

RTM Meeting
January 8, 2013

The call

1. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the request of the First Selectman to approve the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Agreement between the Town of Westport and the Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority, (the C-PACE Agreement), and to authorize the First Selectman, on behalf of the Town of Westport, to execute and deliver the C-PACE Agreement, substantially in the form provided, together with all other documents that may be necessary and appropriate to evidence, secure and otherwise complete the Agreement.
2. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Library Director for an appropriation of \$146,500 to the Capital & Nonrecurring Expenditure Fund (C&NEF) Account for purchase and installation of a new Integrated Library System.
3. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance and a request by the Library Director for an appropriation of \$112,500 to the Capital & Nonrecurring Expenditure Fund (C&NEF) Account for purchase and installation of a new Radio Frequency Identification System.
4. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the request of at least 20 electors of the Town of Westport, to approve a sense of the meeting resolution to support gun control legislation in the United States and urge the President and federal legislators, as well as Connecticut state legislators, to enact a ban on automatic and semi-automatic assault weapons and high-capacity magazine clips. Furthermore, to support closing the “gun-show loophole” that allows people to buy guns at trade shows and from private dealers without background check.
5. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the request of the Finance Director, to approve an amendment to the Town of Westport Defined Contribution Retirement Plan, Effective January 1, 2012. (Copy of the amended Plan available in the Finance Department)
6. To take such action as the meeting may determine, upon the request of the Finance Director, to approve an amendment to the Town of Westport 401(k) Plan, as Amended and Restated, Effective October 1, 2012. (Copy of the amended Plan available in the Finance Department)

Minutes

Moderator Hadley Rose:

This meeting of Westport’s Representative Town Meeting is now called to order. We welcome those who join us tonight in the Town Hall auditorium as well as those watching us streaming live on www.westportct.gov, watching on cable channel 79 or ATT channel 99. My name is Hadley Rose and I am the RTM Moderator. To my right is our RTM secretary, Jackie Fuchs. Tonight’s invocation will be by Suzanne Tanner.

Invocation

Suzanne Tanner, Bolton Lane:

Most of you may know that I have experienced a horrific tragedy in the last two years where I lost my daughter to a horribly random accident. She was the camper who traveled to Maine. Her van was stopped in traffic and a truck going too fast in a very rural intersection hit the van and I lost my only daughter. My invocation tonight is for all of us to be reminded to think small. So much of the media tells us to think big, to go for ego, to go for greatness. I think we need to slow down. I think we need to remind ourselves to think about our town as a village, remind ourselves we are doing a very, very good job with educating our children, trying to find priorities that are really worth putting more time and effort towards, spending the time and the energy on things that are truly important. I think it is really important to reduce it down to very simple, fundamental priorities. How do we keep our children safer at home? How do we remind ourselves to just slow down the pace a little bit and think about the little things in life? Not the great ones. Not the big ones. They may come and we can celebrate them but remind ourselves that some of those small moments may be the most important or the last. We won't have regrets. So, I thank you for your dedication to the town. I thank you for putting so much energy into our, I'll call it a small village. Great things start here. Big things start here. But small is very important.

There were 33 members present. Dr. Cunitz, Mr. Urist and Ms. Rea notified the Moderator that they would be absent. Ms. Feller was late.

Mr. Rose:

First of all, I'd like to wish you a healthy and happy new year. This is the beginning of a new year and I'm sure we'll have a lot of interesting things on our plate this year.

RTM Announcements

Bill Meyer, district 3:

A 19 year success story, First Night. Better than ever. I want to thank George Underhill who spent hours on our board and Allen and Steve. This is the first year he's missed because he was sick. It's the greatest thing to walk around town and see the people that love First Night. It has failed in five other towns but nothing fails in Westport. First Night. And Gordon, thanks for spending the night talking to people. You are a great ambassador for the town.

Jack Klinge, district 7:

As usual, when Bill makes an announcement, it reminds me that I should be making one. This is on behalf of the Friends of the Senior Center and our board. We are having our second music concert this Sunday, Jan. 13. Doors open at one o'clock and the Steve D'Agostino Swing Band at two o'clock. I am promising chips and dips and food and beverages and it should be a wonderful event. Fast

forward to Feb. 4, Super Bowl Sunday. We are having our sixth annual Super Bowl party from one o'clock to four o'clock at the Senior Center. All ages are invited. Oscars will provide the hot dogs with all the works and so forth. It will be Staples football players, cheerleaders and so forth but, most important, the guest of honor who will be receiving our annual Service to Seniors Award is one our own, Bill Meyer. Please come join us.

There were no corrections to the minutes of November 12 or December 4.

Corrections to the minutes of Nov. 13:

Lois Schine:

Page 20 in the middle of the page, I am quoted as saying "Let's give everybody who qualifies *an opportunity* to apply" (The words *an opportunity* were omitted leaving the sentence incomplete.)

