

**AVON TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
January 5, 2017**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. at the Avon Town Hall, in the Selectmen's Chamber by Chairman Zacchio. Members present: Mrs. Maguire and Messrs: Zacchio, Stokesbury, Pena, and Speich.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Zacchio.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

**16/17-34 Chapter 9 Article 2 Section 23 (b) Building Permit Fees and Chapter 45
Article 2 Section 23 Land Use Application Fees and review and
possibly approve a proposed revision to the Building Permit Fee Schedule**

The Public Hearing was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Zacchio. Chairman Zacchio waived the reading of the following legal notice:

"TOWN OF AVON
LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Town Council of the Town of Avon, Connecticut will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, January 5, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. at the Avon Town Hall, Selectman's Chamber, 60 West Main Street, Avon, CT to consider the following:

To consider and permit all interested persons to speak on a proposal to amend Chapter 9 Article 2 Section 23(b) Building Permit Fees and Chapter 45 Article 2 Section 23 Land Use Application Fees and amend the Building Permit Fee Schedule.

A copy of the proposed amendments is on file in the Avon Town Clerk's Office and open to the public for inspection during normal business hours.

Dated at Avon, Connecticut this 6th day of December 2016.

Brandon L. Robertson, Town Manager"

The Town Manager reported that there are two fee schedules being recommended for revisions: the building permit fee schedule hasn't been updated since 2009 and we did a comparison with surrounding communities and part of the rationale is every year our cost for processing these permits goes up with increases for our overhead, electricity and personnel costs so a nominal increase of about \$8 per \$1,000 of value seems to be inline what those costs have been over the last ten years or so and puts us in the median with where our surrounding neighbors are. He noted that the way the ordinance is structured this does not actually require a public hearing and can be done based on the Building Official's recommendation to the Town Council but we thought because we were also looking to modify the land use fee schedule which does require a public hearing we thought it was wise to include the building permit fee schedule at the same

time. He added that there is one section that if we want to modify it does require a public hearing and that is the work without a permit fee as discussed at the last meeting and the original recommendation was to go from twice the cost of the initial permit to three times the cost; Hiram Peck, Town Planner, and I had additional conversations about that and our recommendation is to leave it at twice the cost. He reported that the third element is the land use fees; fees for subdivision applications, zoning compliance certificates, and basically all of the services provided through the Planning and Community Development Department. He noted that one of the modifications that we recommend has to do with the zoning compliance permit fee and the original recommendation was to charge \$25 and after review we are recommending \$50. He added that the land use fees have not been increased since 2004.

Chairman Zacchio summarized that this brings some of the costs in line with actual costs and getting our fee schedule more up to date in terms of what the fees are across other communities for the same types of services. The Town Manager added that it keeps us from making a larger correction down the road. Mr. Speich questioned how often we get the work without permit fees. Mr. Peck responded that in the past year we have only had one that we are aware of so it is not frequent but it is helpful when we do have them. Mr. Speich questioned why we would not go to three times the cost versus keeping it at two times the cost. Mr. Peck responded that we are trying to do it incrementally and because it does not happen that often we thought we could stay at two times and still get people's attention when we needed to so without overdoing it we thought that was a reasonable position at this particular point and time and if the economy was really going and we were getting a lot of these he thinks our position would probably be different. The Town Manager commented that it does not come up very often and in the communities we have compared ourselves to there is one other community that has implemented the three times the cost and it really is punitive at that point.

Mr. Stokesbury commented why we are trying to diary this for five-year intervals and more aggressively look at it in a defined schedule. The Town Manager responded that we will, maybe every other year.

On a motion made by Mrs. Maguire, seconded by Mr. Pena, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council close the public hearing.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Stokesbury, Speich, and Pena voted in favor.

On a motion made by Mrs. Maguire, seconded by Mr. Pena, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council approve the amendment to Chapter 45 Article 2 Section 23 Land Use Application Fees and amend the Building Permit Fee Schedule as recommended.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Pena, Stokesbury, and Speich voted in favor.

The Town Clerk noted that once the publication notice is signed it will run within ten days and will not take effect for twenty-one days. The Town Manager added that the Building Permit Fee Schedule does not require publication because it is not set by ordinance but will have it become effective on a date that is coterminous with the Land Use Fee Schedule.

IV. MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING: November 16, 2016 Special Meeting
December 1, 2016

On a motion made by Mr. Pena, seconded by Mrs. Maguire, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council accept the minutes of the November 16, 2016 Special Meeting as presented.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Pena, Stokesbury, and Speich voted in favor.

On a motion made by Mr. Stokesbury, seconded by Mr. Pena, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council accept the minutes of the December 1, 2016 Meeting as presented.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Pena, and Stokesbury voted in favor. Mr. Speich abstained.

V. COMMUNICATION FROM AUDIENCE

Michael Farrell, owns property at 67 Brentwood Drive but lives in the city of Torrington and did live in the Town of Avon for a long time, commented on an issue that is near and dear to his heart and read about it last month in the newspaper, the water supply issues up on the Vermillion Drive area. He noted as background that he was a member of the Avon Volunteer Fire Department for thirty-three years and did a lot of work for a lot of years with the capital improvement program developing the water supply program. He spent a lot of time with Mr. DiPace in the Board room with the Planning Committee taking this thing from its infancy and is still a work in progress to this day. He noted that he listened to the fire call on Vermillion Drive for approximately two hours and then he read about what transpired here last month with the neighborhood group and he worked with Mr. Genco and a lot of the other neighbors on some questions and concerns they had. He has two issues with it: first is calming the fears of the residents of that neighborhood; this is a very emotional issue for them, that was a very high profile incident, a scary incident for someone who is not in emergency services and can understand their passion and their fears. He noted that their concerns appear to be focused on the lack of water supply in their neighborhood for firefighting and it is good that they have the ear of the Council at this point but the reality is, he would like to dispel some of their fears because the reality is that there is plenty of water in that neighborhood for firefighting. He added that particular home that burned unfortunately was surrounded by two tremendous water supplies and for whatever reason were not accessed that particular evening and needs to be understood by the Town Council because, and he does understand that the Fire Department is autonomously governed in some respects because they have a Board of Directors and are incorporated, as the neighborhood group approaches you folks and this becomes a public issue, ultimately it is going to involve spending taxpayers' money and the reality of the water supply program from the day it started in the early 1980s to this date and it is still in progress we have spent millions of dollars of taxpayers' money on developing a water supply program in the Town of Avon and we continue to have money earmarked in the capital improvement 5-year plan for continuing to develop that water supply and is important to remain focused and steadfast in that because there are still parts of this community where there is large housing stock that are unfortunately not protected by water supply systems and probably aren't ever going to be because it is not feasible for Avon Water or Connecticut Water to run water mains through those neighborhoods. He added that the onus unfortunately falls back on the taxpayers to provide impounded water into those neighborhoods; once we – the Fire Department - has identified all of these target hazard neighborhoods we cannot walk away from it, they do not walk away from it, they are recurring items in the capital budget and that is a good thing. However, with the onus being on the taxpayers to develop those areas and utilize the areas that we have already made improvements

