

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE AGAWAM CITY COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 19, 2008

President Letellier – Welcome to the Agawam City Council Meeting, Regular Meeting, for Tuesday, February 19, 2008.

Item 1. Citizen's Speak Time

President Letellier – Our first item of agenda is Citizen's Speak Time. For those of you who may not have spoken before, each speaker is allotted five minutes. If you do not use your entire five minutes you may not give that time to someone else. We would ask that comments be kept to the topic of interest. You each have signed up for an item. We have approximately three pages. After forty-five minutes, under the Council rules, Citizen's Speak Time would need a motion to be extended. Our first speaker is John Cappuccilli.

John Cappuccilli – Hi. My name is John Cappuccilli, 50 Red Fox Drive in Feeding Hills. I'm a member of the Ad Hoc Committee, Concerned Citizens Sewers. I've been on this committee since 2003. I was on since its inception. Tonight I took the liberty of putting together some informational pamphlets. This was not authorized by the Ad Hoc Committee or the Town Council; I just want to make that clear. This is information that I passed out before the meeting, that these are documents that I came across in our meetings. It's just comparative costs of what other town have done and how they funded it. It shows what the Agawam citizens are paying today who have sewers. I want to start off saying that I am not in favor of the, this proposal, TOR-2007-11, as it's written. I'm in favor of sewers and I was passing out these brochures, this information and a lot of people say they are in favor of sewers. I know there's a lot of people out there who do not have any problems but it's the cost. The cost is inhibitive to the sewers. The homeowners here are facing either replacement of septic systems down the road at a horrendous cost or come up with a proposal like this at a horrendous cost. I think as a community, we could come together. I think we could vote this down tonight and we still have two years on the licenses. I'd like to see a re-awakening of this. This has been a long, arduous process to get the licenses. It was very unexciting work and there wasn't much to talk about. But now the licenses are in place and I would like to propose, and I talked to some of the members on the Ad Hoc Committee, we need fresh, fresh ideas. We need to get information; we need somebody to make a website, to post information as the committee progresses and tries to get funds. We need people to call their state and local representatives, federal senators to get, to try and get funding. And in the end, and in the end, the last two years and we can't get the job done and the cost is still too high, well we have to walk away from this project or we can't say that we didn't try. It would be a shame to have a, to think this is gonna be a victory tonight, to defeat the proposal. I say to defeat the proposal tonight but let's as a community get together to try, to explore,

to find out how can we get this job done. This is a community effort and as a community, we should come together and not let our neighbors hang out, out there in the open. I don't have a problem with my septic system. I've lived in my house for thirty years. My neighbors do. I'm not doing this for myself. I'm doing this for, when I moved into my house I was 32 -33 years old, I, now I'm facing retirement age. I couldn't afford sewers then, I can't afford them now. We need the help of the federal government. We need the help, we need our elected officials to do due diligence to find a way to get this job done. Thank you very much.

President Letellier – Thank you, Mr. Cappuccilli. Our next speaker is Billy Chester.

Billy Chester – Good evening Councilors. My name is Billy Chester. I reside at 320 Barry Street in Feeding Hills. I do hope you have your hearing aids on tonight to listen to what the people are trying to tell you. I appreciate the time and effort spent on putting the project together but this project has become one big mess and with all due respect, it is time to put the issue to rest until state and federal funding becomes available to help pay for this project. The way it has been proposed at this present time would become a financial hardship on a lot of citizens, plus a lot of citizens have indicated they do not want the sewers. I request that this project be brought back onto the table and every councilor vote no and turn the project down until additional funding becomes available to help defray the cost. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you Mr. Chester. Next we have Helen Chester.

Helen Chester – Helen Chester, 320 Barry Street. At the last council meeting, six councilors had the courage to vote no on a request from CPA for \$12,000.00 for design fees for two neighborhood parks. These councilors had the foresight to look beyond the mere \$12,000.00 to the financial ramifications of this request. The state is reducing the matching funds to 75% and may phase it out entirely. The focus should be on completing and maintaining projects already begun before this happened. Then we the taxpayers pay entirely. This money is the one percent surcharge on our tax bills. We are facing difficult financial economy. The Mayor auctioned two homes just a couple weeks ago. I ask the Council to again demonstrate that same courage and foresight to bring the financially devastating sewer expansion amendment back on the table and vote it down until additional funding can be obtained. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you Mrs. Chester. Next we have Daniel O'Neil.

Daniel O'Neil – Council members. My name is Daniel O'Neil. I live at 66 South West Street and I'd like to thank the first gentleman that came up and said you know, he's trying to go along with everyone that we DO need this problem. And I agree with him that it's, we can't afford this and we have to find the funding BUT I have lived in this same house since 1972 and I grew up when my parents were alive, mopping up raw sewage in our cellar, all the time coming in. And we've had the house perked tested and there is NO WAY we can put in a new system. It just can't be done there. If it can't be done, it's gonna be a lot more than the twenty something thousand dollars to put in the

whole system 'cuz it would have to be moved to a different area of our yard, in the front. And it just, it just can't happen. And right now, with our laundry, our laundry, we have a hose going down the yard, down the driveway, all of our laundry we have to do down the driveway which is the case with most of our neighbors on South West Street there, most of 'em – that's what we have to do. It's just ridiculous there but we have to do it, it's like we're camping. We can't, we've got signs on both our toilets "DO NOT FLUSH" because if I'm in the shower which I'm in the shower and I'm up to my ankles in water cuz it won't go down, and my wife forgets in the upstairs bathroom, she flushes the toilet. Well, needless to say, what is on my ankles you know and that is a fact there that it comes in. And I have four year old twins and every time that they take a bath we have to bleach the tub before you know they can even take a bath. This is ridiculous. I know people can't afford this, they want to put it off but what are we supposed to do in the meantime? I've been doing this for years and it's just gone on and on. I just, I think it's terrible that we have to live like this. I agree that the state or federal should help us but I think this is a whole city project that everybody should pay. All you people maybe a couple of you don't have sewers you know so I think we should all pay and get together and pay, everybody pay the cost so we have sewers. We have one little area up there that doesn't have sewers and this has gone on for TOO long. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you Mr. O'Neil. Our next speaker is Paul Lagassi.

Paul Lagassi – Hi. Thank you. My name is Paul Lagasse. I live at 571 Barry Street in Feeding Hills. I've been a resident since 1981. I'm here to speak against the proposed plan for sewers in the southwest section of Feeding Hills. I'm not against sewers in general. I feel that the proposed method of paying for this capital on the backs of some nine hundred Feeding Hills residents is not only unfair but it's quite unethical as well. Mr. Stone described this project in the minutes from the 22nd, "I believe and I've been here for like forty years, this is the largest project the town may have undertaken." He said, "the TOWN may have undertaken". In the minutes, Mr. Stone says "you know, we the administration don't feel like sewer users can afford a big hike to pay for this project" and he quoted some numbers. It's great that he didn't feel that the sewer users could pay but the numbers he quoted were a current rate of \$2.00 going to \$4.50. And that rate if you work it out increases everybody's sewer bill \$276.00. So obviously if we can't afford \$276.00 across the entire tax base, the Feeding Hills residents could have their taxes go up \$1000 due to the lien. It's something like the Beverly Hillbillies – there's gold in them there hills! Mr. Stone also said there's a condominium project out there that's got you know, that's gonna go and develop some of the land, when they connect and they're gonna use those sewers; they would then pay \$4,000 per unit as they connect up upon it. Now, if I got that wrong I apologize but that's what was in the minutes verbatim. So I pay \$20,000 to have a town-owned pipe installed only to have a condo builder pay \$4,000 a unit to hook-up? Sounds like the condo builder should be paying \$20,000 plus \$4,000 per unit. If the administration and council's view or IS IT the administration and council's view that it's okay to have current residents pick up future costs for developers so that the town can increase its total tax base on the base of our... (APPLAUSE) Mr. Stone also said he spoke to Mayor Dawson and the minutes reflect "I've explained the program and project to Mayor Dawson. She understands the project.

She has an interest in getting sewers out there to encourage perhaps some industrial development where the town has some land.” And “up there, the only reason it can’t be used is that there are no sewers out there. She has indicated she supports me and wishes me well going forward.” So it seems like the town is very much interested in developing some sewers up there to get some industrial land developed and increase to town’s tax base. Also from the minutes, the outcome from the Wastewater Disposal...was brought up. Mr. Stone’s response was “the report did show various areas where there were very severe problems, some with moderate, some with not so severe and actually some had no problems whatsoever.” So it’s clear to me that not everybody in Feeding Hills needs a sewer, perhaps the ones in certain sections do. There were no statistics quoted at that meeting to let us know 10% of the people need it...building areas. If you map it out by area and you count the percentage of area needed for sewers in there, there’s ten percent of those areas absolutely need sewers. I feel bad for those folks but they should be handled on an individual basis. Nine hundred of us shouldn’t have to pay for ten percent of the area. One example of this is, we’re putting the pipe down Barry Street, all of the way down Pine and across Barry, those areas are noted to be good soil areas and have good septic systems. In fact, the houses on the streets of Barry, Christopher and Dutchmaster are all fairly new houses with newer (sewer) systems that are likely to last upwards of twenty years. The only reason I can think of that it’s going down in that area is because it has to go by the developer’s property, it has to go by the town property, and there’s a lot of taxable houses in that area that would be more than willing of course to pay \$1000 lien on their house if they were to put this in. So my question is, how many in the town actually in the town government are going to have to pay \$20,000.00 or have a \$20,000 lien put on their houses? This certainly strikes me as ‘taxation without representation’. And I really, it would behoove you people to at least think about us. There’s two hundred people sitting in the audience tonight plus they’re asking you to do the right thing. I ask this council to listen to people. Hundreds have turned out and so far the folks that have spoken have gotten applause. It seems clear to me that the residents of Feeding Hills don’t want the sewer financed the way it’s currently envisioned. I ask the Council to take it off the table, vote no tonight on this and then get back to work with our state and federal reps to what we citizens pay you to do. Get the grants, get the federal money, cut expenses in the town or find other avenues because it’s clearly a town wide benefit, just as Mr. Stone and the Mayor have stated in the minutes of the last meeting. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you, Mr. Lagasse. Our next two speakers have the same names so I’ll refer to them by street. First we have James Peterson from South West Street.

James Peterson - Good evening. James Peterson, 734 South West Street, Feeding Hills. Before I start, I’d just like to thank God that we live in a country where we can all get together with our government and air our differences and just let, let the government know how we feel about proposals that are being done that are gonna affect our lives. With that being said, I am against the proposed financing of the sewer project. I am for sewers. I don’t know who, anybody wouldn’t be for sewers but the way that this is being funded is just, it just doesn’t make any sense. And um, in the information that the Ad

Hoc Committee put out, on the first page it said that it was, you guys, they applied for Assistance Programs and the guidelines were not met so the project was rejected. I was wondering what the guidelines were and can't the project be reworded or reworked to conform to those guidelines? I am, I am all for exhausting any type of paperwork and time that is needed to look into getting the state and federal funds that are probably available if those guidelines are met rather than putting on the backs of nine hundred residents who may or may not need it. For one, I don't need, the septic system, I am in a good area or my septic system's in a good area, it's well maintained and I don't foresee having any trouble with it. So I am not sure if I am one of the people who are going to benefit where it says the number of people who are gonna benefit from this. I do believe it's been said that the town is gonna benefit. I may be able to flush without the risk of backing up into my house. If my septic system fails, but if I'm gonna put in a sewer system that's gonna allow industrial area to be built in my area where the town is gonna get a better tax revenue, I don't know how I benefit from that. Maybe that can be explained but I thank you and again, I'm against the financing of this project.