Birthday greetings: This month we have Mr. Timmins, Ms. Schine, Mr. Klinge, Mr. Rubin, Ms. Feller and Mr. Mall. So, happy birthday to you all.

Announcements

The next RTM meeting will be right here in Town Hall on Feb. 5 at 7:30.

I received a notice that there is going to be a joint Public Works and Finance Committee meeting on Jan. 30, room and time to be announced.

Education Committee will meet this Wednesday, 7:30, room 309.

One sad note, as many of you are probably aware, John Booth passed away a few weeks ago. John was a long time member of the RTM for 16 years. He was a long time chair of the Finance Committee. Frankly, John was the first person I tried to learn about the RTM from. John will certainly will be missed. He served this town in tremendous capacity. Our best wishes go out to his family and his friends. We thank him.

Mr. Meyer:

A lot of us want to talk about John Booth tonight. I will just give a history of John. He was born in Canandaigua New York, 80 years ago. He went to Clarkson College and met his future wife there. His first job was in White plains. He married Grace. Then he lived in St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Westport, London England and then Westport again. All the organizations that John was in, it's amazing. Hoot Owls, he was the lead singer in Y's men. He was Sons of American revolution. So active in his church, he was Moderator twice. Eagle Scout. He had two sons and a brother. I know you are watching Grace because we talked this afternoon. I just want you to know that Carolyn's operation was a success, because Carolyn and Grace are good friends, she sends her love you and I send my love to you, Grace.

Dick Lowenstein, district 5:

John Booth died on Christmas day and the service for him was held this past Friday. The eulogies were given by the family and by Jeff Rider the Minister of the Greens Farms Congregational Church. I knew John well before he joined the RTM. He and my wife both belonged to the Greens Farms Church. The eulogies that we heard in the service were about family, about friends, about church. Had Bill or Gordon or I had given a eulogy for him at that service, it might have sounded something like this: John epitomized what a good RTM member should be. He was totally non-partisan in his views. However he felt personally, it did not interfere or enter in any way into his discussions at the RTM. He served the town very well and also knew when to say *enough*. While he was still a member of the RTM and feeling the effects of Parkinson's, he resigned as Chair of the Finance Committee and he was succeeded by Mike Rea at the time. He continued to serve in the RTM and he sat in the seat where you are sitting, Gil. Then, when the time came, I used to drive him to meetings from his home near ours. He resigned and I believe Paul Rossi was elected by the remaining members of the RTM to be his successor. After he left the RTM, I also had the opportunity to serve him as a constituent. He asked for me to give him some help on a land use matter in his neighborhood, which I was glad to do. He was a good man, a good RTM member and we'll miss him.

Stephen Rubin, district 7:

John Booth was probably a mentor for many of us. He certainly was for me. Many of you might not realize why every time that there is a resolution read, Steve Rubin opens his big mouth and says "second". Well, John always used to do that. When John took ill, he was worried that someone would not second an opinion, a voice, a sound from the town. He asked me if I would keep that tradition going. I promised him I would and I will as long as our current Moderator always permits me and the body always permits me. For those of you who didn't know, that's why Steve Rubin says second all the time, whatever the resolution might be. Rest in peace my friend.

Mr. Rose

For any of you who have been here for a number of years, it is very unusual for members to get up and speak about one of the members who's passed. John was very unique and a valuable member of this community and the RTM. He deserves the comments that were made tonight so thank you all.

Before we get on to the call, just so people are aware, we are making a little switch in the order. We are moving item 4 to the end and we are moving items 5 and 6 up.

The secretary read item #1 of the call - To approve the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Agreement between the Town of Westport and the Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority, (the C-

PACE Agreement), and to authorize the First Selectman, on behalf of the Town of Westport, to execute and deliver the C-PACE Agreement. By show of hands, the motion passes unanimously, 33-0.

Presentation

First Selectman Gordon Joseloff:

Let me just add my thoughts about John Booth. Everything that Dick Lowenstein said, I second in spades. John had a demeanor. You never knew what he was thinking but John also ran out of patience with the RTM and frequently he would call the question when he thought debate would run too long where people were getting up repeatedly. That was one of the hallmarks of John Booth. He was a model RTM member. He knew so much about this town. He reflected the epitome of what an RTM member should do. He ran his meetings even handedly, no matter how controversial the measure. No matter how much of a minority might exist on a certain issue, John was insistent that that person or those people involved be heard just as much as those in the majority. We are going to miss John Booth. For those of you who did not know John Booth, you can certainly look back in the record and read some of his speeches and reports. He was a true Westporter and we send condolences to Grace and to the family.