in, the other issue becomes accountability and transparency. His equal concern and the reason he is here tonight is not just the fears of that neighborhood which are legitimate but they have a right to have legitimate credible information told to them as well as do you folks and as does the entire community. He noted that there seems to be a lack of accountability and transparency from the Fire Department's end on this particular incident. He has made several FOI requests to the Fire Chief, the Fire Marshal/Emergency Management Director, and the Board of Directors asking for answers as to why they did not utilize the water supplies that were in that area for the night of that fire. Chairman Zacchio commented that he has to limit him as it is usually five minutes. Mr. Farrell responded that he would wrap this up. He noted that there are two water supplies in that neighborhood, one in particular is a fire pond that the taxpayers maintain and was refurbished in 2007 with taxpayers' money and is inspected at least two or three times per year by Public Works. He highlighted that it was inspected four days before the fire and the report came back from Public Works that the pond was full and the connection was fine. He noted that we have spent millions of dollars on programs to develop these water supplies and when we have a large scale event, like the fire that night, we burned an 8,000 square foot home to the ground, ran out of water ten times, yet two thousand feet from the fire was a fire pond that the Town of Avon had put in, the Town of Avon pays to maintain, the Town of Avon had refurbished at taxpayers' expenses in 2007, and yet it went completely unutilized. He noted that the other pond on the other side has been known to the Fire Department for decades and not a single drop of water was taken from either of those two supplies and as a result of that members of our community lost their home, their pet died and there is a certain amount of uproar now within the community and there should be. He added that what he hasn't seen is accountability. He noted that we are going to get a little snow tonight and if Public Works forgets to put the plows on, sand in the hopper, or doesn't go out there would be a cry for accountability; if there was a bank robbery and the cops forgot their guns, knives, handcuffs, mace, bullets and the bank robber shot somebody and got away with a million dollars there would be a demand for accountability; if you sent your kids to the Town pool the outlets weren't grounded, the pH was out of balance, they got chlorine burns, the slip mats weren't down and fell and broke their ankle there would be a demand for accountability; yet the taxpayers of this Town have spent millions of dollars, stand poised to continue to spend large amounts of money to develop water supplies in areas that are water supply deficient, the Fire Department knew about this fire pond and has correspondence from the Fire Marshal referencing that pond to two different insurance companies carbon copied to the Fire Chief two years before the fire referencing it as the primary water supply for that neighborhood yet the night of the fire not a drop of water was taken from either of these two sources, their equipment is on the fire engines to draft the water, the manpower was there, they arrived in a timely fashion, the fire was absolutely savable and that is not just my opinion but also the opinion of no less than ten seasoned veteran firefighters who were there that night in the first twenty minutes that was a stoppable fire all day long if the Fire Department established a sustainable water supply. He noted that taxpayers paid to put that water supply up there and now there is a rouge being carried out on that part of the community and this Town Council that there is no water available up there and that is absolutely not the case and yet he has heard not one single call for accountability from the Fire Department; they do not want to answer my questions or my FOI requests. He noted that his information which is rather voluminous and very detailed and one might suggest a little damming is going to be turned over to the Hartford Courant and maybe Ken Byron's investigate reporting can get some answers but the question he has for Council is why nobody is asking questions, they are the only arm of local government that can escape this kind of scrutiny just because they are autonomously governed it does not mean when

you put \$1.5 million of taxpayers' money every single year out of that Fire Department and you have spent millions of dollars over the years to develop a water supply program and we burn a house down because we do not have any water when the reality is that we really do nobody is asking any questions, why is that, can anybody answer that question for me, why is there zero accountability for that one arm of local government that can completely ignore the responsibilities to this community and yet nobody says a word. He added that it is absolutely wrong and if he is paying his taxes he would like to know that if he's paying a Fire Marshal/Emergency Management Director good money to do a full-time job and he is aware of things like that and we have an emergency and he completely ignores that then he wants to know why we are continuing to dump money into an entity that is not returning on that investment, does anybody have an answer for him.

Chairman Zacchio responded that Mr. Farrell's opinions are his opinions and he is entitled to them but they are not facts so first and foremost we have inquired with the Fire Department and the Town Manager has had some meetings with the Fire Department to talk about that; decisions made on a command scene are not our purview. Mr. Farrell understands that and that is not the question. Chairman Zacchio commented that why they chose to use the water supply they chose to use and how they chose to use it is a question for the Fire Department that they have answered and in the Town Manager's eyes satisfactorily. He added that how the other pond can be utilized is something that we are working with the neighborhood on and whether it can be done, we do not own that pond, we do not have a dry hydrant in that pond; it takes an amount of time to siphon from those ponds; we have learned something about that. Mr. Farrell commented that he visited the homeowner four days after the fire who said that he waiting all night for them to come and get the water and no one showed up to get it. Chairman Zacchio responded that respectfully Mr. Farrell's opinion on what happened that night does not quite make it fact and we are investigating it and to come here and suggest that we are not is wrongheaded and it is fine that you are here. Mr. Farrell responded that he is not suggesting that you are not, he just wants to know why. Chairman Zacchio commented that Mr. Farrell needs to allow our process to go through and we are going to trust in the Fire Department which as you point out is independently managed in terms of how they manage a fire. Mr. Farrell commented that he is just looking for some sign of accountability and knows that sometimes because they are autonomously governed we do not always get the accountability we deserve. Chairman Zacchio responded understood. Mr. Farrell added that at the end of the day it is taxpayers' money that goes to that Fire Department so there does need to be some semblance of oversight. Chairman Zacchio responded that there is but not at the fire on a command situation and whether they chop the ice to draw from a pond or they make a decision that the structure is no longer stable and is just a containment fire; having said that and not being a firemen we have had conversations with them and with the neighborhood and they went through in detail the command center process they went through that night and what took place. He added that it is very difficult to say one way or another how that fire might have gone if they chose to break through the ice and use water from that pond or if not but the command structure was in place, it made a decision, and that is what it is at this point and we are talking to them about it. Mr. Farrell commented that it is about accountability and he does not take issue with squirting here or there, it is about money that we are spending and having people held accountable. Chairman Zacchio responded that we spend it every year on apparatus, operating grant, and we look at opportunities for cisterns and dry hydrants where they are needed. Mr. Farrell commented that as long as you are assuring me that questions are being asked. Chairman Zacchio responded that they are. Mr. Farrell commented

that he is not totally comfortable in what he has been told of the essence so far. Chairman Zacchio responded that he knows that he has made FOI requests and he is certain that the Fire Department will be responsive to those in the time they should be. Mr. Farrell responded they have not answered his questions which are pretty boiler plate and why he is here tonight and perhaps the Hartford Courant will get somewhere.

The Town Manager commented that FOI does not require answering questions, rather about documentation, so if you are submitting questions to FOI that is not what they are. He added that back in April we had a very large meeting at Company #1 with thirty to forty residents from Vermillion and Oak Bluff and he found it educational himself which was hosted by entire command staff including Chief Trick and was a hot wash exercise. Mr. Farrell was not there. The Town Manager commented that they explained exactly how they fought the fire, what the tactics were, what the strategy was, and he found it quite satisfactory. Mr. Farrell commented relative to the FOI request and he has been getting responses and it is not about the questions and the tactics, he has asked for documents relative to inspection and training at these water sites from the Fire Department and they have responded but said they have nothing; that is an issue and goes back to the accountability that would suggest there needs to be some stronger oversight if we are going to dump these monies into Town wide programs; the arms of local government that we entrust with them have to utilize them at the appropriate times and this is clearly not the case. The Town Manager commented that you also cannot provide documents that you do not have. Mr. Farrell responded yes, but therein lies the issue; you have a water supply and there has to be some training issues or training records and there was nothing and that raises the question of why not. Mr. Farrell thanked Council for the time.