President Letellier – Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Next we have James Peterson from Cooper Street.

James Peterson – Good evening ladies and gentlemen. My name is James A. Peterson. I live at 652 Cooper Street in Agawam. Now I basically have a number of questions delving into the financing of this project. I think my son, who you just heard from, mentioned the guidelines were rejected and to me a sewer system is a sewer system. It's piping, pumping stations and installation so why is the guidelines from one system different from other ones? They all do the same process. The second question is as far as the bonding goes, when you're talking about existing assessments, now the way I understand this assessment to present people who live in Agawam but not in this particular impacted area, it goes from \$2.28 per hundred cubic feet and that's based on I would suspect water usage cuz you don't have sewers, to \$4.50. That's 100% increase! You know, and that raises a question there. Now as far as, it says you have to make it an Enterprise System because whatever funds the fees generate, go into the General Fund. But you have processes amongst yourself to transfer funds from one area to another okay? In fact, you mention one on this other handout, number three, you're gonna be discussing transferring funds into Veteran's Affairs, so why is it in an Enterprise System, or it has to be developed? Also, I have to question the bonding. Now we all know, you quote the cost of this as 31 million dollars, is that 2008 dollars or what? So you float a bond and it turns out the contractor who makes the bid, he's sixty-two percent done and the \$31 million is gone, what happens then? Do you have to float another bond? Or do you simply raise the fees for everybody? Or do you come back and say "Oops!" Three letters, four letters that scare everybody. Also, probably one of the primary reasons that funding was not available for this especially through the state and I would suspect the federal government is that wonderful project down in Boston known as the Big Dig. That's got to be the biggest sewer system in the world as far as I'm concerned! Fourteen and a half billion dollars and Western Massachusetts has paid a dear price in loss of funding for its own infrastructure and I would suggest that our representatives, they get their put to the fire. To not request these funds, but to go down and say, demand them,

they demand Western Massachusetts' fair share of the tax dollars that we are sending to Boston. (APPLAUSE) Basically that I would suspect that could be one of the reasons why the so called "guidelines" were rejected cuz they say we have no money. They have no money so it just all goes to Boston. But uh, basically, I just wanted to raise those questions and hopefully you know they will be answered. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Next we have Shannon Page.

Shannon Page – Hi. Good evening. Shannon Page, 47 Barbara Lane. It's kind of déjà vu from a couple weeks ago. I have to first thank Mr. Rossi for listening to us. It seems like you seem to be the one who not only listens but can understand and see the big picture. We're gathering you in front of all of you for the second time. You don't want to see our faces any more than we want to spend the night here arguing with you. It's an expensive project. You know that. We can't afford it. You know that. Which one of you wants to look at one of my kids and say mom and dad may not be able to put you to college because we're paying for something that we don't want and we don't need. When I heard the story about the man with the four-year old twins that crushes me as a mother. And it bothers me to think that this town has done nothing to help those people because my God, that poor man and that family, if it was me, I'd be at all your homes every night at bath time. (APPLAUSE) Would sewers be nice? I think we're all in agreement, absolutely when the funding is there. \$20,000.00 or \$30,000.00 is not an acceptable amount of money to ask people to pay. If I want to spend twenty or thirty thousand, I'm thinking new pool, granite countertops, something of my choice. I can flush my toilet just fine. Those people cannot. That ten percent needs help and I think instead of trying to get us all to pay this incredible amount of money, maybe you should spend some of the efforts to try to help those ten percent and those poor four-year old twins who are swimming in feces in their tub. At the last meeting after everyone left, I don't know how many people actually turned the TV back on, but I did. And Mr. Mineo at the very end you had said, that's it's true you're taking a bad rap for a lot of this by being the chairman of it, but you also made very clear you weren't necessarily in favor of it. And I was pleased to hear that because I think we're looking at you ALL as this group that's going to be detrimental to our livelihoods, be detrimental to our lives. Prove to us that you understand us. Prove to us that you're gonna make things right. I understand, Mr. Mineo, you used to be my neighbor a few years ago and moved out of our area. You were smart to move out and if I had the foresight, I would have moved out too! (APPLAUSE) In closing, I have to say something that I think is on a lot of people's minds but no one said it up to this point. This sewer project has gained a lot of attention. At the last meeting, at this meeting, we've had all three major news stations here. We've had two of the local Agawam papers, we've had the Republican, we've had hundreds of people who have spent their time at these meetings. Does anybody notice the one person who's been missing? (MAYOR) The Mayor! (APPLAUSE) I don't know about all of you but it's very disheartening for me to know that the person who is leading this town can't find the time to come and confront all of us, to face us!

President Letellier – All right folks. Let the speaker speak. Thank you.

Shannon Page – Well, I just heard that she was out in the hall. What I'd like to do is have her at some point come in. Face us! Look at us and when we try to say something to her, don't cower like she did at the library. Speak her peace. She is our leader. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you, Miss Page. Next we have Ken Santucci.

Ken Santucci – My name's Ken Santucci from 50 Stony Hill Road. Tonight is a very controversial night but I believe this project is needed but is too expensive the way it's being presented. There has to be a way to trim the cost, there have to be ways to obtain better funding and there has to be a way for people that need sewers, sewers NOW. That's it.

President Letellier – Thank you, Mr. Santucci. Next we have John Mozdzanowski.

John Mozdzanowski - John Mozdzanowski, 57 Stony Hill Road. First thing I noticed on the pass outs that we have here, Stony Hill Road is not even on the list of affected areas. Stony Hill Road and uh, another side street are all septic systems. I live on the east side. My neighbors that are on the west side, everybody on the west side had to replace their system. It's all rock. I think we don't have a problem. I've attended several of these meetings throughout the years. I missed the last one and I'm sorry I did. But it seems like the same questions keep coming up all of the time. Forty years ago when we were supposed to start putting sewers in the system in this area, some people had them, some didn't and I believe there was some seed money available. That question always comes up. Where is that seed money? What was done with it? No answer. So if we're required to have sewers why has constructed kept going on in areas that have poor drainage and sewer pipes not installed at the time of construction? That should be a no-brainer! But yet we still have houses built and people have problems. They put in septic systems, they fail in five years. So you gotta spend \$20,000.00 every five years to replace it. Again, some homes should never have been built, or been allowed to be built if we'd been putting sewers in at the time of construction, it would have cost minimal amount of money, couple thousand to make the connection. Now we're talking \$26,000.00, that's not acceptable! I'm against the proposal the way it's written. I want sewers. I don't have any problem with my home currently but I feel for everybody here that does. And then the way this thing is set up. All of these people have to take out a loan for \$26,000.00. What if I get laid off? Are you guys gonna float my bills for me? Is the bank gonna ruin my credit? I don't think so. You know, you're, you're, it's just not acceptable. This town has been running in my opinion and every time when people ask my where I live and I tell them Agawam or Feeding Hills, and they kind of snicker. We still got that 'good old boy' mentality about how this town is run because of things like this that are happening. You know the people that have bungled this sewer project for the last forty years in my opinion should be held accountable. It's not something that's acceptable in any shape or manner. And so again, I'm against the way this is written, there's got to be money available and I hope you people listen to these people here again that have already mentioned and vote no on this. And you go to Boston and you find the money. We're paying you to do that. You work for us. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you, Mr. Mozdzanowski. Next we have Timothy Dowd.

Timothy Dowd – Good evening. I'm Timothy Dowd of 20 Parker Street, here in Agawam and not suffering from these sewers problems that the people are in Feeding Hills. A couple questions leap readily to mind and I don't want to same ground that they've covered before. There's a couple of these former speakers stole my thunder but that's alright. A couple things leap right out. It says here that the project doesn't meet the guidelines and was rejected. Well, perhaps we could redo the project so that it would meet the guidelines and therefore could be funded. Secondary to that, a couple of other things really jump out and that is the 1370 future units which are covered in this Ad Hoc information that came out here and I believe Mr. Lagassi covered earlier. Why would they be assessed only a \$4200 knock when everybody else is assessed \$19600? And then a couple of other points come to mind as well. Once the new sewer system is built if it is built, and I'm not arguing against it because sewers obviously add benefit to the community, but the way you're trying to pay for it simply doesn't make sense. Once the sewer system is enlarged and has a prorated cost that's as large as the system that you add on. Have you figured in the cost to maintain and run the system after it's built? Or are we just talking about building it and then forgetting how much it costs to run thereafter? Things like this, my old grandfather used to say to me "is that dog won't hunt", and the way that this is written presently, \$31.2 and I've been trying to work out the numbers, even with the assessments that people are talking about; I don't see where the \$31,200,000.00 comes from. I can see if you increase sewer usage by \$2.28 per hundred cubic feet, that's merely a 125% increase, not a big problem I guess unless you're the guy writing the check then it becomes an ungodly problem. I'm gonna go along with the way the other people think tonight and ask that you council members who this gentleman before me just reminded me and hopefully he reminded you as well, you work for the town and consequently the taxpayers. There must be a way, in an age where you can get federal funding to give addicts needles to shoot drugs in public parks, there's got to be way that you can get money to pay for a sewer system! (APPLAUSE) I'll close simply by saying I urge each and every one of you, I don't think I have to urge Mr. Rossi because he's on board with the rest of us, vote this project down in its present form, find a way to make it doable within reason, and don't make the 900 or so residents bear the cost. Again it's a community problem and I'd be willing to share some of the burden but certainly not in the numbers you people are talking about here. So again, this project ought to be taken out and filleted and rethought and brought back in a way that makes it work for all of us. Thank you very much.

President Letellier – Thank you Mr. Dowd. Next we have Lowell McLane.

Lowell McLane – It's tough to follow some of these speakers...I'm Lowell McLane and I reside at 85 Red Fox. I became involved in this issue over five years ago even though I did not at that time and still do not have problems with my septic systems. Many of our neighbors were experiencing difficulty and had to replace their systems. There was at that time a meeting at the Jr. High which was well attended much like tonight. And most of those left with a desire to see sewers to come to Feeding Hills and the southwest

section of this city. I felt then as I do now, that we in Feeding Hills section should have the same benefits as the rest of the city enjoys but not solely on the backs of one group of residents. I volunteered to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee along with the late Jack O'Neil which I wish he was here because he was a master communicator, but also Jack Cappuccilli and Ron LaRiviere. Having been involved and having read the Tighe & Bonde report, we as a community definitely needs to have a plan to deal with the issues and to address the health, the safety and environmental and proper growth issues as they faced this area. This was spelled out quite clearly in that report and other findings and incidentally after we had that meeting five years ago, there was a survey that was sent across the community to have your input and so forth so there was a survey around. I'm looking up at Joe there, Joe just off the record here, I do think that sometimes you were unfairly blamed for a lot of this so, I just want to go on record for that. Speeding ahead to where we are today, development can happen all over our city with just a hook-up fee to the existing infrastructure yet in our section; we're being asked to pay \$20,000.00. Something's wrong with that picture! I do not feel that this is appropriate and I do not think, I do not think it's fair to those of our community that live out in Feeding Hills. I think that there has to be other options that need to be looked at and this project needs to go forward in some form or manner and I don't have the solutions without burdening the homeowner with this expenditure at this time. We, the homeowners, have looked to you as our elected officials to provide leadership in this matter to ensure that our whole community gets representation and equal opportunity. I would ask that you would uh, you would capitalize on the current energy and around here there's so much talent, I think that there is energy; there is the emotion right now that we can capture to get some of this down. I would ask that you would reform another Ad Hoc committee to continue this study but most importantly that we would aggressively seek state and federal funding. To merely vote this down or whatever is decided tonight is not gonna address the issue for the future, it's still gonna be there and we, these people, are depending upon your leadership to provide those answers.

