We don't know the answer. We have no idea. But it wouldn't be cool to look and say, wow. We found a good way, it's a new revenue. Nobody here is, we're not talking about raising money or taxes. It, it's just about, hey, let's look at what's going on out there and let's make a decision that's in the best interest of the residents of our town.

Vice-President Cantor: All of those in favor.

Councilors Cantor, Davidoff, Kerrigan, Wenograd, Casperson: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed?

Councilors Hall, Barnes, Williams: Nay.

Vice-President Cantor: Okay. The motion passes. Okay. Number 15, Announcements. I will start.

ITEM # 15 - ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-President Cantor: Playhouse on Park will hold a food drive in, hold a food drive in February for the West Hartford Food Pantry. February is one of the toughest months for West Hartford Food Pantry so Playhouse on Park is holding a month-long collection of non-perishable food items. The pantry's most needed items include rice, pasta, canned soup, canned vegetables, beans, cereal, oatmeal, peanut butter and jelly, tuna and canned meat, canned fruit, canned meals, healthy snacks, and drinks. The food pantry cannot accept expired, opened, or perishable items. Bring donations to the Playhouse on Park at 244 Park Road and you can also see *The Chosen* until Valentine's Day. I'm going Thursday and I will bring a can of soup. Okay. A \$500 girls' basketball scholarship. The West Hartford girls' basketball league is accepting applications for a \$500 scholarship awarded to a high school senior who played in the league. Please send a 250 word essay on how playing in the league has impacted your life along with a separate cover page containing your name, address, phone number, years played, and team name. This is sent to P.O. Box 271037. If you're listening and you play, West Hartford, CT 06127 by February 15th. And that is not something I did, play basketball. AARP income tax preparation available at the senior centers. A free IRS-certified tax assistant program, AARP Foundation tax aid is available for low- to moderate-income taxpayers, especially those 60 and older at the Elmwood Senior Center. To schedule an appointment, please call (860) 561-8180. The West Hartford Senior Center at Bishop's Corner is also taking appointments for tax preparation. Please call the Senior Center at (860) 561-7583. The appointments are held in the Fellowship Housing Office across the street on Starkel Road. Special events. I just mentioned *The Chosen* at Playhouse on Park through February 14th and it's gotten great reviews. Adapted by Chaim Potok and Aaron Posner, I'm sorry. Based on the award-winning novel, the story is of two boys, two fathers, and two very different Jewish communities, five blocks and a world apart in Williamsburg, Brooklyn in the 1940s. Okay. The Addams Family Ice Cream Social Fundraiser, Friday, February 19th at 6:30. Conard High School is doing it again and rehearsals are in full swing for this year's delightful production of *The Addams Family*. Join us at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, February 19th in the Conard High School Auditorium for a sneak preview of the select musical numbers from the show and enjoy ice cream at 7:00 p.m. in the Conard High School Cafe. Come on out and support the rich tradition of Conard's musical theater program that began in 1959. Tickets for this fundraiser are \$5 at the door and it's always really entertaining. Storytelling salon. Speak Up Saturday, February 20th, 7:30 p.m. Storytellers will be featured at a Speak Up storytelling salon on Saturday, February 20th at 7:30 at the Noah Webster House and West Hartford Historical Society. Speak Up salon show is an intimate and interactive night, I'm sorry, night of storytelling with four storytellers who will tell 8- to 10-minute stories on the theme of unexpected. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. and the show starts at 7:30. Tickets are available now at www.noahwebsterhouse.org and are \$12 for museum members and \$15 for the general public. Beer, wine and refreshments will be available for purchase. I just went to an Infinity Hall

storytelling and our own superintendent of the schools was terrific. He actually was one of the storytellers, as was several of our teachers. And it was, it was really, really entertaining. Free community lunch, February 20th, 12:30 to 1:30. The Fern Street Community Kitchen offers a free community lunch once a month for neighbors in need. These friendly, family-friendly events will include a meal with dessert, prize drawings for grocery and restaurant gift cards, a play area for kids, and a mini-market for free food items to take home. The kitchen is located at the Universalist Church, 433 Fern Street in West Hartford. Doors open at noon. Lunch is served from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. There is no charge. Reservations are not needed and all are welcome. And my last announcement is the West Hartford history series. West Hartford Architecture, Tuesday, February 23rd at 7:00 p.m. The Noah Webster House and West Hartford Historical Society continues its West Hartford History Series in 2016 with architectural historian Mary Donahue on Tuesday, February 23rd at 7:00 p.m. This illustrated lecture will provide a glimpse into the history and architecture of some of West Hartford's most prestigious neighborhoods. A \$5 donation is suggested for attendees. Programs are free for museum members. Let's see. Number, where are we? Sixteen. Oh, sorry. Reports from Corporation Counsel. Sorry...

ITEM #16 - REPORTS OF CORPORATION COUNSEL

Mr. O'Brien: Yes. We don't need, we don't need Executive Session and I'll be happy to answer questions you might have.

Vice-President Cantor: Thank you. Anybody? No? Okay. Number 17 is Appointments.

ITEM #17 - APPOINTMENTS

Vice-President Cantor: I would like to make a motion to appoint Pamela Howard to the Historic District Commission for a term ending 12/31/2017; reappoint Donna Sterling to the Senior Citizens' Advisory Commission for a term ending 12/31/20; reappoint Philip Walker to the Senior Citizens' Advisory Commission for a term ending 12/31/20; and reappoint Nancy Dean to Pension Board for term ending 12/31/20.

Councilor Davidoff: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: Motion's been made and seconded. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed? Okay. Appointments are, are set. And then number 19, Mr. Davidoff.

ITEM #19 - CONSENT CALENDAR

ADOPTED

ITEM #18 – FROM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS – 2015 REPORT

Councilor Davidoff: I move adoption of the Consent Calendar.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: Motion's been made and seconded. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: Okay and all those opposed? The motion passes. Number 20, Mr. Davidoff.

ITEM #20 - FROM GREG GALVIN (1-21-2016) RESIGNING FROM THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

RECEIVED

Councilor Davidoff: I move that we receive the resignation of Greg Galvin from the Historic District Commission.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: The motion's been made and seconded. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed? Okay, motion passes. No, we have no Petitions. Number, no need for Executive Session, right, Mr. O'Brien?

Mr. O'Brien: No.

Vice-President Cantor: Okay.

ITEM #23 - ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Davidoff: I move we adjourn.

Councilor Kerrigan: Second.

Vice-President Cantor: Motion's made and seconded. All those in favor?

All: Aye.

Vice-President Cantor: All those opposed? Okay, we're adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Essie S. Labrot

Essie S. Labrot
Town Clerk/Council Clerk

ESL/dd

APPROVED AT MARCH 8, 2016, TOWN COUNCIL MEETING