Tonight, the item before you is an extension of Westport's lead in things green. As you know, we have a Green Task Force, it used to be called a Green Energy Task Force, and this is consistent, this measure. What this involves, I'll ask Jessica Bailey to come forward and give some of the details, but this enables commercial property owners to receive money, to borrow money from an agency from the state and use the town as the go between where the town acts as the collector of the payments as part of its tax system and forwards those payments to the state. With that, I'll call up Jessica Bailey. She is with the Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority and she's been spearheading the movement to bring C-PACE to the State of Connecticut.

Jessica Bailey, Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority:

Thank you for inviting me to speak. I am, as Gordon suggested, designing a program here in the State of Connecticut to allow commercial, industrial, and multi-family building owners to access private capital to do clean energy improvements in their buildings. It is a program that was made possible by a policy that was passed in June of this year called PACE, Property Assessed Clean Energy. Essentially, what that policy did was it equated energy upgrades in buildings as a public benefit. In so doing, they allow clean energy upgrades to be financed the way we finance other public benefits in the state like sewers or sidewalks or school houses or fire houses which is to use the property tax collection mechanism as the repayment. What this does, is that it solves the largest problem that building owners face when they want to do energy upgrades which is that they don't want to go out of pocket to do them. In a state like Connecticut where many of us own homes or work in businesses understand that energy prices are so high that even the smallest energy improvement in our

buildings would be cash positive for us, we don't want to go out of pocket to do it. This program that we are designing gives building owners a way to access to that up front capital. The reason capital will come into these programs is because the security that the State Legislature has now given this financial product by allowing it to be treated as a tax lien. This means that the building becomes the collateral. So, investors in this program are given the confidence that they need that they can invest in this and the building owners in Connecticut are the beneficiaries. It's a little bit complicated so I am just going to walk you through really quickly how it works. Its tax lien financing that gives building owners 100 percent up front, long term, up to 20 years, capital to do energy improvements to their buildings. There's no cost to the taxpayer. There is no liability to the town. The way it works is this: If I am a building owner, I engage a contractor who will design a scope of work for me. If I decided that I wanted to go through the scope of work which could include anything from retrofitting the windows, to putting solar on the roof to changing out the boiler, any energy improvement measures, if I, as the building owner, decide I want to do that, I would apply to myself, in this case, I would apply to CEFIA, the quasi-state agency with whom I work, for approval. If those improvements are approved, the first call that we would make is to the Tax Collector in the town in which the building is located. We would alert the Tax Collector that the improvements have been approved through our system and to place a caveat on the land records. This, then, gives the security to the investment community to come in and lend money to that building owner. The building owner then uses that money to go forward with the upgrades. The building owner repays this loan through their property taxes. That's why I am here today. Where do we pay our property taxes? We pay them to our town. So, the legislature, when they passed this policy in June, they passed a state-wide policy that interested municipalities opt in to. That's why we're talking to Westport today. The reason that we need the opt in of the city of Westport and the other cities around the state is because the property tax happens at the city level here. The repayment of the PACE lien, this energy loan is as a line item on your property tax bill. This, again, gives security to the investment and allows our building owners in the state to bring in low cost capital to do the energy improvements in their building. The Town of Westport in the agreement that Gordon and his team have looked through and we have had a chance to discuss in detail, basically lays out the responsibilities of the Town of Westport which is to use their property tax collection mechanism the same way they do any other improvements; the sewer district, I know, is one you have here. When that money comes in from the building owner, remit it over to the State of Connecticut, the organization with whom I work, and we pay the investors. It's that security that I feel very confident is going to allow our building owners in the state in towns that have opted in to be the beneficiaries of what is a very innovative policy that the state legislature passed in June. So, we are here hoping that Westport comes in. We've got nine towns that are on board. We are hoping that Westport becomes the tenth. We are very eager to bring this opportunity to building owners here. As Gordon mentioned, Westport has been very progressive thinking about these issues. One of the barriers has been the

lack of capital to do the improvements that the building owners want to do. We feel very confident that we can help solve that problem. So, we hope that Westport will join us.

Committees report

Finance and Environment Committees, Cathy Talmadge district 6:

The Finance and Environment Committees met on Jan. 3, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. to discuss the First Selectman's request that the RTM approve the C-PACE Agreement and authorize the First Selectmen, on behalf of the Town of Westport to execute and complete the C-Pace agreement substantially in the form provided in your packet. The First Selectman provided a brief overview of the legislation which was passed in 2012 enabling Property Assessed Clean Energy or "PACE" which is an innovative financing model that allows building owners to low-cost financing to make energy efficient upgrades and spread the costs of doing so over a period of years. The new law requires each municipality to embrace the program by agreeing to partner with the state's program authority, the Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority (CEFIA), in the simple administration of program requirements which Jessica just spoke about.