President Letellier – Thank you, Mr. McLane. Our next speaker is John Sloane.

John Sloane – My name is John Sloane and I live at 890 Barry Street. I'll keep my comments short because of all the people that have preceded me. I will say that the people that have preceded me have been quite eloquent and for the most part I support everything that they have said. So I'll keep my comments short. The uh, I would say that we need to keep the overall reputation of our town in our minds. The reputation that we have...affects our house values and general attractiveness of wanting to live in Feeding Hills and in Agawam. And furthermore, the reputation stems from the town's infrastructure, sewer system is obviously an integral part of the infrastructure and as such its cost is the responsibility of the complete municipality. I would say that you know all of you as elected officials, you know, need to work as hard as possible to pressure the state and federal governments to find a way. You know I find it unacceptable to hear that there's no funds from here and no funds from there. The squeaky wheel you know frequently you know get the oil and you are our elected officials and are the only mechanism that we have to pressure and work with the state and federal government. So I would say to, to all of the citizens that if a way can't be found, then we simply need to

go back to what some of the people have said that there needs to be accountability and if there's no results, at the next election, we need to keep that in mind, and vote out these folks. Thank you very much.

President Letellier – Thank you, Mr. Sloane. Our next speaker is Edwin Calo.

Edwin Calo – I'll pass.

President Letellier – Okay thank you sir. Our next speaker is Melissa Gillis.

Melissa Gillis – I'm Melissa Gillis from 10 Middle Lane. You know, I stood up here two weeks ago and by the way you're not gonna like what I have to say tonight, I stood up here two weeks ago and I heard all these people had very heartfelt things to say and stories and everybody was speaking from the heart and I tend to take a little different approach to it. And at the time, the Council tabled this so that they could put out an informational flier. Unless I haven't gotten my mail in two weeks, I haven't received that flier. But I'm gonna tell you right now, don't waste your time. Okay. It doesn't work the way that it is now. And I can't help but think that there's an ulterior motive to this whole thing and quite honestly I really can't help but think that you people don't care if we have failing sewers or not. That's not what this is about. This issue has been on the table for what, twenty years? All of a sudden we're gonna fast track it within the last three years. Why? Not because you have people knocking at your door saying my system doesn't work. That's not why. You haven't established any kind of community fund to help those people. You're saying let's do this big bulk of a project right now. Why? Because somebody says that there's some growth to be had and some development to be had. Well, you what? That benefits the whole town. Why on earth are thirteen hundred or nine hundred people footing that entire bill? Don't piggy back on the hearts and emotions and money of everybody else in this town. That is just not right. If you want to make a capital improvement to the city, just as you would build a school, would you really ask the parents of the children who are gonna attend that school to fund the whole project? (APPLAUSE) Give me a break! I see right through it. There's an ulterior motive. And if you want to develop part of Feeding Hills, that's something we can talk about on another day, but you're not gonna do it this way by having me and everybody else pay \$20,000, \$25,000, \$30,000 worth of sewer cuz I'm telling you right now, I'M NOT GONNA PAY IT! (APPLAUSE) I know that there are things that I can do so that I'm not gonna pay it. If you want, you know, I'll tell you what I will pay for, I will pay for the OPTIONAL connection from the street into my house at a time that I see fit. (APPLAUSE) But if you're gonna make a capital improvement on the town, in the town, that benefits the town as a whole because you're allowing development come in and that's gonna increase the tax revenue, then fine. Then the whole town as a whole needs to fund it, needs and like everybody else has said, needs to find other ways, state and federal funding whatever else have you, but whoever came up with the great idea of we have \$32 million to spend and let's take 900 or 1000 households and divide the cost BING there we go...I mean that's grammar school mathematics. That doesn't work here. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Next we have Paul Munzert, sorry.

Paul Munzert – Good evening. My name is Paul Munzert on 49 Stoney Hill Road, Feeding Hills, Mass. I, unfortunately, did not attend the meeting two weeks ago cuz I did not, I was not aware of the ramification or importance of the meeting. However, the next day, being Wednesday, I did go to the town hall. I did go to the Mayor's office and I said "I'd like some information about what happened last night" "I'd like some information about the proposed sewer project." And you know what I got? Nothing. What are you talking about sir? We don't know. I said oh my god is this gonna happen for the next two years? And they said, well sir, you got to go down to the DPW. So I go out and get in my car and drive down to the DPW. I walked in and I said "I'd like some information about the sewer. Is my street, Stony Hill Road, gonna be on there?" Uh, I don't know sir. Well, get Mr. Stone, let's find out. Uh, sir, he's in a meeting. Well, interrupt him. I'd like to know if my street's gonna be in it. Well, twenty minutes later she comes to me, yea you're street's on there. Well, I said, would you have Mr. Stone call me? Four subsequent telephone calls to his office and he still has not returned my call. So, not that I'm clairvoyant but I see there's a problem some place. But uh, you know, I just like to urge you all to vote against this. This is not good for the town the way it is structured. \$26,000.00 is kind of a lot of money. Please reconsider it. Send our representative out to look for state aid and federal money. I did a house...\$10,000.00 to put sewer and they had a blast every stitch of the way. Please just reconsider. Thank you very much.

President Letellier – May I have a motion from the Council to extend Citizen's Speak Time? Moved by Councilors Cavallo and Rossi, seconded by Councilor Bitzas. All those in favor signify by saying Ay. Opposed? Abstentions? You've extended Citizen's Speak Time. Our next speaker is John Fleming.

John Fleming – Hi. I'm John Fleming. My wife Cheryl and I reside at 95 Karen Lynn Circle in Feeding Hills. We've been together thirty three years, we've lived almost all of our life in the town of Agawam. We've owned four homes in the town of Agawam and around 1996, we decided that, we decided that we wanted to buy a little bit different kind of a home and maybe get more out into the country and a little farther away but we still wanted to reside in Agawam. Our three daughters were in Agawam schools, we felt that was important. So, be as that may, in the years previous to that there were many times I heard the horror stories from the ball coaches, people I knew about wetlands north of Granger school, or west of Granger school, and how wet those neighborhoods were, how many cellar problems that they had, how much water there was. And I was very discouraged to think that we would never even look or seek to live in that part of the town. After driving home my daughters friends and being aware of all this. However, after searching for homes to our desire in 1997, we kind of fell in love with a house that was on Karen Lynn Circle and we had concerns about the water and the house we bought, the people that were there one year before us had spent \$8,000 on an irrigation system in their basement to sub-pump water out of their basement to keep the basement dry which it still doesn't totally do that but it's pretty good. Um, we were well aware of the septic system and the Title V that we passed at that time and we were well aware that the possibility for sewer existed but we were also aware through articles and being good

town people and knowing them years and years of bureaucracy that had transpired when trying to get sewers put up in this area of town. Now, I have a lot of empathy for the man with the washing machine waste going down his driveway but if you look around in that area of town, there's a lot of people who have already suffered through this. They've already got a lump in their yard which I guarantee you is not doing anything for the value of their home let alone the expense of putting it in and taking care of what it's supposed to do and that's give you a normal life just like sewer people. Okay? I know for a fact after ten years on Karen Circle, my wife and I have participated in every single type of meeting that had to do with putting in sewers. I will not beat that dead horse of how many times we've heard this since we've lived here. But the point I would like to make is that we knew about this, we knew there was a problem and we wanted to live in our house on Karen Lynn Circle. We paid full price for our house, we took full responsibility that we would live there and when we moved in we realized that someday we might have to do something about it, and might have to put in a septic system. We took on that responsibility; it's just like a roof, or anything. We said the heck with the bureaucracy, the town, the problems, we're gonna do that. Now wishful thinking wise as the years went through, the meetings, the Jr. High and Tighe & Bonde and all these things, the studies and all that, are always making the price going up and whatever's gonna happen, but always thinking that if it did happen we would pay the hook-up price and we would be a part of it. At the same time, we knew that there's a possibility of failure and we took on that responsibility and last January the stink in our backyard got to be to the point where I needed to have it checked. And we were just about to the point of backing up into our home. We had one beautiful maple tree in our yard that we had to remove and at the same time had to dig up our entire yard and I put in a state of the art infiltrator, huge state of the art septic tank system in my yard, new piping in my basement, spent \$16,000.00, you know, raised the money, got the money and \$16000 and fortunately I was somebody that had a large enough and structured lot on the curve of Karen Lynn Circle that I was able to grade it down and make it look halfway presentable. Now the point is this, um, I'm not paying \$16000, \$19000, \$25000 again for anyone for any project. I already did. (APPLAUSE) Okay? We also did it, to let you know, for our love of this town and living in Feeding Hills or Agawam. We want to retire here, we want to stay here and uh, you know, the responsibility here, I shouldn't even get into that, the point has been made, and um, I feel empathy for the man with going down his driveway, but just think in the next three and a half years, if this would pass, how many people are gonna fail just in the next three and a half years, and spend that money and still be faced with having either some kind of a legal battle with the town or at the same time paying those fees for another twenty years to be hooked up? And I'd like to mention one more thing, if indeed some of it was funded and the sewers were put in, I realize there are benefits for health and safety, and if that happened, the hook-up fee even though I spent \$16,000, would still be something I would highly consider doing. That's it.

President Letellier – Thank you Mr. Fleming. The next speaker, I'm sorry, I'm having trouble with the handwriting. Mr....202 South West? Boglisch. Okay. Sorry. CeCe and I both looked and we couldn't see it.

Dale Boglisch – I'm at 202 South West Street. We've lived there since 1981 uh, I don't want to just approach people. I want to look at it from a different aspect along with the Council and approach the public. We only got a couple years to do this. Every year the environmental issues they're gonna run into are going to be harder and harder to pass. There's not anybody in here who cannot drive down South West Street, North West Street, Karen Lynn, even the new development that was put in by McBrook, Kozak Court, those houses aren't even that old and several people have already replaced them and some of them, if you go around that block now, spring thaw's here, you can't miss it. There's not anybody here who cannot say they, their neighbor, somebody doesn't have a problem. It's not just up to these people to find funding. There's two hundred people here. Everyone of you can start raising havoc with city hall, with the state reps to get money. It's gotta be done. There's no doubt about it. It's how it's funded is the problem. And anybody who has to mop up their cellar, if you're on hardpan, you're not just mopping up water, it's a health issue. There's no doubt about it and that water is flowing into the brooks, it's flowing into the ponds, it's flowing into your basement. It's gotta be done, there's no way around it. So when you people are here and you're talking to these people, you gotta remember, it's gotta be done. It's how it's funded so it's up to everybody to get it funded. It's up to everybody to raise havoc to get it funded. I mean there's nobody here that can't say it doesn't need to be done. So when you're talking to these people and you're lambasting them, honestly in your hearts you know it's got to get done. So you may live in a sandy area down off of Christopher Lane, your area may not need it, but take a nice scenic walk up South West Street and tell me everybody else up there doesn't. So, just consider that when you're thinking about it. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you Mr. Boglisch and I'm sorry I couldn't read your writing. Next we have Dennis Stempel.