VI. COMMUNICATION FROM COUNCIL

Mr. Stokesbury commended the Avon Volunteer Fire Department for their response on Tuesday night to his Cold Spring neighborhood for a CO alarm; very professional response, scene management, taken care of quite quickly and all is well. He also commented that during this budget season he reminded everyone that we should be working towards both shared services and consolidation of (inaudible) from our town management and noted that we have an Administrative Services report from nearly ten years ago that made certain recommendations and we should take another look at those and look at them as we develop our budgets given the overall state of the State budget. Chairman Zacchio agreed.

Mrs. Maguire wished all a Happy New Year. She reported that she attended the Board of Education budget workshop at their regular meeting on December 19th and observed some of the budget issues that they are facing. She noted the Town Manager's presentation regarding the turf field project. She reported that Avon Education Foundation awarded two grants in December: a mini-grant for \$134 to Kristin Cutler at Roaring Brook School for math fluency practice projects and a grant for \$2,600 to Michael Marella at Avon High School for "would you please not sit down," non-traditional type furniture for the classroom.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

13/14-48 Synthetic Turf Field Project: Avon High School

Chairman Zacchio reported that we sent a letter to the Board of Education with what was our final recommendation around scope of the project and asked for them to weigh in, mostly to package this. He added that one of our next steps has to be seeking out some public funding in terms of the State and we all know the state of the State and that is probably an uphill battle but without a project that is approved by both boards in concept or footprint and for a base project we could move forward with that. He noted that like us some members of the Board of Education were still interested in what kinds of infill might be used if we get to that point; we had chosen off the recommendation from the Recreation and Parks Sub-committee that did the research that the food grade coated crumb rubber was the best product to use similar to what Simsbury just did after extensive research and refurbishing their field but there is still a lot of time between now and when this project comes to fruition when we will see some of these active studies that are out today come more full circle so we can make a different decision if we want to make one at that point. He added that we have an approval from the Board of Education in terms of what we were asking for and the next step is a letter to the legislator.

The Town Manager reported that the Board of Education approved the project in concept with two issues: they want to be certain that if the project does go to referendum, is approved, and constructed they want to have one representative on the public building committee and there were some concerns about the infill material and we have time to do further investigation if necessary and he can coordinate a future presentation to the Board of Education with the Superintendent of Schools. He noted that this is a major milestone in the life of this project. He added that we now have a defined project, consensus between the two Boards and we also have an estimated project cost of about \$5 million including soft costs and contingency and behind that we have a lot of due diligence having gone through 100% design development when historically our practice has been to go through about 30% design development then go to referendum and then do the permitting and all of the additional work. Chairman Zacchio commented that this kind of project and the proximity in the neighborhoods just didn't call for that kind of function and would have much rather done it the way we did it and done all this work at the front. The Town Manager added that the next step is the bonding scenario and in Tab M of the budget we did anticipate \$1.5 million for field facilities and he will be talking later tonight about the Fisher Meadows field projects where our three funding sources are FY 18 capital budget, Fee in Lieu of Open Space Revenue Fund, and Recreational Activities Special Revenue Fund so not looking for bonding money for that project but there is theoretically some capacity in our debt service line item. He added that we modeled \$1.5 million for field facilities so say we add \$500,000 and we make an ask to the State of \$3 million; there is a precedent for it and going back over ten years nineteen projects have been approved by the Bond Commission, the two largest were Torrington and Derby and Derby was approved in November for \$2.97 million. Chairman Zacchio noted that our opinion was initially that someone is going to get the bonding money and if we do not have a project to put in front of them we do not have a chance so it is better to be in the position with a shovel ready project to move forward with than it is clearly to be in the rears and not get opportunities that come our way. The Town Manager would recommend that he work with the delegation, prepare a letter, perhaps get a meeting together and have it into them before the session starts and monitor it throughout. Council agreed. Chairman Zacchio added that is the next step otherwise it is shelved.

Wendy Howard, Board of Education member and Vice President of ACORN which is a private 501c3 that we have used in the past for Town projects to raise funds, reported that non-profit is

still available and ready to be turned over. She questioned who would pick up the arm of the project funding. Chairman Zacchio responded that David Magrini had interest in that when the project first kicked off and talked about it some years ago. He noted that we have always thought of the project as being funded through different phases: some public funding, Town funding, State funding, and probably some fundraising. He added that part of the design and the footprint presented to the Board of Education does not have lights and some other amenities that could be added at a future time through fundraising so depending on what we could get from the State and what we could bond we could put together a base project with or without pieces and if there is extra funding or interest in the community to raise extra dollars for funding at that point it could go to those other amenities but we have not necessarily gotten there yet. He noted that with the Library we had a referendum question that allowed us to borrow up to and not to exceed an amount of \$7 million, we had a \$1 million grant already from the State Library Board and for other amenities to be raised up to \$1 million Mark Nolan took on that challenge and raised \$1.5 million for some of the amenities around the Library that are still there today. He added that it gets a little clearer as you see what you might get from State funding and then you look at your own bonding curve and debt service and what you can afford because then you come up with a number and you have a project number and start to put that puzzle together. Ms. Howard commented that the vehicle is there. Chairman Zacchio thanked her. He gave the Town Manager the go ahead to start the next process.

Susan Reboul, 23 Sudbury Way, asked the Town Council how they feel about the Governor now indicating that there will be funds shifted away from more affluent communities to be put towards other communities. She also read recently that the State has done away with, for budgetary reasons, the matching program. She questioned how that will impact this project. Chairman Zacchio responded that it is hard to say; money shifting away from our community to other communities is not new so we have seen decreases in operating help including Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grants and Local Capital Improvement Programs (LoCIP) most recently. He noted that some of the schedule that the Town Manager has put together the towns have gotten grants through the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) that we have used typically for our sidewalk program and some have received bond money, straight borrowing that is done through OPM; all three of those components are separate parts of the State budget so the State could stop borrowing and bonding these projects which means that source should be 100% dried up or they may continue to borrow at the rate they have been and those dollars and opportunities are there for towns who have projects in front of them. He added that we have a project that is feasible and can be pitched but it takes quite a bit of work to get it on the Bond Commission's agenda. Ms. Reboul questioned if you feel their focus at the present is on underfunded, underdeveloped areas versus Avon which is similar to a Greenwich or Salisbury. Chairman Zacchio responded yes, clearly on the operating side is what he has seen. Ms. Reboul commented that this is not a slam dunk; it could go in either direction. Chairman Zacchio responded that money is going to be the hardest part; the money from the State given its fiscal condition right now if he was sitting in the legislature it would be unlikely. He added that if they bond and there is a project out there that we can get a hold of we will try to get a hold of it. Ms. Reboul questioned if there is a contingency plan if we get no monies from the State, how do we then move this forward? Chairman Zacchio responded that the Town could make a choice to borrow 100% and do it ourselves or someone could donate 100%; we would have to go to referendum. He noted that you have not heard anything from this Council or even the last Council when we started talking about projects like this that would suggest we were willing to

take 100% of this to referendum without some component of public funding, private funding, and State funding similar to what we did with the Library. He spoke personally in that he does not think that he would bring this entire project to the Town under referendum out of 100% tax dollars. Mr. Stokesbury commented that we have a host of competing needs within our own Town capital budget. Ms. Reboul commented that we will ask the State and then take on plan b. Chairman Zacchio responded that the State is the toss up; what we did with the Library project was that we knew we wanted to upgrade the Library, we had some preliminary drawings, some ideas around what the architecture would be like, and the Library Board aggressively lobbied the State Library Board for a grant and then we had a \$1 million grant in our hands; we wanted to upgrade, we had a \$1 million, we waited a period of time until we could afford to ask the community through referendum for the difference. He noted that the Library project predates him ten years so it had been on the books for a long time but it finally came around. He added that it depends on the priorities in the debt service at that time.