The town's role is to facilitate repayment of the financing of the investment via the business's property tax bill, over a period as long as twenty years. A lien is placed on the business's property to secure the financing. The lien remains on the property until the loan is repaid, even if the land is sold. Because the payment is tied to property tax, low interest capital can be raised from the private sector with no government financing required. This arrangement spreads the cost of these clean energy improvements over the their expected life. CEFIA compensates the municipality for its expenses and handles all other administrative aspects, including the financing. Gail Kelly, the Town Attorney, has reviewed the agreement and Peggy Klein the Tax Collector has verified that our current systems have the capabilities required to collect and remit these payments and that the incremental cost would be negligible. Jessica Bailey, the Director of CEFIA, attended the meeting and mentioned that she came from a similar position in New York when the CT legislation was passed because this is the first state to implement a policy that included all of the required success components... Another member of the public attending the meeting was Martin Gitlin, a Westport resident whose company finances PACE programs in California and that company is an approved provider for C-PACE. He confirmed that there would be many lenders interested in funding the Connecticut program because of the streamlined structure and that he would expect that in many cases the lender financing the upgrades would also be the building's mortgage holder. Since PACE was enacted statewide, nine municipalities have already enacted the required agreement including Beacon Falls, Bridgeport, Durham, Hartford, Middletown, Norwalk, Simsbury, West Hartford and Wyndham. We understand that Fairfield is also close to completing its agreement. Ms. Bailey mentioned that Westport is especially attractive because of the large number of commercial buildings that would qualify. Attached is a summary of Westport building stock compiled by CEFIA. Recommendation: Although neither committees

had a quorum, the committee members who were present voted unanimously to recommend approval of the First Selectman's request.

State Representative Jonathan Steinberg, 1 Bushy Ridge Road:

I'd just like to speak briefly to reiterate the points that Jessica Bailey made. This is the last leg of the landmark legislation that the legislature passed two years ago. The reason why it languished for an additional year is we wanted to get it right. We've learned a lot from how other states have constructed their C-PACE programs. We believe ours is now reflective of the best practices and should be the most straight-forward to implement of any in the nation. This is an important aspect of the state's new comprehensive energy strategy. Conservation and energy efficiency is really important to reduce our overall carbon footprint and consumption which leads to lower fuel prices and energy prices for everyone. It is a very straightforward program. To reiterate, again, there is no cost to the town. The town is compensated for any administrative costs. It could not be more straightforward. It's a great thing for Westport businesses to take advantage of very low cost loans ideally. We expect that to be the case and, more importantly, to invest in energy efficiency projects which they may have been looking at for years but didn't have the means by which to accomplish them in the near term. As I said, this has been proven in other states. We expect, with Jessica's help and CEFIA's determination, that we will find a number of Westport businesses interested in taking advantage of this.

Martin Gitlin, 22 Partick Lane:

When a building property owner wants to buy electricity, it's actually pretty easy. In Westport, you call up Connecticut Light and Power and say you want service to your building and they give it too you. When you want to buy energy efficiency, it's really not easy. You have to go and get a contractor and do plans and buy equipment and spend a lot of money up front that you might only see in your return over a period of years. As Ms. Bailey suggested, policy makers are really focused on how to make buying energy efficiency less painful for property owners and C-PACE provides one of those avenues to do just that. Studies have shown that financing, getting the cash up front, is the biggest barrier to people doing energy improvements. As Jessica said, there are a whole range of them. Basically, anything you can do to a commercial building that is not aesthetic to upgrade it, is likely to have an impact on improving energy efficiency of that building. It's a wide range of things that we can do to our building stock here in town, but how do we get the money? Well, C-PACE is one answer, not the only answer. It is an answer that works particularly well for large deep upgrades where there are lots of different things maybe some solar, maybe building envelopes, maybe windows, maybe controls, maybe heating. It uses the good offices but not the coffers of government to do it. Without going into the details, because the report suggested and Jessica and the First Selectman also mentioned it, I want to just suggest a few reasons why Westport would want this program. The first is, of course, it promotes Westport's environmental goals. Westport has always been seen as a leader in the state and in the region on pro-environmental polices. By being one of the first 10 towns to adopt this, it really

cements our town's position there. In addition to the psychic and the feel good benefits, there are some real strong economic and commercial benefits to doing this. By improving our commercial building stock, our office buildings, our shopping buildings, we put our building stock in a better competitive position than it was before and vis a vis other towns. When we are trying to attract businesses and economic development to the town, our buildings are cheaper because the energy costs are lower because these improvements have been made. It brings money into the town through construction dollars, people who spend money here and, as Representative Steinberg suggested, it does it all without tapping our budget. There is no cost to the town. The money that funds these improvements is supplied by private investors who buy the debts, essentially, in the capital markets. In fact, not only are there no costs to the town, if there are incidental costs, CEFIA reimburses us. So, there is really very little downside that we can see. I will admit, as suggested in the report that was read from the committee, I have an interest. I am in the business of originating and bringing financing to these PACE assessments but, as a citizen of the town, I don't see any downside and lots of upside. Thank you very much.