Dennis Stempel – Dennis Stempel, 85 Christopher Lane in Feeding Hills. When I spoke at the Council Meeting a few weeks ago, one of the things I asked for was information. I think we need to get information out to everybody involved and I think we shouldn't make any further decisions until we have the information. Well, since then, it's only taken two weeks, I've moved past that and I think a lot of people have moved passed it too. I think we've gotten a lot of information. I think everybody's been pretty resourceful in how they've done that. I think the information I'd look for here you know first of all, I don't want anymore information on the project, the details, I've been through the Tighe & Bonde reports, I've heard a lot about it. It's not the project we have an issue with. It's not the cost. I'm not going to go through a \$31 million cost structure trying to figure how to reduce it. It's really just the way we're spreading it and funding it. That's the real deal killer here. So, what I'd really like to understand is some more specifics on what has been gone after for state funding. I know we've been at this for you know well over twenty years, eight years, depending on who you listen to, what's been done eight years ago for state funding, what's been on the last two or three years for state funding, but more importantly, what's being done now and how are we going to keep some part of this project on the front burner so that when things change and funding does become available, how are we gonna be first in the queue? How are we gonna make sure this doesn't fall by the wayside? Because I don't think any of us feel good. I think Mr.

Boglich made some very good points. I don't think any of us feel good. This isn't a great victory saying No. We can't fund it this way. We don't want it. I don't think any of us feel real good about it cuz we're leaving some of our neighbors in a jam. But clearly the proposal that's on the table is unworkable, no doubt about it. Second thing is I'd really ask the council this evening suspend the rules, let's bring this, let's bring this agenda item to the front of the agenda and let's have the discussion, let's have whatever action you're gonna take this evening, let's have it in front of everybody that's taken the time to come down here. (APPLAUSE) Let's not have it three hours from now.

President Letellier – Thank you, Mr. Stempel. Next we have Linda O'Neill.

Linda O'Neill – Hi. I'm Linda O'Neill. I live at 59 Red Fox Drive. Joe Mineo I want to thank you for everything you've done for us. My husband was the late Jack O'Neill who worked very hard on this project. You know, I don't have my laundry water going out into my street. Do you want to know why? Cuz I haven't done laundry in my home for fifteen years! I go to the Laundromat. So, Mr. Rossi, want to give me a key to your house and I'll start doing it at your house? Obviously, it should be okay. I don't see why not. But we need these sewers. It's a health issue, the high rate of cancer in these neighborhoods – maybe we should start looking into that because there's too many health issues out there. Our sewers, we need the sewers. You know what? You put a new septic system in. I had a neighbor who put a new septic system in, went to sell their house in less than five years, it failed. They had to replace it a second time. Moved into a brand new house up off of South West Street, failed within a year! These, this is a couple that had to replace the system three times. They're not lasting. You can put a new one in, it's not going to last. The homes off of Barry Street, on the new streets, Christopher, and Spear Farm and Muriel, great they're new homes, they have better drainage than we do. Our homes one lot was perked on the top of the street, old town politics, build the whole street. We're high water, we're clay, it was not meant to be on a septic system. The town has failed us. We should have had, we were promised sewers thirty years ago (APPLAUSE). The last time, at one time the project was supposed to go, it was \$8 million, four years ago, it was \$28 million and now it's up to what, \$32 million? We can't stop this project. No I don't want to pay the whole cost but if that's what I have to do, that's what I have to do. Because what difference does it make? I'm gonna end up spending that much replacing the whole system within the next ten years anyways cuz it's not gonna last. Not in our neighborhood. This town needs to step up! The whole town. Not just Feeding Hills. Not the thirteen hundred homes. And you know what? Well, the paper also said 1300. So whether it's 900, 1300 what difference does it make? There's a lot more homes and every single citizen of Agawam should help fund this project cuz God knows for over thirty years, we've help fund every other thing that has gone on in Agawam. Now it's your turn to help us.

President Letellier – Thank you Mrs. O'Neill. Our next speaker is Maureen LaPierre.

Maureen LaPierre – My name is Maureen LaPierre and I live at 51 Red Fox Drive. 1982 was the first time that I approached DPW, the town hall about what I did about our sewer system. They told me then that there was no state funding or federal funding. I

have a letter in 1982, I have a letter 1994 and in 2003, we've been told the same thing "No state or federal funding". How come Southwick, Ludlow and Chicopee have all gotten state and federal funding?!! Do we have a grant writer? Or do we need one? Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you Miss LaPierre. Our next speaker is Douglas Reed.

Douglas Reed – City Council. Douglas Reed, 10 Shelley Lane. One of the things that was touched on just briefly tonight is the environmental impact that this is really causing our area. We talked about the health issues, some people talked about the health issues, the environmental impact is not going to go away. One of the things that I think we probably haven't looked and maybe it's an option to look towards federal funding is the waters from Agawam in that area, they're contained in the brooks, the ponds, the wetlands, those go towards the river. I have a brook and a pond in my backyard, I can't do anything cuz they come under the Rivers Act. What that means in 1988 an Act was passed if the water that you have eventually goes to the river, you have all these parameters, two hundred feet, you can't build, and so on and so forth. The state of Connecticut receives that water after we're done with it, what we add to it, um, have we looked into that? The state of Connecticut may be interested in what we're sending over the border to them. You know the effluence that comes out of our systems into the ground water. You keep adding to it and adding to it and adding to it, we have all these homes that water keeps going in. The water table's not gonna go down. If anything, I'm not a scientist, but I think if you keep adding water to a bucket, the bucket's always gonna stay full and eventually it's gonna overflow. Regarding funding eligibility, one of the things for the funding eligibility from my understanding and I made a phone call to state rep's office and also to Senator Buoniconti's office, there's several things that make us eligible for funding. Our capability for bonding, our sewer rate and the debt that the town has incurred or carries. If we are not eligible for funding because we don't meet that criteria, we've got too good a bond rating, geez we don't carry enough debt or our sewer rate's not high enough, well if that's the case, then I'm having problems thinking why I gotta pay twenty grand when the town's in such great financial shape that we can't get the eligibility to get the funding. (APPLAUSE) Call me crazy but uh, that's simple math. Back on January 9th, there was an article that appeared in the Springfield Republican, 'state to fund water projects'. Now some of this money does go for the sewer, splitting the sewers with the drain water, but there, there's a couple of towns that to my recollection, don't have big sewer systems and one of them is the Town of Granby, they have, they are slated to receive \$1.8 million for new Ludlow Road sewers, they're getting another \$400,000.00 for a comprehensive wastewater management plant, the Town of Hadley is getting \$1.6 million for Meadowbrook Drive area sewer extension! Sounds familiar! What we need to do is obviously we're here beating you guys up, this is our second week of beating you up; we did the thing at the library. We're holding you guys accountable and we appreciate the efforts that have been put in. The accountability needs to go further. The accountability to our state rep, to our state senator, to our senator down, or our congressman and senator down in Washington, these are the guys that need to be fighting for us. As of two weeks ago when I called Representative Sandlin's office, I was the only constituent that made a call regarding any of this funding!

We all need to do this. In Boston, to get a bill through, the only way it gets through is you have to call the committee that the bill's sitting in. This bill from Governor Patrick is sitting in committee right now. I'll try and get the information. I'll talk to these guys here. Talk to Joe, we need to get some names; we need to get some phone numbers. We need to call these guys, we need to torture them. We need to make them understand we have an environmental issue that needs to be taken care of, the state needs to help us out; the federal government needs to help us out. We don't want to take and pull \$20,000.00 out of our wallet for something that should be covered by our government and its officials! Today I took a ride down Garden Street and I'll tell you what, Six Flags' got nothing on that ride down Garden Street - the potholes and what not. Using the logic, let the guys know at the DPW when they do fix the potholes, send the bill to Responsive Trucking and maybe some of the industrial park tenants cuz I think they need to pay for those potholes and the filling, because I don't want to pay for the sewers and if I'm gonna pay for the sewers, then start billing those guys for damage in the road. Thanks.

President Letellier – Thank you, Mr. Reed. That was our last speaker. We'll move onto Roll Call.

Item 2. Roll Call

President Letellier – Barbara, could you read the roll please?

ROLL CALL – 11 Present, 0 Absent

President Letellier –.With eleven present, we have full attendance.

Item 3. Moment of Silence and the Pledge of Allegiance

President Letellier – Would you please rise for a Moment of Silence and the Pledge of Allegiance?

Item 4. Minutes

a. Regular Council Meeting – February 6, 2008

President Letellier – Our next item of agenda is minutes. I've been told that the minutes are not available because the tape machine was not properly working. So we'll move on to Declaration from Council President. At this time, I'd like to open the sewer Ad Hoc Committee to three new members. If any of you in the audience whether here or at home are interested in being added to the sewer Ad Hoc Committee, please send a letter of interest to the Town Hall by next Wednesday so it will be in our packet by Thursday and I'll pick three new members.

Councilor Simpson – May I may a...

Councilor Cavallo – Madam President...

President Letellier – Councilor Simpson’s light was on first.

Councilor Simpson – Thank you. Point of information. I was gonna mention this later on but if I could since you brought it up, I would like to suggest to the Chair tonight that we also create another sub-committee which I would love to be on. A committee just to deal with looking for federal funding because just the sewer committee alone has a lot of issues and looking for funding is a huge amount of time and ...So I’d like to just present that idea at this time since you brought up adding new committee members that we’d like to have a new, I would like to see a new committee. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thanks, Councilor Simpson. That is not appropriate for this point in the agenda but we will be happy to talk about it later. Councilor Cavallo?

Councilor Cavallo – Yes, Madam President, because of lateness of the hour and the people being here this evening, Mr. Stempel made a good suggestion about moving up TOR-2007-11, up for action before we have a hearing prior to that but I think for the benefit of the people that have been here I think it’s only appropriate that we do that now.

President Letellier - Are you making a motion...

Councilor Cavallo – Yes, I am. I’m making a motion to move TOR-2007-11 Ordinance to Amend the Code of the Town of Agawam Water and Sewer Ordinances by Adding Article XII ‘Special Sewer Improvement District’ and move that up now in the agenda.

President Letellier - Moved by Councilor Cavallo, seconded by Councilor Bitzas. Barbara, could you please call the roll?

1. TOR-2007-11 -An Ordinance to Amend the Code of the Town of Agawam Water and Sewer Ordinances by Adding Article XII, “Special Sewer Improvement District”. (3/3) (tabled indefinitely 2/6/08) (Majority of those present and voting)

ROLL CALL – 11 Yes, 0 No.

President Letellier – With eleven yes, zero no, we’ve moved the item forward. The item has been tabled; do we have a motion to take off the table? Moved by Councilor Simpson, seconded by Councilors Rheault and Bitzas. Barbara, could you please call the roll on taking the item off the table?

ROLL CALL – 11 Yes, 0 No.

President Letellier – With eleven yes, you’ve voted to take the item off the table. The item is now open for discussion. Do I see any lights? Councilor Simpson?