15/16-33 Athletic Fields Advertising Policy: Review & 5-Year Option Recommendation

Chairman Zacchio commented that this policy has been very successful and Sperry Park actually looks like a ballpark and nice to see. The Town Manager reported that this policy was approved in December 2015 and allowed for sponsorships for a certain dollar amount based on the number of years to have signs up at Buckingham and Council approved it on a pilot basis and wanted a report back in about a year. He noted that the Director of Recreation and Parks has been administering the program and reviewed the results of the one-year operation with the Recreation and Parks Committee and it has been very successful; we have not had any zoning complaints, has resulted in about \$9,500 to the Recreational Activities Special Revenue Fund. He noted that the Town does all of the revenue collection that goes to a Special Revenue Fund and can be used on the upkeep and improvement of Buckingham and Sperry and does not believe that any expenditures have been made out of the fund for those purposes. He reported that the only recommendation that they have going forward is to have a 5-year option for \$3,000; the Recreation and Parks Committee recommends approval, he recommends it and sees no reason not to given the great track record we had this past year.

Mr. Stokesbury questioned if we have a 5-year option to a sponsor and within that duration we come to the conclusion that maybe the program should be terminated do we have the ability to stop, amend, terminate the policy and refund money. The Town Manager responded yes, we could give them a prorated refund. Chairman Zacchio asked the Town Manager to thank the Director of Recreation and Parks and the Recreation and Parks Committee as it has been pretty successful. Mr. Stokesbury noted thanks to the Avon Little League for pushing the program.

On a motion made by Mr. Stokesbury, seconded by Mr. Pena, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council approve the addition of a five-year advertising option at \$3,000 to the Athletic Fields Advertising Program Policy.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Pena, Speich, and Stokesbury voted in favor.

16/17-15 FY 17/18 Budget: Town Council Budget Workshop Schedule: **Recommended Date: Saturday, February 11, 2017 at 7:30 a.m.**

Chairman Zacchio commented that the proposed date works for all members and will start a little earlier at 7:30 a.m., finishing at 12:30 p.m. and everyone's conflicts were resolved by doing this.

On a motion made by Mrs. Maguire, seconded by Mr. Stokesbury, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council approve the Budget Workshop Schedule for Saturday, February 11, 2017 at 7:30 a.m. in the Selectmen's Chamber as follows:

7:30 a.m. Budget Overview
7:50 a.m. Library
8:10 a.m. Fire Department
8:30 a.m. Police Department
8:50 a.m. Public Works
9:20 a.m. General Government
9:40 a.m. Break
9:55 a.m. Public Safety (except Fire and Police)
10:15 a.m. Health/Social Services
10:35 a.m. Recreation & Parks
10:55 a.m. Conservation & Development
11:15 a.m. Engineering/Sewers
11:35 a.m. Lunch
12:05 p.m. Special Revenue Funds / Capital Improvement Program
12:30 p.m. Adjustments, wrap-up – Adjourn

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Pena, Stokesbury, and Speich voted in favor.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

16/17-36 Avon Day Review

Nancy Weiner-Anstey, Avon Day Committee Chair, reported on results from Avon Day 2016 held on Saturday, September 24, 2016 from the Committee's Final Report to the Avon Town Council (a copy of which is included and made part of these minutes). She noted that they have about \$9,500 in the budget for the next Avon Day. Chairman Zacchio commented that it is a good starting point and questioned how that compares to last year's starting point. Ms. Anstey responded that it is a little more. She noted that there were 66 corporate and non-profit booths which was more than last year of which the booth fees had been decreased for this event.

Ms. Anstey highlighted comments provided by residents, friends, and the Committee along with suggestions for 2017 (a copy of which is included and made part of these minutes). She noted that with the inflatables we had no volunteers and half the time all inflatables were down which added to the lack of attendance. She noted that we have loyal organizations there like Rotary and UNICO with food; perhaps we open it up to food trucks or fair food. She added that the new activities' suggestions are meant to draw people and not take away from the basic mission of Avon Day which is to showcase the wonderful things that we have in all of our non-profits and things that go on in town in our Social Services and our Special Needs; we want to make this successful.

Chairman Zacchio commented that there is a lot here; some of this free through advertising. He questioned if the Committee is trying to create a fair or carnival. Ms. Anstey responded no.

Chairman Zacchio commented that it all sounds like great ideas and trying to picture now what that looks like and segment what needs to be done to get there. He noted that the Avon Volunteer Fire Department might be a good starting spot as they have experience when they did the carnival near the post office, what drew people, etc. He is trying to get to the core of are we trying to draw more people, do something for everybody, have one big show, etc. Ms. Anstey responded that there are a lot of ideas to deal with; their major concern is getting the town and people from surrounding towns to come and learn about Avon in terms of the booths with the Fire Department and Police Department but you need to do a little extra these days in order to get people to walk through the door. She noted that having two or three non-profits and three restaurants is really not enough; we do not want to turn this into a carnival but if you add a few food trucks and popcorn, popsicles, and cotton candy it is going to be okay too. She added that in terms of entertainment we certainly have budget; we want to explore all of these things and decide if there are one or two things that are really great; if we get a band maybe it would be the high school students. She noted that we never want to lose the mission in what Avon Day is but if it stays the same they are afraid it is going to go down; it needs a little re-boot. Chairman Zacchio commented that Council is willing partners in terms of change around what we want to do with it; we want to see it continue, have the spirit in which we developed it and intended it years ago as an event and has continued all of this time; change around how we draw people and the activities we are willing partners in terms of how we do that. He asked Ms. Anstey to come back with how this will be approached and determining what this looks like.

Mrs. Maguire commented that she loves the suggestions and Avon Celebrates is a great name and change. She added that we have a unique concept and loves the idea of expanding it and bringing in some other things. She noted that she was involved with doing the May Fair at Roaring Brook School and they do have food trucks and bouncy houses that were manned and can provide the contractor name and was done well; another potential resource. She commented that we talked about letting the vendor sell some things that was approved by the Avon Day Committee and questioned how that turned out. Ms. Anstey responded poorly. Chairman Zacchio commented that it was a good test. Mrs. Maguire commented that people go really looking for freebies so outside of giving a bag or pen of their business that is what people are looking for. She added that you want to appeal to the whole community and maybe we can partner with the Board of Education to get this spread out in the schools to get the kids involved; artwork on display, maybe a prize, engaging the younger kids and newer families might be a new group to look at. She loves what the Committee does, a great thing for Avon, it should continue and evolve, and offered to help in anyway.