Ms. Flug read the resolution and it was seconded by Mr. Rubin.

RESOLVED: That upon the request of the First Selectman, the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Agreement between the Town of Westport and the Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority, (the C-PACE Agreement) is hereby approved; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the First Selectman is hereby authorized and directed, on behalf of the Town of Westport, to execute and deliver the C-PACE Agreement, substantially in the form provided, together with all other documents that he may determine to be necessary and appropriate to evidence, secure and otherwise complete the Agreement.

Mr. Rose:

It has been moved and seconded by Mr. Rubin to approve the resolution just read.

Members of the RTM

Wendy Batteau, district 8:

I urge everybody to support this. Mr. Gitlin has really summed up the benefits and Mr. Steinberg has summed up the benefits. This is a terrific environmental step and also a terrific economic stimulus. We are now looking to improve the business climate in Westport and this will help, Full disclosure, I am also a member of the Green Task Force and, as such, I have been to numerous meetings on this for months and months and months and have asked numerous questions, as you might expect, about the language, about the agreements, about the costs, about who was going to be doing what, making sure that the town wasn't going to have any liability, making sure that the town wasn't going to have any unanticipated costs, unanticipated consequences and am satisfied that

this really is as straight ahead, positive, uncomplicated and innovated as it seems and I urge everybody to vote for this.

Ms. Flug:

I have a question. I'm not sure if it's for Ms. Bailey or Representative Steinberg. I think this is a great program. My question is, does it affect the town's priority in the tax lien the event of a default or is the lien on the property for this improvement equal to the town's tax lien?

Ms. Bailey:

It doesn't affect the town's priority in a foreclosure. Anything due to the town is due ahead of the PACE lien so it shouldn't compromise anything that is owed to the town.

By show of hands the motion passes unanimously, 33-0.

The secretary read item #2 of the call - An appropriation of \$146,500 to the Capital & Nonrecurring Expenditure Fund (C&NEF) Account for purchase and installation of a new Integrated Library System. By show of hands the motion passes unanimously, 33-0.

Presentation

Maxine Bleiweis, Library Director:

I will open by saying we have come before you tonight to request funds to replace two systems. We have waited for the right time despite being on the capital and non-recurring list for many, many years. We waited for the market place to settle down, for the right products to be there, we waited for price stabilization, and we were watching the experience of other libraries with comparable types of systems. Timing is right for us operationally as we have our whole collection of books together. We want people to be able to adjust to new systems in our library while we are operating as we are in the building we are in now. This is not a particularly exciting expenditure. It will do wonderful things for us but it is really replacing outmoded systems. But it is maximizing the investment of our \$5 million value of our collections and I think that's very important. Unlike some people predicted, the use of the public library is soaring. We have 200,000 individual items which need good care and feeding. So, we are excited to be able to put these in place. It's a long planned expenditure and an exciting step to be able to replace an outmoded system. Right now, the system we have, unlike when you try to find a book, say, on Amazon, you have to spell it absolutely correctly; you have to put in last name comma, first name when you look for an author or else you don't find what you are looking for. An Integrated Library System is the heart and soul of the library. It has all the information of what we own and everybody who has registered so it makes us very efficient. Unfortunately, we haven't been able to be as efficient because we have been

dealing with these outmoded systems. I'm happy to turn it over to the report of the committee.

Committees report

Library, Museum and Arts Committee and Finance Committee, Cornelia Olsen:

Date: December 10, 2012, Town Hall.

Re: Request for Capital and Non-Recurring Funds for Integrated Library System (ILS) and Radio Frequency Identification System (RFID). After a discussion of how it came about from an RFP with three valid responses, Polaris, a company based in Syracuse New York, was chosen to create and provide a new Integrated Library System. Darien and Wilton already have this system in place and are happy with it. It will provide true integration for all library offerings, including newspapers, magazines, databases, as well as traditional offerings such as books and movies, all possible to search while sitting at home! Or from a mobile device. Expected life is seven to 10 years. The Library is requesting \$146,500 to purchase the Polaris ILS. This is based on their proposal plus a six percent contingency. Installation is expected to be completed in four to six months and be operational in July.

The Radio Frequency Identification System (RFID) will be a system of tags in books for inventory control. Now, barcodes require a laser reader. The RFID will enable faster check-out and also inventorying of the collection. Whole stacks of books can be checked out in one go. The company chosen (from three who responded to the RFP) was 3M, and the Library is requesting \$112,500 to proceed with the purchase and installation of the RFID Tags and associated equipment, based on the proposal of 3M plus a six percent contingency . This system will also be up and running by July 1, 2013.