Councilor Simpson – Thank you very much. I’m gonna be brief. I think that the public

said it very well on what needs to be done this evening. I'd like to say that for all the people who have called me and I also did receive some letters regarding this issue, thank you for your input. Everyone was very professional. The only thing that bothered me is that some people felt that there was some mistrust because of leaving it on the table that all of a sudden we would just take it off the table, vote on it, it'd be done, um, it saddens me because I feel that people that voted for me had trust in me and I hope that they still do have that trust. I don't think the, well I'll talk for myself, I can't speak for my other councilors, the intention to table it was to table it for the time being and get some more input. On my side that there was no mismeaning or mistrust going on with it, that I was just gonna all of a sudden vote yes for it. I have not been in favor of this. I had brought up a while ago my concern with making people hook up for the sewers if they did not need them or weren't ready for them yet. I feel that there is definitely need for those people who need sewers that needs to be prioritized and as I had said before and I'll mention it again, that I think that there should be another sub-committee. I'm not a big fan of creating committee after committee but I think this time there needs to be a committee that can just focus on the funding for it, from the federal and from the state and that's a huge job in itself. So I would like to see that committee to be formed, I'm putting that out there again and also that I would like to be a member of that committee. So I'm gonna vote no on this issue tonight and but it needs to continue on and there has been shown that there is desperate need for certain people in this community to have their sewer, have a sewer system put in, that should be the TOP priority at that point along with the funding. Thank you very much.

President Letellier – Thank you Councilor Simson. Our next councilor light was Councilor Rossi.

Councilor Rossi – Thank you. First of all, I'd like to look out at the sea of faces out here and say I commend you all for being here and taking part of the process and you're living proof that this system does work and I applaud you for that. Let me make things perfectly clear for a few of you out there and especially Mrs. O'Neill. I'm not disinfavor of sewers. I am in favor of sewers out there. What I have not been in favor of is the manner of the funding. I have not been am not now or never will be in favor of arbitrary assessments of property owners in this community. I think it's a burden, it's a cost that's too high to pay. That was my main concern here and on January 22nd when this item first came aboard, it was my suggestion that we stand back, send out some information so you people out there can digest it and decide for yourselves what you wanted. Unfortunately it didn't go by the way in which it was intended to go and the information didn't get out there as it should have and a lot of misinformation did get out there however. But the most important part is that you did get the information and you had a chance to digest whatever you took from the minutes or whatever you might have read in the newspapers. And I think that you spoke here quite well on what you would like to see us do here. Now, this as I said earlier is a very major undertaking, the largest that this town has ever undertaken. I think we could have done this a little bit better and explored different options and taken some baby steps here. I think ...to get it done. I think you people all have exemplified that fact that together we can do almost anything. And I think we can. So I would like to have this thing defeated and rejected and I would like to have it go

back and to have somebody come back with something that makes sense. Now this town has a lot of resources available to them and I am sure that if we sit down with the powers to be out there, with our DPW department and other department heads, we can come up with some ideas on how this town may help some of those people out there who have these special problems. And in the meantime, let me just extend an invitation to Mrs. O'Neill, any time you'd like to come to my home to do your laundry, YOU CAN!

President Letellier – Thank you. Our next speaker is George Bitzas.

Councilor Bitzas – Thank you Madam President. This is democracy...I love it. You guys, you were fantastic. We heard from you three minutes before when we had a public hearing, there was only three people here for this public hearing. We were going to ask for your input and those three people, they spoke in favor so. So not only spoke in favor of it but tonight of course they agreed with all of you, they too said they're not supporting the funding. I agree one hundred percent with them; I agree one hundred percent with you. I am not in funding and I guarantee you tonight because you'll sleep good because this council is going to be 11 to 0 no vote, until we find the money from our state representatives, our state senators, our federal government, there's money there. I travel all over Connecticut for my work, I see construction of sewers, the town, the state, and the federal government pays for it. Why not us? But we are the small fish here; we can do whatever we can do for you. I want to ask the President tomorrow. I wanted to draft with the help of the others, a Resolution to ask the state senator, the state representative, the governor, representative of means, all of them and everybody can sign the resolution that we're looking for funds. We can do it, for funds. I cannot see anybody of you or myself to pay \$20,000.00 plus another \$5000 or \$6000 and who knows...it's not fair. Don't blame us. We voted for the first reading not because we supported that. We voted for it because three of the people that were there I see a couple are on the Ad Hoc Committee for Citizens said to us and I read to you 'but' and this is from John Cappuccilli, 'but I urge you to pass this resolution tonight, it's not going to cost the town any money to pass this resolution, it's just going to make us move forward to move forward into the right direction. I want to challenge the administration, etc. etc.' I don't have to read the whole thing, it's in the minutes, you can read it. And I ask also, I said where's the people here? And I hope the press, the newspaper, the TV, make some noise and have the people come to us and tell us. I asked for, I asked Jack Stone...he said not yet. But this is, the first step to vote for that, but it was not ... no funding, it was nothing, it was just to move forward to the next step. But we're not going to do anymore steps. This is a small step in the wrong direction and it needs to stop here and I guarantee you this councilor here and I'm telling you I care and we care about you too. We don't want you to spend any money, \$20,000.00 for it but we have to be fair and we do the best we can to secure funding but we have, you have to do some work too. Your vote counts for the state representative...you are the voters, you are the people that got these problems and we want to help you but I cannot allow you to pay \$25,000.00 - \$26,000.00 and the rest of the town to pay 42% to increase the sewer rate for them and the state and the federal not give us a single dime for it. It's not fair. So I thank you for coming. I really appreciate that. I'm very happy to see you here, you should be here all of the time to watch us and give us advice too. Thank you all and good night and sleep good tonight

as I said.

President Letellier – Next is Councilor Rheault, then Councilor Mineo, then Councilor Cavallo.

Councilor Rheault – First of all I'd like to thank all of you for coming this evening. It's a, in all my years of service I think this is probably one of the largest crowds we've had and we've listened, believe me. To give you a little understanding, this was presented to us from the administration of the town, the DPW, the Mayor's office, and so forth. Our job is then to analyze whether it's good or bad for the town, that's what we're here for as legislators. So just because it's in front of us, that doesn't mean that we are accepting it. It means that we've got an opportunity to express our opinion whether we want it as legislators or whether it's good for you or not. For those who called my home and wondered why, excuse me, that I voted Yes on the first reading, I voted Yes because I didn't feel that there was enough information out to all of you to understand the impact of what this is going to be so I echoed the sentiments of Councilor Rossi that night if you were here and asked that we draft some questionnaires to get information so we could make a better judgment and you've showed up so you're giving us that information. I will not vote for this. I don't care what the project is, I think it's ridiculous to place this kind of financial burden on any homeowner and I will vote against this project in its present form. But I would ask you, having said that, I would like the town to continue to pressure the state and federal government for funding and maybe the financial climate will change and if funding becomes available, we can pursue it at that time. But for tonight, the proposal presented before us, I will not vote for it. Now there are three hundred fifty-one cities and towns in the Commonwealth, some of those are getting money for sewers, why isn't Agawam? So that's our job to find out and put the pressure on them and to be sure that maybe could get matching funds. Let's get creative. The Council has presented this plan so it's our job to help to see if we can take that burden away from you. I will not support the funding in its present form. I don't think it's good and it's not fair to you people out there. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Next we have Councilor Mineo.

Councilor Mineo – Yes. It looks like I've been the one on the hot seat over this. The only thing that I've ever asked was for public input on this. This was put on the agenda by the last mayor. We, all I wanted to know and I think that our committee wanted to know was what did you want, what did you want us as a council, what do you want us to do? If you want to help, we've been running into brick walls. We have written letters to the last two state representatives, the last two state senators, we've met with John Kerry, we've come up with nothing. I'm looking for three new people to help out. I'm along with Lowell, Jack and Ron LaRiviere, we need some help on this. This is a big project and I do want, I have not been in support of this. I talked to Paul Lagasse, he called my home and I told him I wasn't in favor of this. Mrs. Chester called my house; I told her I wasn't in favor of it. Mr. Footitt called my house, I told him I was not interested in having anybody pay \$20,000.00 but this was the proposal that came. And this was the proposal that we needed to share with you whether you want it or you don't want it. I can

clearly see I'm glad you all showed up and let us know because I'm not voting in favor of it. But I do want to mention one more thing, Page had mentioned that I was her neighbor and I moved out. Well, I want to just let you know. The reason I moved, I had another child. I outgrew my house. And another thing before I left my house, I had to pay dearly. It cost me \$12,000.00. \$12,000.00 to replace my systems and I have two kids in college. I would have rather put that on a college bill than have to repair a sewer system and I was, our house in my backyard, it started out the size of a ping pong ball, a ping pong ball with raw sewage coming up in my backyard. It got to the size of a beach ball where I had to put a palate on it because some little kid fell into it. On hot days, I, we did not use our, I and Mrs. O'Neil, I was in the same boat until I replaced my system. We would go down to the center of Feeding Hills and we'd have to use the Laundromat. That's how we lived. We couldn't flush our toilets. We couldn't have people over our house, especially on a hot day. You go to flush your toilet, you can't believe the odor. You know how embarrassing it is when you have your family over, you have a birthday party, I mean, I feel for people I really do feel for you people, for everyone that's having a problem. I went through it. I failed two perk tests in my backyard on Kathy Terrace. Two of them. They tore my whole backyard up. I had to put a, I had to have a leach field in my front yard. I had an electric pumping chamber which is like, it's another holding tank that's shooting the sewage out into my front yard. It cost a lot of money, it just does but one way or the other, we've got to get this project done. The questionnaire, I do want to address that. The questionnaire, I just received, tonight. Tonight. Gina?

President Letellier - You mean the draft?

Councilor Mineo - It's only a draft.

President Letellier - Yea, we got them.

Councilor Mineo - Okay. We are having a meeting next Thursday night. Barbara is gonna try to set it up to have it here in the cafeteria. We want public input. We need our, we've gone to our legislators, we've asked, and asked and repeatedly asked. I've heard about, somebody had said about how come we don't qualify for some of the funding. Well, back in 2000, we did go down to the DEP for the state of the sewer revolving funds. We didn't qualify because of our population. We were over 15,000, and that's why when I hear Granby's getting this amount of money and some of these smaller communities are getting, they're qualifying. They are qualifying because of their population. We don't qualify. I wish we could do this and I wish we could pay for it and not even have you, a resident pay for the hook up, but there's nothing there. I mean we'll have to just keep knocking on it, knocking on doors and keep calling everybody. I think what you need to do is call them up too. I think everybody needs to call them up and let them know, we want to get this done. You need to help us. And again, I want to thank you all for coming tonight. I appreciate it and again, I am definitely voting no against this as it's proposed. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Cavallo?