Mr. Pena thanked the Committee for all of the hard work they do. He noted that he likes Avon Day but does think that it can get better. He added that this past fall he attended fourteen other fairs and they are having the same kind of problems. He gave an example with Simsbury and the chili cook off and was a good event; something new. He noted that other towns outside of the area he went to also have food contests and they all have food trucks too which attracts people. He added that most vendors do not like to stay after 4:00 p.m. Ms. Anstey commented that she has spoken to many other communities and some of the ideas for activities to get kids came from Simsbury's Septemberfest. Mr. Pena noted that everyone wants something new and would like to discuss some ideas with Ms. Anstey. Mrs. Howard commented that maybe 4:00 p.m. is a good closing time. Mr. Pena added that regarding volunteers you might seek help from an organization like the Lions Club. Ms. Anstey responded that they tried every avenue and they

had all inflatables covered up until Avon Day when nobody showed. He noted that maybe the Chamber would volunteer. Ms. Anstey commented that Bounce About has been the best but does not provide volunteers. Mr. Pena noted that one activity that would be very good is the rope pull, democrats versus republicans.

Mrs. Maguire commented that advertising where the money is going, getting the word out, and having buckets around is another suggestion. Chairman Zacchio commented that these are all good peripheral changes and need to come back with what the big change is and start there. He asked what the pull is to get people there and then use these other mechanisms to raise more money, bring more awareness, and spread the word. Ms. Anstey commented that starting with the name change, dealing with the publicity, and need to find a draw or two interest/activity/entertainment wise to do that. She noted that the Committee's first meeting is in January, will work on this and come before Council prior to the Committee's next meeting in April. She added that the fair food, one or two new good entertainment things and an activity is what is going to draw when we switch the name and do the publicity. She thanked Council for supporting their efforts. Chairman Zacchio commented that you have a willing partner with Council; appreciate the work you did, we cannot do it without you, you have the hard part, have been pulling your weight for years to make this happen for Avon, the Town thanks you for doing that and hopefully we continue to have the success we have had in the future. Council thanked Ms. Anstey and the Avon Day Committee.

16/17-37 Approve Eagle Scout Proclamations

Chairman Zacchio recognized the six scouts who will be attaining the rank of Eagle Scout at a ceremony on January 7, 2017. They are Matthew Jacob Bagley, Zachary Roland Bortoff, Drew William Duarte, Joshua A. Wakai Forchheimer, Dominic Thomas Lofredo, and John Molinex Whitney. He read one of the proclamations aloud.

January 5, 2017

Permit the Town Council to join your many friends in offering our heartiest congratulations upon your achievement as an Eagle Scout.

This is indeed an appropriate honor for the many years you have spent as a Boy Scout. As a Boy Scout you have had to show qualities of leadership, integrity, loyalty, and service to your troop, community, school, church, and your friends.

The high standards of the Boy Scouts of America are well known and your elevation to Eagle Scout most certainly attests to your fulfillment of their high standards.

Congratulations on your outstanding achievement!

16/17-38 Review, Discussion, and Approval: Town Council Policy No. 17, Elderly Tax Relief Program

Chairman Zacchio reported that we typically review this every year or two and Harry DerAsadourian, Assessor, is here to go through his recommendation. He noted that in the past we may have had some other flavor around where we fall and what the next circuit breaker amounts might be and might ask that we have that information before acting on this as well but hold off until the Assessor discusses his thoughts. The Town Manager reported that he has talked to the Assessor about this item and he is prepared to talk about what the next plateau

might be if there was an interest in increasing the income limit, what the cost would be associated with it, and how many additional people would benefit by doing that.

Harry DerAsadourian, Assessor, reported that this program started in 1999 and has provided tremendous relief for the senior population community and started as a piggy back to the State program and over time we have increased the income limits. He noted that two years when this was up for review we increased the income limits from \$45,000 to \$55,000 and that did increase the cost and the participation. He shared a comparison of previous years, 2014 to 2015. He reported that in 2014 we had 265 participants, 2015 we had 272 participants in the overall program. He added that in addition to increasing the income limits to \$55,000 we also now index the benefit so as the mill rate increases the benefit increases at the same rate and important to keep the benefit index and review the income periodically because we could then gauge the number of people taking advantage and if there was inflation or changes in the State program we could then adjust the income instead of the index and over time that philosophy has worked well. He noted that when we increased the income limit to \$55,000 last year we picked up thirty more people. He commented on the shift in the make-up of the participants, some unfortunately deceased and some move; our experience has been that those that have been on the program a very long time are usually at the lower end of the income stream and getting the most benefit and their replacements are at the higher income stream where there is less benefit so the cost balances out over time. He added that by increasing the income levels we have not drastically changed the numbers because we have the shift in participants. Mr. Stokesbury commented that there are more people getting smaller benefits as you go through the age cycle. Mr. DerAsadourian agreed. He noted that total participants has increased at the State level going up to \$42,200 we had 168 participants in 2014 and 155 participants in 2015 but if we look at the Town program in 2014 we had 97 participants and in 2015 we had 117 participants. Chairman Zacchio questioned if that was predominantly based on our change to the program. Mr. DerAsadourian responded that it is just the nature of the program; the income change occurred on the 2014 grand list and carried over to 2015 so the income change was from 2013 to 2014, 2014 to 2015 stayed the same and if you choose to make a change this year it is going to be 2016 to 2017 that will be affected by the change. He noted that his recommendation is not to make any changes because the State has not changed its income limits and Social Security had a very minor change, inflation is less than 3%, the benefit is indexed to the mill rate so we are increasing the benefit. He added that any revenue that is lost will be made up by the other taxpayers so it is a re-distribution.

Mr. Speich questioned the income that the people have and they apply with and if it has anything to do with assets. Mr. DerAsadourian responded that it has nothing to do with assets; it is adjusted gross income plus the full social security and if they do not file a tax return it is whatever income they have (pension, dividends, or social security). Mr. Speich commented that there is a State program and a local program and people can qualify for both. Mr. DerAsadourian responded yes, if their income is below \$42,400 they qualify for both. He added that with the State program, \$0 to \$42,400 that credit that the property owner receives is reimbursed to us by the State so there is no revenue lost unless they do not fully fund the program. He noted that the only revenue lost for the Town is the Town program that you have full control over and the two-year provision is so that you can evaluate the program. Chairman Zacchio asked if we expect the State numbers to move. Mr. DerAsadourian responded that the State numbers are reviewed each year and they look at inflation and social security benefits and made a decision not to increase them this year. He noted that is one of the reasons we did not