The Library reckons that these new systems together will result in annual savings of \$60,000, and 3,744 hours which is two part-time people, through attrition. A vote was taken and was unanimous in favor of granting these requests.

Members of the Westport electorate - No comment

Ms. Flug read the resolution and it was seconded by Mr. Rubin.

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, and a request by the Library Director, the sum of \$146,500 to the Capital & Nonrecurring Expenditure Fund (C&NEF) Account for the purchase and installation of a new Integrated Library System is hereby appropriated.

Mr. Rose:

It has been moved and seconded by Mr. Rubin to approve the resolution just read.

By show of hands, the motion passes unanimously, 33-0.

The secretary read item #3 of the call - An appropriation of \$112,500 to the Capital & Nonrecurring Expenditure Fund (C&NEF) Account for purchase and installation of a new Radio Frequency Identification System. By show of hands the motion passes unanimously, 32-0-1. Lowenstein abstains.

Presentation

Ms. Bleiweis:

As Cornelia mentioned, the RFID system is a much more updated system than using bar codes and laser readers. It will enable us to do very, very fast inventory up and down the aisles with a wand. If anything is out of place, you'll know. Checking out materials is very fast. It is just a much more robust system.

Members of the Westport electorate - No comment

Ms. Flug read the resolution and it was seconded by Mr. Rubin.

RESOLVED: That upon the recommendation of the Board of Finance, and a request by the Library Director, the sum of \$112,500 to the Capital & Nonrecurring Expenditure Fund (C&NEF) Account for the purchase and installation of a new Radio Frequency Identification System is hereby appropriated.

Mr. Rose:

It has been moved and seconded by Mr. Rubin to approve the resolution just read.

Members of the RTM - no comment

By show of hands, the motion passes unanimously. Lowenstein abstains. 32-0-1.

The secretary read item #5 of the call - To approve an amendment to the Town of Westport Defined Contribution Retirement Plan, Effective January 1, 2012. The motion passes 32-1. Underhill opposed.

Presentation

Gary Conrad, Finance Director:

Back in October, we established the amendments to the 401K plan to allow for new hires and new hired members of the Department of Public Works workers to participate in the 401k and at the same time. we established the defined contribution plan for all new hires in both the non- bargaining group and the DPW. At the time the plan was written, it had a hardship withdrawal provision. We were asked by Mr. Mall to take a look at that because it was a taxable event with a penalty whether there was another option with possibly having loans come first. We've taken a look at that and had the pension attorneys go through and put an amendment to the plan. There will actually be two pieces to it. There will

be loans allowed from the 401k plan and loans allowed from the Westport Defined Contribution plan. Both plans will allow loans for up to \$50,000. Loans can be taken for any purpose but they will have to be paid back within five years. The exception to that is if a person is buying a principal residence, they can borrow up to the \$50,000 on both the combined plans. They can use that for the purchase of their personal residence. That can be done over a period of 15 years. Any loan has a minimum of \$1,000. It has to be approved by the Retirement Committee. In the case of a default and, if the employee leaves the employ of the town prior to paying off the full loan, they have the option of making other financing arrangements to pay their plan back so it does not create a taxable event. If they do leave the town employ and do not pay it back, the town replenishes that from the balance that is in there and they cannot exceed 50 percent of balance of their vested benefits. Therefore, if they do leave, the town does not have an exposure and the plan will actually then create a distribution which then becomes a taxable event if they do not repay it. That's the summary for both amendments to the plan.

Committee reports

Employee Compensation Committee, Louis Mall, district 2:

The Employee Compensation Committee met prior to this meeting and voted 7-1 to approve the amendments. This is just standard boiler plate loan provisions which is to the benefit of plan participants which are Town employees. This is really a no-brainer. It's a win for our town employees.

Members of the Westport electorate - No comment

Ms. Flug read the resolution and it was seconded by Mr. Rubin.

RESOLVED: That upon the request of the Finance Director, an amendment adding Article VIIIA to the Town of Westport Defined Contribution Retirement Plan, (Effective January 1, 2012) is hereby approved. Said amendment to be effective January 1, 2013. Full text of the amendment is as follows.

ARTICLE VIIIA: LOANS TO PARTICIPANTS

8A.1 In General.

(a) In the sole discretion of the Retirement Committee, the Retirement Committee may direct the Trustee to make a *bona fide* loan to a Participant who is an Employee; provided, however, that all loans granted hereunder:

- (1) Are available to all potential borrowers on an equivalent basis; and
- (2) Are made in accordance with and subject to all the provisions of this Article VIIIA.

(b) The minimum initial amount of any loan shall be \$1,000.