Councilor Cavallo – Yes. I'd like to thank all of you for coming here this evening. I guess I'm the new guy on the block here. I just became a councilor in January having served on the School Committee for the past four years. I guess my honeymoon is over but I would like to say a couple of things regarding this issue. Last, two weeks ago, I listened to all of you speak about your concerns and also went in the audience during the intermission and spoke to some people and I told them I was gonna table this. And again my reason for tabling it, I wanted a little more information too. Although at that time, I had the feeling inside me that I was not going to vote for this particular second reading. The concern that I have tonight that was voiced by some people and I don't want to repeat a lot of what's been said, about the poor guy who's got to give his two kids a bath in a bathtub that really is, is full of feces. Okay or whatever. I think what we should do or what the town should do is really triage all of these problems, really, just like when you go to the emergency room. Let's look at some of these people now who have some serious problems out in Feeding Hills, okay, with their septic systems. There's no reason why a person should have to go through that. I know it's sort of like a band aid approach because we're looking down the road maybe, hopefully, we'll get some federal and state funding as everybody talked about here but something should be done for those people, there's no reason to live in that kind of condition. That's number one. Number two I think the other thing that we should keep utmost in our mind is I have sewer. I'm very lucky. I had sewer when I moved into town in 1968. I lived on Pineview Circle. I wanted a sewer; I didn't want to live where septic tanks were located. At that time, the town had not grown that much when I came here in 1968. But I think when we have our next meeting or gather, we gotta get the word out to those people who have sewers because it was mentioned this evening that maybe the burden should be taken on not only be you people but also by the people who have sewers and are taxpayers, okay? I think you can't leave them out in the folds somewhere here. You've gotta bring them in because I certainly, I would like to help you people out too. Of course, I don't know how much of a burden it would place on me but someone brought that up and I think it's a good point. I think it's something we should investigate. But again, I plan on voting against this second reading this evening and I do hope you people still keep the faith up. I would like to help out as much as possible, become involved in some of these committees, much as I did before when I was on the School Committee, I volunteered for a lot of Ad Hoc Committees, because I think this is something that definitely is a priority. This, someone called my home last week and said to me, gee how come you voted that way on the park issue with the sec...I voted no. And I said you know what? My priority now as a Councilman, right now, is to take care of the people who have a problem with sewers. So you can count on my vote tonight. Thank you very much.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Young?

Councilor Young – Yes, thank you. I'm also gonna vote no against this tonight but I would like if before we vote and I guess I'll direct this to the chair without knowing who else to direct it to, on the committee on moving forward, I guess I'd like to see how we're gonna move forward on this issue from a councilor perspective and the committee format hasn't seemed to work the last eight or ten years that it's been going on. Creating new committees, if they have little responsibility or power, doesn't sound like the right thing

to do either. New members may be an answer since I, two of the three that were on it from the beginning, I've heard in the last month go against their recommendation. I guess, you know I think we're all up here willing to help. So I guess I would recommend or observation or recommend to the leadership of this board, that maybe we go back to the mayor, DPW, and maybe look at the organizational structure of how we're gonna do this project. We spend a lot of money for professionals; we were already looking at spending \$12,000.00 for professionals to design parks last week, right? I think this definitely deserves that or better. A professional project manager, a grant writer, someone suggested, someone to look at this. Obviously, I share the blame over the last ten years you know as we've shepherded this forward and again, I'm as much as anyone here is embarrassed that it's come to this. I certainly, when my wife looked at me and asked me about how much our sewer rates were gonna go up, you know I didn't have a good answer either. So I think, yes we'll vote it down but again there's certainly a long standing need. We're not going to jump the hurdle of forty years or however long it's been standing in...but I guess I would recommend that we take a good hard look at how we're gonna move forward on this and I, you know again, I, you know voting no is almost the easy way out at this point. But I would before we vote at all, I'd like to understand how we're gonna go forward. Otherwise, again, I have, you know a lot of my friends are out here in the audience who also need the sewers or will need them sooner or later and I don't, again, we can vote it down now and that saves them the big cost going forward in the near term but there's no good answers and long after we're gone, we won't have them either I'm afraid if we resort back to what's been going on. So, if I can help in that or you know help with the folks going forward, we have a finance committee, we have a thing on the docket for \$30,000.00 tonight, again for also valuable cause I'm sure but I think two weeks ago we spent a lot of time, meetings and hours, countless hours on the small stuff and on the big stuff it goes by very quickly. And it's long forgotten after the easy no vote or the yes vote. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Any other councilors wishing to speak for the first time? Councilor Messick?

Councilor Messick – Hi. Um, we have heard you speak tonight and we are saying that we would like you to continue to speak. One of the ways that you get through to legislative bodies is to show up in groups, large groups, and to tell them what you want to have happen. Mr. Reed made some very good points as far as calling state representatives, calling state senators, getting involved with the government. I have actually made a couple of calls and am speaking with people I know in the DEP. The environmental issues are a very big concern and that might be a key into the whole back door thing where you could get some funding through there or at least some assistance with some ideas. Um, what I'm concerned about is that once this big threat is over with, say for instance, we do vote this down tonight and I believe that we will, I don't want to see all of your faces fade into the woodwork and have meetings which we've all had where nobody shows up. We have to keep this dialogue going because we need your help. At some point in time, we may need every single one of you to find three other people to sign a petition to take to the state. We may need phone calls to be made, we may need letters to be written and this is all important. And so hopefully you will stay

engaged even though the big threat might be over because as Councilor Young just said, we do need to find a way to move this forward. And I think everybody agrees they would like the sewers, just not at this cost. So thank you to everybody who spoke tonight.

President Letellier – Any other councilor for the first time? No? Councilor Rossi.

Councilor Rossi – Thank you. Through the chair I just want to address the issue that Councilor Young raised over here and part of the problem that really troubled me with this whole project was the fact that this project, the framers have absolutely no idea when this project is even going to start. By their own admissions, they're talking at least two years down the road. And to make this kind of an assessment for a project that's not even gonna have a shovel go into the ground for the first couple of years, is not a good idea. And without even a projection date on when it's gonna end, they have no idea. So you know you can write all the letters you want and make all the phone calls you want and I'm not gonna suggest that no one do that, but the fact of the matter is that it's been known for quite some time, there just isn't any state money, there isn't any federal money. That's been a known and with the downturn with the economy I don't think that any one in here wouldn't agree that there isn't gonna be any monies available for sewers. We're just not a priority for the state or the federal government here in Agawam...small grant for some small, low interest bondings in order to get this project done. And over a period of time through these little bite size pieces or steps if you will, we could probably get the project completed but I would like to see and in response to Councilor Young, more importantly, how we're gonna proceed in terms of the construction. Just don't come up to us with a plan for a sewer district ordinance that's gonna allow the city or town to assess these people \$20,000.00 and not have any idea when the project's gonna start, have no really projected date of when it's gonna end and some of the people that you're gonna assess, the likelihood of them even getting the sewers is not very good, if history has taught us anything, it's not gonna be very good. And if you do get them, in the meantime, the chances are that some of you people are gonna have to go and revamp your systems and I think we've heard that here. So that's the reality of this whole thing. So what I'd like to see is have somebody sit down and say how are we gonna do this? When can we get it off the ground? And then we can start talking about how much it's gonna cost and get some kind of a realistic figure with some realizable goals and achieving what we need to achieve up there in that district. And I think Councilor Young had the right idea but I think that's what we need to do. We don't need to create Ordinances at least two years in advance and start asking these people to pay for something that they might not even get. And the real tragedy is that we're asking through this Ordinance, to make an assessment, a lien attachment, to your properties. And I think as a city or town we have the responsibility to provide services to protect your interest and your well-being not to add to the burden of living here and I think that would be doing that. So I would suggest that maybe we could form a committee to sit down and actually find out how we're gonna go about it, when we're gonna go about it and let's start from there. And in the meantime, if you want to continue doing the funding stuff, I don't suggest that we stop but I think we should start looking at when we're gonna actually start the construction phase. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Anyone else? No? Okay, Barbara, could you please call the roll? A yes vote is to pass the Ordinance to Create the Sewer Improvement District. A no vote is to deny the Ordinance to Create the Sewer Improvement District.

ROLL CALL – 0 Yes, 11 No.

President Letellier – With a vote of eleven no, you've defeated the item. I call a five minute recess.

Item 5. Declaration from Council President

Item 6. Presentation of Petitions, Memorials & Remonstrances

(a) Resolutions

1. TR-2008-2 - A Resolution Confirming the Appointment of Elaine Awand, 1 Corey Colonial, Agawam, MA. 01001, to the Agawam Planning Board to a Term Expiring on January 1, 2013. (Mavor) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – Do we have a motion? Moved by Councilor Simpson, seconded by Councilor Rossi. Miss Awand is here so we can go into Committee as a Whole if she'd like to address us. Motion is moved by Councilor Perry and Rossi, seconded by Councilor Messick. Miss Awand, would you care to address us? Thank you very much for coming.

Elaine Awand – I just want to thank you for the opportunity to let me have the privilege of being on your Planning Committee and contribute to the community that I live in. I'm currently a resident of Corey Colonial and I've been on the Board there on and off as the President and the Treasurer for quite some time now. And um, and this is a new opportunity for me and I want to thank you if you give me that opportunity.

President Letellier – Thank you. Does the Council have any questions for Miss Awand? No? Seeing none, do we have a motion to come out of committee as a whole? Moved by Councilor Cavallo, seconded by Councilor Perry. Thank you Miss Awand. Do we have any discussion on the nomination? Councilor Rheault?

Councilor Rheault – Yes, I'd just like to thank her for coming forward and serving and hopefully the Council will unanimously vote you in and enjoy your stay.

President Letellier – Thank you. Barbara, could you please call the roll?

ROLL CALL – 11 Awand

President Letellier – Eleven yes, thank you Miss Awand and we welcome you. Barbara will send you a letter. There's some paperwork you'll have to sign at the Town Hall.

Elaine Awand – Thank you.

Item 7. Report of Council Committees

Item 8. Elections

Item 9. Public Hearings

1. PH-2008-2 (ZC-2008-1) (TO-2008-4)- Public Hearing for Zone Change for the Property known as 287 Springfield Street, Feeding Hills, MA., Petitioning the Town of Agawam to Change from Zone RB to Zone BB, as submitted by the Colvest Group, Ltd., 360 Bloomfield Avenue, Windsor, CT. (2/3 Majority of those present and voting – 8 votes for Zone Change)

President Letellier – I call the public hearing to order. Each, we will have uh, any speakers that wish to present on behalf of the Petitioner? Thank you. Sir, if you could state your name and address for the record and you'll have ten minutes to make your presentation.

Peter LaPointe - Good evening. Thank you very much.

President Letellier - Good evening. You're welcome.

Peter LaPointe - My name is Peter LaPointe. I'm a Project Manager for the Colvest Group. We have offices at 360 Bloomfield Avenue in Windsor, Connecticut. We are the owner of the existing CVS site which is 287 Springfield Street. And we are proposing to redevelop that site by demolishing the existing CVS and building a new one at the back of the site. The redevelopment of the parcel included the acquisition of about 23,000 square feet of additional land area from the adjacent property owner. That acquisition piece is zoned Residence B. The rest of our parcel is zoned Business B. The parcels around us and I have a print of the proposed site plan. The parcels around us are Sarat Ford...

President Letellier – Sir? Sir? I'm sorry, you have to, if you pick up your mike and bring it with you, we'll be able to hear you. Or, you can, yea, Barbara can help you there.

Peter LaPointe - Sorry.

President Letellier – You're good there. Thank you.

Peter LaPointe – Thank you. The parcels around us are Sarat Ford which is zoned Business B. The Auto Body Shop for the Ford Dealership which is zoned Business B. There's a Tai Kwon Do facility which is also zoned Business, a park and as you extend down North and Springfield Streets, there's a mix of retail, personal service and other commercial uses which are also zoned Business B. And adjacent to us, there is on

Springfield Street, there's also a mix of commercial uses that are zoned Business B. So we're basically surrounded by a Business B zone. The rest of our property, the existing CVS, is zoned Business B and by a cornering of the land and rezoning the 23,000 square feet we did acquire at the back of the site, it will enable us to construct the new facility. We do not abut any residential use. We abut Mr. Shibley's property at the back of the site which is currently zoned Residential B. It is a very deep gulley, very heavily wooded. The area beyond our site is wetlands so it's unlikely that it will be developed. It will probably always remain a wood lot and a visual barrier for anything that happens to the south of us. I'm more than happy to answer any questions you may have.