talk about indexing the income years ago because we did not want to have runaway income limits. Mr. Speich commented that the purpose of this is to relieve certain citizens of tax burden; we talk about social security benefits and things that people use as a gauge but what about the taxes; he does not necessarily agree that we should not do something. He added that if the State is going to be increasing your taxes and shedding money down to us and asked if that is something we should be considering for the upcoming year. The Town Manager commented that the amount of the benefit does increase the dollar value every year by whatever the percentage is in the mill rate increase and we are talking about a redistribution program so any revenue that is lost is spread across the tax base. Chairman Zacchio questioned if there is a way for us to determine that there are a number of people we could capture and help; this is always the discussion that we have, what is the waterfall to get there. Mr. DerAsadourian responded that they did a benefit comparison with other towns; we are at \$55,000 and Glastonbury is at \$56,890 (by ordinance) and Granby is at \$59,600 (indexed). He added that in terms of raising the income limit to try to capture more individuals that might qualify, we have turned away a lot but every incremental increase does help someone. He noted that maybe we could make a modest rise in the maximum income and come back next year and see how many participants there were and know better what the State is doing in terms of the benefit side. He suggested that if you are interested in increasing the limit to try to capture a few more people he would take the benefits and even them out; if you increase the \$55,000 to \$57,500 then you would have an approximate \$10,000 distance between the groupings and the \$2,500 might bring in a few more people. Chairman Zacchio commented that he likes the progressive thinking and see it year by year as it is the struggle that we have each year, every time we look at this and how it affects people and do it in such a way that makes sense. Mr. DerAsadourian responded that in terms of data that is out there we extract information from the Census, the last one in 2010, and the elderly population of 65 years or older was around 15% in terms of property owners (it is actually 18% but you have to strip out the rental apartments that are age restricted), then look at the income which goes up to \$50,000, then from \$50,000 to \$75,000 on the Census and do make some projections that maybe we can look at next time in 2017. Chairman Zacchio questioned if the suggestion is if we want to do something now to increase the Town limit from \$55,000 to \$57,500, then do some monitoring and have some metric about how it helped us and have something to pivot off of. Mr. DerAsadourian responded yes, we would also have what the State is doing in terms of their income limits and reimbursement. Chairman Zacchio commented that he likes this approach.

Mr. Stokesbury commented that what we do not know is what the State may do to the reimbursement back to the Town as one of the wealthy towns on the State portion, as certainly the Board of Education has seen for many years in the ECS calculations and that was across the board; the State may be more targeted based on how it perceives wealth. Mr. Stokesbury commented that we need to go slowly, we may be in a time of new reality and does not want to build a very expensive program that we cannot afford; we are best served by moving incrementally and staying within our own fiscal resources. Mr. Stokesbury questioned how many taxpayers are there in the pool when we are talking about 265 applicants per year; how does that compare to the total taxpayers. Mr. DerAsadourian responded that for residential accounts, we have approximately 6,500. Mr. Stokesbury commented that then this is a tiny number. Mr. DerAsadourian noted that we have some residents that are seniors that claim Florida or North Carolina as their residence. Mr. Stokesbury clarified that they would be excluded from eligibility. Mr. DerAsadourian responded yes. He added that we do know what

the situation is regarding State reimbursements and has been for the past two years; in the past they have fully funded the tax relief program to towns and if they had not budgeted enough they would find the funds to make towns whole. He added that the new approach is we are budgeting x number of dollars, if the requests are greater than what we budgeted we pro-rate the reimbursement and that is true for the State owned PILOT program, the disabled veterans' program, and the homeowners' program; the reimbursement for the veterans' program is small at 2 or 3%, the reimbursement for State owned property might have been 11-12%, the funding is 88-89% reimbursement, the homeowners' program is around 88-89% reimbursement; this is to all communities and not just Avon. Chairman Zacchio commented that we take that risk on every promise from the State but we still want to do what we think is right. Mr. DerAsadourian commented that an additional \$2,500 is a good move, it balances out the distribution of the income table and we can see what effect it has; if the mill rate goes up 3% the benefit is going to go up 3%. Mr. Stokesbury commented that he would like to see the potential impact of different reductions in the actual credit from the State and how that would impact the total cost to the program as we look at it. Chairman Zacchio responded that we are in that risk already; indexing may or may not have an effect on that. He asked if we could act on this tonight and index it \$2,500 higher. Mr. DerAsadourian responded that this would be for the July 2017 tax bills; the reimbursement comes in at the end of December. Mr. Stokesbury commented that for our FY 18 budget he would like to have some idea of the range of impact on State action will have if you look at this program on an isolated basis; what is the range of maximum impact. Mr. DerAsadourian responded that the State request is in the \$80,000 range. Mr. Stokesbury commented that as we continue doing this we have to look at more possibilities or probabilities; he is not against a meaningful program and would like to see if we can capture a few more people without increasing the known cost to us. Mr. DerAsadourian responded that we are losing some at the higher benefit and replacing them at the lower benefit; as far as the State reimbursement we will not know until the budget is set and then they won't know what the allocation or percentage change will be until the towns file their request which will be around fall 2017. He added that if we revisit this in a year we will know the State reimbursement and how many people this benefited. He recommended increasing the range by \$2,500 and revisit it a year from now. The Town Manager noted that we have a Town newsletter going to press tomorrow and can highlight this change within the program.

On a motion made by Mr. Zacchio, seconded by Mr. Speich, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council extend the Town Elderly Tax Relief Program (Town Council Policy #17) and increase the income range from \$55,000 to \$57,500 as recommended by the Tax Assessor and Town Manager.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Pena, Speich, and Stokesbury voted in favor.

Chairman Zacchio thanked Mr. DerAsadourian. He noted that it is important in terms of us tracking this and pivoting off of; the State is in a fiscal condition that it is and we are at risk for every one of these programs and anything that we get from a State dollar perspective to be shorted, we see it happening all over the place, we need to look at the big picture focus all of the time. He asked the Town Manager to look at this one as a test and track it and report back. The Town Manager noted that as we work through the revenue budget for the Town Manager's proposed budget we are looking at intergovernmental reductions just for modeling purposes at 25/50/75% reduction; about 5.3% of the overall General Government operating budget, Board of Education bottom line comes from intergovernmental revenues. He added that Actual FY 16

versus Budgeted FY 17 for Education Cost Sharing (ECS) we are seeing a 45% decrease if the numbers hold so everything is going down. Mr. Pena questioned how somebody finds out about the benefit aside from the Town newsletter. Mr. DerAsadourian responded that there is also a tab on the Town web site under the Assessor's web page, along with veterans' and renter's benefits. Mr. Pena noted that most seniors do not utilize the internet. Mr. DerAsadourian responded that in the past we have gone to the Senior Center. Council agreed that any time a change is made, we should go to the Senior Center and share the news. Mr. DerAsadourian would take care of that. He also clarified that the recommendation included the renewal for two years. Chairman Zacchio responded yes. Council thanked Mr. DerAsadourian.

16/17-39 Review, Discussion, Set Public Hearing Date: Road Acceptances for Fairway Ridge and Pioneer Drive Extension

On a motion made by Mr. Stokesbury, seconded by Mrs. Maguire, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council set a public hearing date to be held at their February 2, 2017 meeting to consider the acceptance of the title of roads and all appurtenances thereof for Fairway Ridge and an extension of Pioneer Drive as certain pieces or parcels of land situated in the Town of Avon, County of Hartford and State of Connecticut shown and designated as "Fairway Ridge" on a map entitled "SUBDIVISION PLAN PREPARED FOR FAIRWAY RIDGE LLC; 135 & 175 FRANDEL DRIVE, AVON CONNECTICUT" maps 1 thru 4; Scale 1"=100' and 1"=40' dated 03-06-09 revised to 10-16-09 which maps are on file in the Avon Land Records as May #10/04 thru 10/07.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Pena, Stokesbury, and Speich voted in favor.