(c) No more than one loan from the Plan may be outstanding at any time.

(d) Each loan shall be charged against the borrower's Pick-Up Account.

(e) Any origination and maintenance fees in connection with a loan shall be deducted from the borrower's Pick-Up Account.

8A.2 Interest.

All loans pursuant to this Article VIII A shall be considered Trust Fund investments, and as such shall bear interest at the "prime rate" as set forth in the first edition of *The Wall Street Journal* during the month in which the loan is requested, rounded to the nearest ¼%.

8A.3 Maximum to be Loaned.

A loan to a borrower made pursuant to this Article VIII A [when added to the outstanding balance of all other loans made to such borrower by any other qualified plans maintained by the Town ("Other Plans")] shall be limited to the lesser of:

(a) \$50,000, reduced by the excess (if any) of the highest outstanding balance of loans from this Plan and Other Plans to the borrower during the one-year period ending on the day before the date on which such loan from this Plan is made, over the outstanding balance of loans to the borrower from this Plan and Other Plans on the date on which such loan was made; or

(b) One half of the balance of the borrower's Pick-Up Account.

For purposes of the above limits, all qualified plans of the Town shall be considered one plan.

8A.4 Repayment.

The period for repayment of any loan shall be arrived at by mutual agreement between the Retirement Committee and the borrower pursuant to a uniform, nondiscriminatory policy, but in no event shall the term of any such loan exceed a period of 5 years from the effective date of the loan, except that a longer period of up to 15 years may apply to any loan used to acquire any dwelling unit that within a reasonable time is to be used (determined at the time the loan is made) as the principal residence of the borrower. The repayment of any loan shall be fully amortized over the term of the loan and shall be made by payroll deductions as wages are paid by the Town to the borrower. Repayment of a loan shall be credited to the borrower's Pick-Up Account.

8A.5 Truth-in-Lending.

Where required by law, each borrower receiving a loan hereunder shall receive a statement clearly reflecting the charges involved in each loan transaction, which statement shall also include the dollar amount and annual interest rate of any finance charge.

8A.6 Purpose of Loan.

All applications for loans shall state the purpose for which the loan is sought. The Retirement Committee may approve a loan for any reasonable purpose, provided that the Retirement Committee is satisfied as to the potential borrower's ability to repay the loan and provided further that the Retirement Committee's decision to approve or deny a loan shall not be based upon any criteria which have the effect of discriminating for or against any group or groups of potential borrowers

8A.7 Collateral Security.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the Plan to the contrary, in the event of a loan the Retirement Committee shall require or take such security from the borrower as shall be available, feasible or practical under all of the circumstances, uniformly administered, but in any and all events and whether or not any other security shall be obtained or shall be obtainable, the Retirement Committee shall always take and have as collateral security a security interest in one half of said borrower's entire vested right, title and interest in his Accounts in this Plan and in this connection the Retirement Committee shall also have the right (i) upon default in payment of any installment due under the terms of repayment of such loan to accelerate (with or without notice) the unpaid indebtedness of any such loan and to offset the amount of such indebtedness against any distribution then due or to become due to the borrower, but if no distribution

is then due, or becoming due, then upon notice to the borrower, to debit the borrower's vested Accounts in this Plan by any such amount; and (ii) upon termination of the borrower's employment with the Town or other event permitting or requiring distribution, to accelerate (with or without notice) such indebtedness and to pay or cause payment to the Trust of the entire unpaid amount of principal and accrued interest from any benefits then payable or distributable to the borrower. If such applications do not fully satisfy the borrower's indebtedness, he shall remain liable for and continue to make payments on any unpaid balance still due.

8A.8 Rules and Regulations.

The Retirement Committee shall have the authority to prescribe rules and regulations for the administration of this Article VIIIA. All such rules and regulations shall be in writing, shall be communicated to all Participants and shall be considered part of the Plan.

Mr. Rose: Seconded by Mr. Rubin

Members of the RTM – no comments

The motion passes 32-1. Underhill opposed.

The secretary read item #6 of the call - To approve an amendment to the Town of Westport 401(k) Plan, as Amended and Restated, Effective October 1, 2012. By show of hands, the motion passes 32-0-1. Underhill abstains.

Committee report

Mr. Mall:

Again, the committee voted 7-1 to approve the amendments. Again to reiterate, this is to the benefit of town employees and plan participants. Rather than taking a hardship withdrawal and creating an additional hardship of a tax burden and 10 percent penalties, loans are a much better way of accessing their account balances.

Members of the Westport electorate - No comment

Ms. Flug read the resolution and it was seconded by Mr. Rubin.

RESOLVED: That upon the request of the Finance Director, an amendment adding Article VIIA to the Town of Westport 401(k) Plan, as Amended and Restated, effective October 1, 2012 is hereby approved. Said amendment to be effective January 1, 2013. Full text of the amendment is as follows.