President Letellier – Thank you. Any questions for the speaker? Councilor Calabrese?

Councilor Calabrese – Yes, I just have a quick question about the traffic pattern that's gonna result from this?

Peter LaPointe – Yes.

Councilor Calabrese – Could you just address that for me?

Peter LaPointe – Certainly. We're using, the site as it is currently configured has two driveways. One closest to Sarat Ford and one immediately at the traffic light. We are going to continue to use the same two driveways. The advantage of the one closest to the Ford Dealership is that it's as far away from the light as we can get on this property. And the advantage to the driveway in the intersection is that it is a signalized driveway. It will continue to be signalized. There will be a detector loop in that driveway and there in fact is a walk signal and a push button that triggers off of that driveway which will allow people to enter this part of the site. There will be additional parking along the side of the building, additional parking in front of the building. The building will be pushed back in the site and we've left adequate room around the back of the building for both the largest fire apparatus you have and tractor trailer truck delivery. There's an overhead door at the rear of the building. There will be a drive-through which the site does not now have, or the CVS doesn't have, and that will be at the back corner of the building and the drive-through exit lane will be down the Sarat Ford side of the property. The building if you've ever seen them take a delivery where they are now, the deliveries come in the front of the building through a door in the façade of the building and then down a conveyor belt to the basement. The deliveries here, the compact, they don't have a cardboard compactor now, they will have one with the new store. The trash dumpster will be at the back of the building and enclosed in a fence with vinyl slats. The, I think that the reconstruction or redevelopment of this site will be a dramatic improvement to this intersection.

President Letellier - Thank you. Councilor Rossi?

Councilor Rossi – Would you just address that exit and entrance closest to the traffic signal? Is there a plan to widen that?

Peter LaPointe – It does get widened slightly and the walk gets reconstructed at that

point and the curb radius gets reconstructed at that point. So it will be a full twenty-four foot wide when it's completed. I think it's eighteen or nineteen feet wide now.

Councilor Rossi - Okay. So the twenty-four feet would give you about a twelve foot entrance/exit?

Peter LaPointe - That's for two-way traffic.

Councilor Rossi - Okay.

President Letellier – Thank you. Any other Councilors with any questions for the speaker? No? Thank you very much, sir. Do we have any one else who wishes to speak in support of the zone change? Do we have anyone who wishes to speak in opposition to the zone change? Anyone who wishes to register their support in name only for the zone change? Anyone who wishes to register their opposition in name only to the zone change. Seeing none, I call the public hearing closed. What's the Council's pleasure? Do we have a report from the Zoning Committee?

Councilor Messick – Yes, we do. The Zoning Committee met and we had information which I believe is the same information that you have in your packets from Debbie Dachos recommending the zone change for the reasons that it is in the best interests of the town because it promotes more growth principles when reusing a currently used site, reconfiguring to improve the traffic in the area and add additional ...space which it doesn't currently have. The proposed development will result in a cleaning of a brown field site. The ravine that's behind the CVS now is filled with trash. It's filled with metal junk, it's filled with building materials, it's filled with um just things that will be remove when they clean it out, when they do the construction. I've been down there a couple times and it's really awful. The stream that's down there runs red because of all the rust that's seeping out of the soil. So, that's one issue. It's really gonna clean up the area. It is adjacent to other business zoned properties. There's no residential buildings within sight distance of the back and that's the major concern. The front is actually gonna be ...being improved, but the back of the building where the changes will be made, you can't see any of the houses, the residential buildings, from there. And so we voted 3-0 to recommend the zone change at our meeting. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Do we have a motion? I forgot to ask for a motion? Do we have a motion? Moved by Councilors Rheault and Simpson, seconded by Councilor Bitzas. Any other discussion from the council floor? Councilor Rossi?

Councilor Rossi – Yes. I had a chance to look at the project and I think that this project would be a decided asset not only to the community but to that area in particular. And I think it was nicely done.

President Letellier – Thank you. Any other discussion? Councilor Bitzas?

Councilor Bitzas – Yes. I'm in support of that zoning change and I believe it would be a

lot better that intersection with more open space...and also they're going to clean up the area and it's a plus plus for the community. We thank him for coming down here and presenting the nice plans. So, thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Any other discussion from the Council? No? Seeing none, Barbara, could you call the roll? This is the first reading of three and eight votes are required.

ROLL CALL – 11 Yes, 0 No.

President Letellier – With eleven yes, you've approved the first reading for the zone change and the ordinance. Thank you very much.

Item 10. Old Business

1. TOR-2007-11 -An Ordinance to Amend the Code of the Town of Agawam Water and Sewer Ordinances by Adding Article XII, "Special Sewer Improvement District". (3/3) (tabled indefinitely 2/6/08) (Majority of those present and voting)

(moved forward)

2. TO-2007-52 - Discussion of elimination of verbatim Council Minutes to outline form. (Councilor Young) (tabled on 2/6/08) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – This matter is on the table. I did just recently give the summary that Barbara had prepared to the Rules Committee so I would recommend that this remain on the table but I will. So absent a motion to remove it, it will remain on the table. Okay?

3. TO-2008-8 - Transfer - \$30,000.00 from Reserve Fund (16605-57300) to Veterans Benefits (16604-57100) (Mayor) (Referred to Finance Committee) (Majority of Full Council – 6 votes)

President Letellier – This was referred to the Finance Committee. Do we have a motion? Moved by Councilor Simpson, seconded by Councilor Cavallo. Our Veteran's Agent is here. I believe he'd like to address the Council. Do we have a motion to go into Committee as a Whole? Moved by Councilor Rossi, seconded by Councilor Calabrese. Mr. Girard?

Richard Girard – I'm glad I picked such an uneventful night to be here. I apologize for having this on the Agenda. A couple things I just wanted to address real quick. The reason for the request for the transfer is due to the high number of veterans that are coming through the office now through an outreach program that I've done to try to get some of our senior veterans and low income veterans into this program that this money

would go to. As you know, with us being at war now, we're having a lot of kids coming back now that are in need of some financial aide at some point when they get back. It's been a long tough year as far as the things I've seen from our veterans in this town. It's a sad state when we have people in this town that fought for this country and are having a hard time deciding whether they want to keep their house or eat. And that happened to me at one point last year and I swore then that I was not gonna let it happen again. This outreach program has got a lot of our older veterans in the office, has gotten food on their table, paid for their heat. Just a quick example, I did some work from the years before I was here, back around 2002 we were averaging around 10-12 people in our Chapter 115 program and as of today, we have 25 people on our program. It changes daily or excuse me monthly, back in January of '02, the office was spending about \$5200 on veterans and as of February of '08, we're around \$8200 to \$8300 a month. The office has been double funded for the last seven years. There has been no increase. As far back as I could go, there was an increase in the budget every single year before that. I don't know the reason why it wasn't increased but it is what it is and on a yearly basis, I'm required to pay these people. Some of them are reimbursements for the Medicare which increases every year, their health insurance which increases every year, the fuel, the rent, the retirement benefits, all these are increased by the state every year and with more people on their it's easy to see how this money gotten eaten up. I don't know if anybody has any questions about any of the funds, what they're used for, but I'd be happy to address anything that's on anybody's mind.

President Letellier – Thank you. Do we have any questions for the speaker? Councilor Young, then Councilor .

Councilor Young – I have a few questions. The, so pertaining to the request for funding, are the veterans this \$30,000.00 would be just for Agawam veterans?

Richard Girard – Yes sir. The, each individual town has a fund that's established for Chapter 115 so the money that we have here would be specific to Agawam and 75% of all the money that we spent is reimbursed by the Commonwealth. So if we were to spend \$100,000.00, we would get \$75,000.00 back to the Town.

Councilor Young – So are you going to the other towns that you represent for the same money?

Richard Girard - The only other town that I deal with Chapter 115 benefits are Southwick and they have had an increase. I think Springfield is going for \$350,000.00 increase, West Springfield just got a \$40,000.00 increase. I asked for a list from the Department of Veterans' Services of towns that had to get an increase this year due to the high number of vets that are coming in and they sad it would be easier just to get a list of the towns that didn't get anything.

Councilor Young – Okay, so looking at the last year to date expenditure report from our auditor shows that as of January 31st, you've spent about, it says 60.3% of your budget?

Richard Girard - I don't have that in front of me. When I had that meeting in January and if I recall we had about \$30,000.00 left.

Councilor Young – Right. \$31,000 and almost \$32,000.00. So your estimate or your request for \$30,000.00, can you tell me what that and maybe you did, all I have is the transfer request in front of me, can you tell me how you came to that number?

Richard Girard - Yea. What I did was as of January, we were at almost \$8,000.00 per month, so to get us through with what we have left and to get us through to the end of June, \$30,000.00 was about as safe a figure as I could get. The office is also responsible for indigent funerals for our veterans whose families can't afford to pay for their funeral and those are assessed, the town is required to pay that by law. And those funerals are at \$2,000.00 each so, I try to leave a little space in case of an emergency but the \$30,000.00 is about as close as I can come.

Councilor Young – Okay. Thank you.

President Letellier – Councilor Messick?

Councilor Messick – Um, actually Councilor Young kind of covered it a little bit. Chapter 115, you said it covers funerals, medical expenses, what are some of the other things it requires us to spend funds for?

Richard Girard – The way the state has it set up, they're called Ordinary Benefits. They present a list, and I apologize for not having this in front of you. I didn't know that I needed that hand out and Barbara called me this morning and I didn't have enough time to put it together but they allow an allowance for rent, fuel, what they call ordinary benefits or are veterans that meet the, that are below the threshold of the income that the state sets. And the big thing now, is as of January 1st, the state increased the fuel benefit to \$250 per person across the board, whoever was entitled to it where as before it went by the number of rooms in your house, so the most we gave out for fuel before was I think \$146 a month and now it's \$250 for every single person who qualifies which is a lot of the people that are on there right now.

President Letellier – Councilor Rossi?

Councilor Rossi – Yes, I don't if I missed it or not, I know that you're responsible for...this \$30,000.00, is that gonna benefit just Agawam?

Richard Girard – Just, just Agawam. Each individual town has a fund set up for the veterans' department. Even though I am the agent in Southwick, they have their own Chapter 115 Veterans Fund that they use. Their load has increased dramatically as well and they've already, it's easier with them because I can just call the Treasurer and they vote on it in their own meeting and transfer it, so I don't have to do that but each town has their own funds so the \$30,000.00 would be strictly for Agawam.

Councilor Rossi – Okay so you just handle the administration of that area for those other towns? Is that what it is?

Richard Girard – Well, I do the same job as I do here but I am, the administrative costs for the office are paid by all four towns but the 115 budget is paid for by each individual town.

Councilor Rossi – Okay. Thank you.

President Letellier - Any other questions?

Councilor Messick - I'm sorry I forgot. Have you put in with the account an um increased budget for the next couple of years if you believe you're gonna continue having these expenses?

Richard Girard – Yes I did. In fact, I think the figure I had for next year was \$120,000.00 based on the number of people that are coming in. It's a tough time right now because we're getting a lot of World War II people, veterans and spouses that qualify that unfortunately are passing away and they're really strapped for money. It's a testament to Agawam on how many people we have in this town that are, that are veterans. It's uh, you know if you went through it, we have some real war heroes here from World War II that are living to the Iraq War that are living and it's amazing to deal with these people. And you know I've really made it a mission to get out there and get these people what they need because I don't think it's right for any of these people that fought for this country to suffer. And you know I need the money strictly for that. It's a tough thing to deal with but it's worth it in the end.