16/17-40 Review, Discussion, Set Public Hearing Date: Sidewalk Easement from Riverdale Farms, LLC, 124 Simsbury Road

Mr. Speich questioned why we are holding a public hearing for this sidewalk easement; we did not hold one on other sidewalks. The Town Manager responded that the easement allows the public to walk over the property; the abutters retain all of the responsibility in terms of maintenance, snow plowing, etc. He noted that we will maintain the lights but all other responsibilities are theirs. Mr. Speich questioned that all other sidewalks put in have been on Town property with the exception of these two. The Town Manager responded that we have not done any new sidewalks in quite a long time.

On a motion made by Mr. Pena, seconded by Mr. Stokesbury, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council set a public hearing date to be held at their February 2, 2017 meeting to consider the acceptance of a sidewalk easement for the area of the property between the highway line designated as "Simsbury Road (CT Route 10 and 202)" and the line designated as the "Project Limit" which runs along the westerly portion of property known as 124 Simsbury Road as shown on a certain map or plan entitled "PROPOSED AVON STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT", Scale: 1"=40', July 17, 2015, Sheet 1, prepared by the Town of Avon Engineering Department.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Pena, Stokesbury, and Speich voted in favor.

16/17-41 Review, Discussion, Set Public Hearing Date: Sidewalk Easement from Silvio Brighenti Family Wellness Center, LLC, 100 Simsbury Road

On a motion made by Mr. Stokesbury, seconded by Mrs. Maguire, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council set a public hearing date to be held at their February 2, 2017 meeting to consider the acceptance of a sidewalk easement for the area of the property between the highway line designated as “Simsbury Road (CT Route 10 and 202)” and the line designated as the “Project Limit” which runs along the westerly portion of property known as 100 Simsbury Road as shown on a certain map or plan entitled “PROPOSED AVON STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT”, Scale: 1”=40’, July 17, 2015, Sheet 1, prepared by the Town of Avon Engineering Department.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Pena, Stokesbury, and Speich voted in favor.

Mr. Speich clarified that these easements run all the way down to the Simsbury town line. Chairman Zacchio responded yes. The Town Manager added that Simsbury is going to have a sidewalk heading south. Ms. Howard questioned what the easement is for. Chairman Zacchio responded that it allows people to walk over it because it is not Town property.

16/17-42 Approval of Real Estate Tax Refunds, \$6,807.89

On a motion made by Mr. Stokesbury, seconded by Mrs. Maguire, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council approves real estate tax refunds to Corelogic Tax Services in the amounts of \$3,221.66 and \$3,586.23.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Pena, Speich, and Stokesbury voted in favor.

Mr. Stokesbury noted that in the trade this is something that happens because of the lead time and the notice that an attorney or a homeowner would give the lender that they are going to pay it off, sometimes dumped in the automatic payment schedule; we handle it efficiently.

16/17-43 Resignation: Board of Assessment Appeals (R – 12/31/2019)

Chairman Zacchio noted that Samuel Chester has been an asset to the Town, participated on many boards, and always looked out for the best for Avon.

On a motion made by Mr. Zacchio, seconded by Mr. Pena, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council accept with regret the resignation of Samuel Chester from the Board of Assessment Appeals.

Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Zacchio, Pena, Speich, and Stokesbury voted in favor.

IX. TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT/MISCELLANEOUS

Misc. A: Purchasing Update: The Town Manager reported that we are working to finalize a scope of services with Fuss & O’Neill to help us with the Old Farms Road Project; we had a meeting yesterday with Fuss and CRCOG Transportation staff and based on it the scope is going to change a little bit and expect to have something by the end of the month so we can keep moving this project forward. He recalled that when we last talked about this over the summer we have \$1.4 million that has been allocated through STP program at CRCOG to offset the costs of the north/south section of the road reconstruction. He noted that CRCOG is recommending that we might be better served by going through the LOTCIP program which does not allow funding for design services. He noted that we may need to find a new funding mechanism to get through

the design process for the project and do it off budget cycle as the next LOTCIP application is due by December 2017 and if we wait until July 1st it will not be enough time to get an application done. He added that we may get into a situation much like we did with Old Wheeler Lane and when we funded the feasibility work for Old Farms Road which was to get in advance through Unassigned Fund Balance and replenish it either through the capital budget or other funding source.

The Town Manager reported that Michael Trick, Fire Chief, was going to Gowans-Knight tonight to do the final check of the new Engine 7, which will be coming here soon and is great news.

The Town Manager reported that the Assistant to the Town Manager did a great job working with the Board of Education and our consultant through CCM to put our electricity loads out to bid; our current contracts expire in December 2017 but from the perspective from the people that are in the market now is a good time to lock in and get a real premium in terms of rate for doing that; new contracts are now in place for January 2018.

The Town Manager reported that we did an RFP for Legal Services for the Assistant Town Attorney for the legal work that may be necessary given the CT Water acquisition of the Avon Water Company; we received five responses and have a short list of three firms; we have a committee with the Town Planner, Town Engineer, and Assistant to the Town Manager to interview the firms, make a recommendation to him, he will do a final interview and then make a recommendation to Council for the appointment; the goal is to have it on the February agenda.

The Town Manager reported that there are bids in development for sewer extensions on Paper Chase, Hurdle Fence, Stony Corners, and Winding Lane which the Engineering Department is working on.

Misc. B: Construction Update: The Town Manager reported on the Fire Training Center and all financials have been given to Farmington. He noted that Council had authorized the use of some fund equity in one of the capital accounts that was originally appropriated for apparatus and have not had to use it; we spent in-kind services with a value of approximately \$174,000 and used FEMA rates to calculate that amount; total project cost was just north of \$1 million which is about exactly what we thought it would be. Chairman Zacchio commented that thankfully we had the Public Works Department to be able to pull a lot of that weight to keep it there. Mr. Stokesbury commented that the total project is \$1.75 million and our contribution was roughly \$400,000. He questioned if that is because the State grant came off the top. The Town Manager responded that this is just the Avon portion; there is the Farmington Fire Department and the Town of Farmington; Farmington has taken the grant of \$200,000 off the bottom line. Mr. Stokesbury questioned if it is fully funded. The Town Manager responded yes.

The Assistant to the Town Manager commented on the STEAP project and that the light fixtures arrived today; we still need Eversource to install the new meter at Sperry and as early as next week will start on the Brighenti's property and work their way towards the Simsbury line.

The Town Manager reported on the Police Department Improvements project which will start in the spring; there is some design work to do, we will have to go to Inland Wetlands for approval.

He noted that \$400,000 has been put in capital for FY 18. He added that this will be funded in three steps: an original appropriation for \$25,000 for design, \$250,000 in the current fiscal year, and next year finish off the balance of the project and complete by the end of FY 18.

The Town Manager reported that work continues at Company #4. He also reported on the Fisher Meadows expansion project which we want to start in March; a lot of work will be done in-house. He will start working with the Finance Director in January on the financial arrangement for the supplemental appropriations; funding will come from two Special Revenue Funds, Fisher Meadows and Fee In Lieu of Open Space, and the FY 18 capital budget totaling approximately \$600,000. He noted that by keeping it in-house there is an opportunity cost, of course while staff is working on this there are other projects that they cannot be working on, but we save about \$500,000 versus having outside crews do the work and most of our costs are for the rental of equipment that we do not own. He added that we recently received re-approval from the Inland Wetlands Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission has also given their approval so permits are in place.

Misc. C: Vermillion/Oak Bluff Water Supply: The Town Manager reported that this has been discussed with Fire Chief Mike Trick, Assistant Chief Bruce Appell, and Fire Marshal Jamie DiPace and the Chief believes that having an additional water supply in this area could certainly be beneficial. He added that our recommendation is that we go ahead with the normal process for a capital project; first is the program which we have determined that the improvement would be of benefit, then it is feasibility, permit, design and construction. We do not know if there will be dredging involved or what the permitting will be. Chairman Zacchio commented that it may sound easy but we do not own it. The Town Manager responded that before we can figure any of that out we need to know what we are dealing with. He noted that we met with Jim Genco and Brian Harvey, residents of that neighborhood, explained to them the strategy and path, they were fine with it and understood it will take time and not a commitment to do the project. Chairman Zacchio commented that the Fire Department did a test to siphon from that site. The Town Manager responded that they did so yesterday and it took about a half hour to get the water running. He noted that with a dry hydrant you would have a connection at the edge of the right of way to pull up and connect to. Mr. Speich noted that there is a dry hydrant on Country Club Road. Chairman Zacchio commented that the half hour is a lot of time; the tanker strike force probably moved much faster than that just to get the first water on the site. Mr. Speich commented that ponds do not always have water in them all year long; the pond referred to by Mr. Farrell is dry half the year, the other pond usually has water on it but at any height throughout the year. He added that when you have dry years like we have been having there is no runoff. The Town Manager commented that it is a calculation that if it is a \$100,000 project the Fire Department may look at it and say that money may be better spent on apparatus, equipment, facilities that serve the entire Town. Mr. Speich commented that there are a few streets on the top of Avon Mountain that have cisterns in them and that is a sure amount of water.

Misc. D: Traffic Issues: The Town Manager reported that we have contracted with Fuss & O'Neill to take a look at the intersections of West Avon/Country Club Road and Country Club Road/Burnham and looking for their recommendations for improvements. He also reported on the traffic lights in flash mode and Sgt. Gannon did some research on this; the State is doing that as an electricity savings. He added that as the State is replacing the lights they are getting them to cycle. He asked the Chief of Police to ask that the State look at the intersections of

Lovely/Country Club Road and West Avon/Country Club Road which are not on the schedule for replacement for years out and see if an internal change can be made on those. He added that West Avon/Arch is up for a replacement and will go on a regular cycle.

Misc. E: UCONN Paramedic Service: The Town Manager reported that the last agreement with UCONN was approved for a 6-month extension because UCONN was talking about getting out of that business. He noted that we received notification from Chief Brown at UCONN in early December that they are discontinuing their intercept service but still available on a mutual aid basis. He added that Chief Mark Rinaldo ran the call volume for the intercept service and it declined over the years and no impact to Avon. Mr. Stokesbury commented that it is declining because we have AMR and not the call volume. The Town Manager responded that it is the number of responses. He noted that in terms of the savings, we were paying UCONN approximately \$28,000 per year and that funding will be reallocated. Mr. Speich questioned if the cost has gone up for AMR because of the paramedic service. The Town Manager responded that there is no fee from the Town for AMR; we do give the ability to stage at the Public Work facility but they bill based on the calls to patients.

Misc. F: Fire Facility Assessment Committee: The Town Manager reported that their first meeting was held on December 14th and another meeting should be scheduled in January.

Mr. Pena questioned the status on the Avon Village Center project. The Town Manager responded that the excavation process has stopped and we are trying to understand why and when it is going to get started again. He noted that the site is stabilized; in terms of the conditions that went along with the permit they have the rip rap up and sedimentation control so we will not have to deal with any erosion. Chairman Zacchio commented on what difference it makes until they have a site plan in place. The Town Manager responded that the Planning and Zoning Commission has approved a conceptual plan and from there have to fill in the details.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pending Claim/Litigation
Collective Bargaining
Real Estate

On a motion made by Mr. Pena, seconded by Mrs. Maguire, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council go into Executive Session at 9:38 p.m.
Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Pena, Zacchio, Stokesbury, and Speich voted in favor.

The Town Manager, Assistant to the Town Manager, and Town Clerk attended the session.

XII. ADJOURN

On a motion made by Mr. Pena, seconded by Mrs. Maguire, it was voted:

RESOLVED: That the Town Council adjourn the meeting at 9:54 p.m.
Mrs. Maguire, Messrs: Stokesbury, Zacchio, Pena, and Speich voted in favor.

Attest:

Ann L. Dearstyne, Town Clerk

2016 AVON DAY COMMITTEE'S FINAL REPORT TO THE AVON TOWN COUNCIL

Avon Day was held on Saturday, September 24, 2016. The event began at 11:00 a.m. and concluded at 5:30 p.m.

AVON DAY 2016 was successful, although the committee still felt the "pinch," and residents had numerous comments about things to work on. \$ 9,561 was raised through ticket sales (down \$1,500). After expenses, the committee's check to the Town of Avon's Special Needs Fund was \$7,500.00. The significant increase was due in part to the decrease in tent costs. Due to a change in the accounting format, we don't have the amount in hand to begin Avon Day 2017. By the Town Council meeting in January, we will have the information to report.

Corporate and non-profit booths increased this year to 66; due, in part, to the decrease in booth fees. Ticket sales were down, due to an awareness that there were difficulties with the inflatables; that restaurant menu's were not "Fair Food;" and that people think that Avon Day is "the same old thing" every year.

The Avon Day Committee worked diligently this past year, conducting monthly meetings and working directly with Parks & Recreation, Public Works, the Board of Education, the Police Department, and Volunteer Fire Department. The Committee thanks all of these departments for their cooperation and assistance throughout the year and on the day of the event.

Special thanks to Laurie Rotundo of the Public Works Department and Sharon Brummert of the Parks & Recreation Department for their tireless hours of work during the year and on Avon Day itself.

Of course, Avon Day would not be possible without the cooperation from our Town Manager, Brandon Robertson, and the Town Council. The Committee thanks you for your support and assistance.

The Committee has been discussing:

- How to "Re-boot" Avon Day to increase visibility, ticket sales, entertainment, and attendance.
- How to get more food vendors, and encourage them to sell "Fair Food;"
- How to increase corporate booths and sponsors; and
- How to get volunteers to staff the token booths
- (please refer to the attached list of comments and suggestions and we will discuss)

Despite this year's shortcomings, the Committee requests that:

- We continue Avon Day Next year, but change its name to "Celebrate Avon;"
- We add food trucks and "Fair Food" to our Taste of Avon;
- The committee remains the same (all committee members have agreed to continue with their same level of involvement);
- Town Employees Laurie Rotundo and Sharon Brummert continue at their same level of involvement;
- Avon Day 2017 be scheduled for Saturday, September 23, 2017 with a rain date of Sunday, September 24, 2017, and that the location will remain the same – the fields at Thompson Brook School.

Respectively Submitted,

The Avon Day Committee