President Letellier – Thank you. Any other questions? Thank you very much Richie.

Richard Girard – Thank you.

President Letellier - Do I have a motion to come out of committee as a whole? Moved by Councilor Rheault, seconded by Councilor Rossi. All in favor of coming out of committee as a whole signify by saying Ay? Opposed? We're out of committee as a whole. Do we have a report from the Finance Committee?

Councilor Young – No, due to time constraints we have not and lack of information, we have not scheduled a meeting. I have, you know I've asked and we've received the information that I would have asked if I had a meeting. I guess there's details about detailed expenditures and various...and I commend our veterans' agent, Rich, you're doing a great job as always and I appreciate his straight forwardness in coming here and answering the questions off the cuff as he did. So I'm satisfied for what that's worth to you. So I guess I would open it up to the rest of the committee or the council, when I was on my way here I thought maybe we'd table it for a week to have a meeting but I don't really see a need personally but I will defer to the Council's pleasure. Thanks.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Rheault I believe was next.

Councilor Rheault – Oh I'm sorry.

President Letellier – Okay. Councilor Rossi?

Councilor Rossi – Nice job Rich.

President Letellier – Councilor Bitzas?

Councilor Bitzas - Yes, um I'm in favor for the \$30,000.00 and I think \$30,000.00 is a very small price for what those veterans give to us and our country. So I hope everybody supports that and I don't need, I don't think we need to bring that to the separate committee, the finance committee, I think we should vote tonight.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Cavallo?

Councilor Cavallo – I concur. I think we should vote on that tonight.

President Letellier – Okay. Councilor Mineo?

Councilor Mineo – Yea. I think we should vote on it tonight also. I'd like to thank Rich Girard. I think he does a great job and I know there's got to be a lot of veterans that are walking through his door because where I work, we're getting a lot of veterans. Just to remind you to Rich, there still is funding available for veterans if they want to go back to school so if you need any other information, I know we've talked about it in the past, please refer them over to Future Works. Thanks.

President Letellier – Councilor Messick?

Councilor Messick – Hi. I would just like to ask Mr. Girard if I could um have the information that you provided...the information that you said about Chapter 115, just for my own advocacy. I don't know that much about it. Thank you.

President Letellier – Any other discussion from the Council? No? Seeing none, Barbara, could you call the roll. Six votes are needed.

ROLL CALL – 11 Yes, 0 No.

President Letellier – Eleven yes, you've approved the transfer unanimously. Thank you again. You're welcome.

4. TO-2008-9 - Order Granting or Renewing a LICENSE for Automatic Amusement Device(s) –Agawam Bowl, 359 Walnut Street Extension, Agawam, MA. (Referred to the License Committee) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – Do we have a motion? Moved by Councilor Simpson, seconded by Councilor Rossi. Do we have a report from the License Committee?

Councilor Rossi – Yes. I spoke with the Licensing Committee earlier this evening. We really didn't have a chance to meet but we discussed it and all are in agreement that there are no problems that we see with the license. So I would like to make a positive recommendation for TO-2008-8, TO-2008-9 and TO-2008-10 for a favorable vote.

President Letellier – That's -9,-10 and -11. Okay. Thank you. Any discussion from the Council on TO-2008-9? No? Seeing none, Barbara, could you call the roll? Six votes are needed.

ROLL CALL – 11 Yes, 0 No.

President Letellier – Eleven yes, zero no, you've passed the license for Agawam Bowl.

5. TO-2008-10 - Order Granting or Renewing a LICENSE for Automatic Amusement Device(s) –Agawam Bowl, 363 Walnut Street Extension, Agawam, MA. (Referred to the License Committee) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – Also for Agawam Bowl but the second address, 363 Walnut Street, do we have a motion? Moved by Councilors Simpson and Rossi, seconded by Councilor Perry? Any discussion? Seeing none, Barbara, could you please call the roll?

ROLL CALL – 11 Yes, 0 No.

President Letellier – Eleven yes, zero no. You've passed the second license for Agawam Bowl.

6. TO-2008-11 - Order Granting or Renewing a LICENSE for an Automatic and Weekly Amusement Device(s) – Alexander's, 60 North Westfield Street, Feeding Hills (Referred to the License Committee) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – Do we have a motion? Moved by Councilors Rossi and Simpson, seconded by Councilor Perry. Any discussion? No? Seeing none, Barbara, could you please call the roll?

ROLL CALL – 11 Yes, 0 No.

President Letellier – With eleven yes, zero no, we've approved the license for Alexander's. We move onto New Business...

Councilor Rheault – Point of information.

President Letellier – Yes?

Councilor Rheault – If I may, just for, before we get into that, going back to the Zone Change...

President Letellier – Mhmm?

Councilor Rheault – I think the Chair ruled that it was an Ordinance so it took three readings? I don't recall taking three readings on a Zone Change before. I thought we only took one.

President Letellier – One for the Zone Change but there's also an underlying TO-2008-4.

Councilor Rheault – Where's that?

President Letellier - If you look at the item from the City Solicitor? Right here. It's an Ordinance and the Council Chair had made the rule at the beginning of her term that Ordinance would continue to have three readings.

Councilor Rheault – That's not on the agenda.

President Letellier - I noti, I did notice that on the agenda it does not list that it's a TO but the item itself is a TO. And I know that I had read into the record that it was also a TO.

Councilor Rheault – Okay.

President Letellier - Thank you.

Item 11. New Business

1. TR-2008-4 - A Resolution Establishing a No Parking Zone on Hunt Street. (Mayor) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – That will be next agenda and I'll ask the Traffic and Street Safety Committee to look at that.

2. TR-2008-5 - A Resolution to Accept Massachusetts General Law Chapter 43D "An Act Relative to Streamlining and Expediting the Permitting Process in the Commonwealth". (Mayor) (Majority of those present and voting)

President Letellier – Next agenda and refer that to Zoning & Ordinance.

3. TO-2008-12 - Voucher List (\$195.00) (Majority of those present and

voting)

President Letellier – Next agenda.

4. TR-2008-6 - A Resolution Authorizing the Agawam Community Preservation Committee to Spend \$65,000.00 for the Acquisition, Preservation, Rehabilitation and Restoration of Historic Resources as Provided for Under the Historic Resources Section of the Community Preservation Act. (CPA) (Majority of full council or six votes)

President Letellier – Refer that to the Council's CPA Committee, next agenda.

Item 12. Any other matter that may legally come before the City Council.

President Letellier – We'll start with Councilor Perry.

Councilor Perry – Yes, thank you, Madam President, I'll be brief this evening. Just one issue that I think you just referred one item to the Ad Hoc Committee for the CPA. I think we really need to have another meeting, if Jill, I believe you chair that board, if you put an item of agenda as far as the School Street Park. We did have a meeting probably two months ago when Joe was Chairman of that and there were some issues that were brought up in regards to some engineering and questions and things and I never got any response from that so I don't know if you could slip that onto the agenda too, kill two birds with one stone. I was down to the park yesterday. For the swales that were never gonna have standing water in them, you gotta go down there and see them! Okay? They're full! You pull in by the barn, the entrance, there's an area there that's a catch basin. It's probably I would imagine, when I seen it in the summertime about six feet deep. It's road level full. Now, it was pretty foggy when I left there yesterday, I mean, you know, School Street, that corner there, there's nothing blocking from anyone going in to that little catch basin there. It's definitely an accident waiting to happen. That park, you tell me, I was there in November, okay, because I was looking into things before our last meeting that we had with CPA Ad Hoc Committee, I was up there yesterday. The most I could see because like I said, it was foggy when I was up there around 4:00, there's ten brand new park benches installed up there! I was there in November and they weren't there. They're there now. It's only February! These are beautiful cast iron sides, nice redwood wood on them, I mean they're long. Why are we installing these in February? In this weather? I, you know, I just have a lot of questions up there and it's just, you know, I think we need to as a Council and a sub-committee, need to sit and talk on some of the issues that are up there because you know, we need to look at it. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you Councilor Perry. Councilor Messick?

Councilor Messick – I actually was gonna bring that up too. I had some phone calls and uh, I spoke with some people who have water in their basements who are abutting School Street. I was speaking with Engineering as well and it's an issue that we're gonna have

to take a look into, so I think that possibly meeting with the CPA Committee and Engineering might be in order because the residents are, um, residents have a lot of questions. I was at a few meetings where the residents came when we were planning, we were going through Conservation with this, and they were concerned at the time about water in their basements and lo and behold they have water in their basements. So, I think it's an excellent idea. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Bitzas?

Councilor Bitzas – Nothing this evening.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Young?

Councilor Young – Yea. Just for maybe Councilor Simpson, when it's her turn, as Chair of School Budget Sub-Committee, if you could just confirm that we're gonna attend the meeting with, the co-meeting with the School Committee Finance Committee on March 10th that we were invited to?

Councilor Simpson – May I address through the Chair or should I wait?

President Letellier - That's fine go ahead.

Councilor Simpson – Okay. Thank you. I was under the impression that we all got the invitation to that meeting. I was just gonna have each committee member say whether they could go or not unless you all want to tell me cuz I don't know if you can go or not. So I was just responding that I could attend. So...

Councilor Young - Okay. Are you attending?

Councilor Simpson – Yes.

Councilor Young - Okay.

Councilor Cavallo - I didn't receive an invitation.

President Letellier - We got it in our packet.

Councilor Simpson – It was in our packets.

Councilor Young – So, I guess, my only point was to make sure people were going cuz I heard somewhere that they were, hadn't heard or gotten a response so

Councilor Simpson – Okay. I just figured each individual member would respond but if you want to send me an email saying you can go and then I'll just send something up to them altogether or you can respond on your own, whichever way you would like or Barbara just said you could respond to her and she'd respond for us. So...

Councilor Young – And then, thank you, I will be attending it also. And then finally related to School Street Park, I've gotten some calls also from citizens and maybe the committee responsible for that while you're meeting, you could find out what the ETA for my lacrosse fields' completion will be? Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Simpson? It's your turn for any other matter.

Councilor Simpson – Nothing tonight thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Mineo.

Councilor Mineo – Barbara, I will be attending that meeting on March 10th. Nothing else.

President Letellier – Thank you Councilor. Councilor Cavallo?

Councilor Cavallo – I attended along with Councilor Calabrese last Tuesday night, a wonderful ceremony here honoring the students at the high school that received a letter "A" for their academic achievements. There was probably a couple hundred parents there. It was very nice. The ceremony, they allowed us to stand in line and shake the hands, right, Councilor Calabrese, of the students. They did a real nice job and again it was a nice gesture on their part to invite us. That's all I have.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Rossi?

Councilor Rossi – I've nothing this evening. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. Councilor Rheault?

Councilor Rheault – Nothing this evening.

President Letellier – Thank you. Vice President Calabrese?

Councilor Calabrese – Barbara, I'll be in touch with you about scheduling a Rules Committee meeting to discuss TO-2007-52 and also to follow up from the previous meeting that I had last week, I don't recall the, about the public safety committee, about establishing a public safety committee. We need to follow up on that as well. Thank you.

President Letellier – Thank you. I have nothing. Thank you everyone. Have a good week. Do we have a motion to adjourn? Moved by the Council, seconded by the Council. All in favor? Thank you.

Adjournment