ARTICLE VIIA: LOANS TO PARTICIPANTS

7A.1 In General.

(a) In the sole discretion of the Retirement Committee, the Retirement Committee may direct the Trustee to make a *bona fide* loan to a Participant who is an Employee; provided, however, that all loans granted hereunder:

(1) Are available to all potential borrowers on an equivalent basis; and

- (2) Are made in accordance with and subject to all the provisions of this Article VIIA.
- (b) The minimum initial amount of any loan shall be \$1,000.
- (c) No more than one loan from the Plan may be outstanding at any time.
- (d) Each loan shall be charged against the borrower's 401(k) Account and Rollover Account, as the case may be, in proportion to the sources of funds used to provide such loan from such Accounts.
- (e) Any origination and maintenance fees in connection with a loan shall be deducted from the borrower's 401(k) Account and Rollover Account, as the case may be, in proportion to the sources of funds used to provide such loan from such Accounts.

7A.2 Interest.

All loans pursuant to this Article VIIA shall be considered Trust Fund investments, and as such shall bear interest at the "prime rate" as set forth in the first edition of *The Wall Street Journal* during the month in which the loan is requested, rounded to the nearest ¼%.

7A.3 Maximum to be Loaned.

A loan to a borrower made pursuant to this Article VIIA [when added to the outstanding balance of all other loans made to such borrower by any other qualified plans maintained by the Town ("Other Plans")] shall be limited to the lesser of:

- (a) \$50,000, reduced by the excess (if any) of the highest outstanding balance of loans from this Plan and Other Plans to the borrower during the one-year period ending on the day before the date on which such loan from this Plan is made, over the outstanding balance of loans to the borrower from this Plan and Other Plans on the date on which such loan was made; or
- (b) One half of the sum of the balances of the borrower's Accounts in this Plan.

For purposes of the above limits, all qualified plans of the Town shall be considered one plan.

7A.4 Repayment.

The period for repayment of any loan shall be arrived at by mutual agreement between the Retirement Committee and the borrower pursuant to a uniform, nondiscriminatory policy, but in no event shall the term of any such loan exceed a period of 5 years from the effective date of the loan, except that a longer period of up to 15 years may apply to any loan used to acquire any dwelling unit that, within a reasonable time is to be used (determined at the time the loan is made) as the principal residence of the borrower. The repayment of any loan shall be fully amortized over the term of the loan and shall be made by payroll deductions as wages are paid by the Town to the borrower. Repayment of a loan shall be credited to the borrower's Accounts in proportion to the sources of funds used to provide such loan from such Accounts.

7A.5 Truth-in-Lending.

Where required by law, each borrower receiving a loan hereunder shall receive a statement clearly reflecting the charges involved in each loan transaction, which statement shall also include the dollar amount and annual interest rate of any finance charge.

7A.6 Purpose of Loan.

All applications for loans shall state the purpose for which the loan is sought. The Retirement Committee may approve a loan for any reasonable purpose, provided that the Retirement Committee is satisfied as to the potential borrower's ability to repay the loan and provided further that the Retirement Committee's decision to approve or

deny a loan shall not be based upon any criteria which have the effect of discriminating for or against any group or groups of potential borrowers

7A.7 Collateral Security.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the Plan to the contrary, in the event of a loan the Retirement Committee shall require or take such security from the borrower as shall be available, feasible or practical under all of the circumstances, uniformly administered, but in any and all events and whether or not any other security shall be obtained or shall be obtainable, the Retirement Committee shall always take and have as collateral security a security interest in one half of said borrower's entire right, title and interest in his Accounts in this Plan and in this connection the Retirement Committee shall also have the right (i) upon default in payment of any installment due under the terms of repayment of such loan to accelerate (with or without notice) the unpaid indebtedness of any such loan and to offset the amount of such indebtedness against any distribution then due or to become due to the borrower, but if no distribution is then due, or becoming due, then upon notice to the borrower, to debit the borrower's Accounts in this Plan by any such amount; and (ii) upon termination of the borrower's employment with the Town or other event permitting or requiring distribution, to accelerate (with or without notice) such indebtedness and to pay or cause payment to the Trust of the entire unpaid amount of principal and accrued interest from any benefits then payable or distributable to the borrower. If such applications do not fully satisfy the borrower's indebtedness, he shall remain liable for and continue to make payments on any unpaid balance still due.

7A.8 Rules and Regulations.

The Retirement Committee shall have the authority to prescribe rules and regulations for the administration of this Article VIIA. All such rules and regulations shall be in writing, shall be communicated to all Participants and shall be considered part of the Plan.

Mr. Rose: It has been seconded by Mr. Rubin.

Members of the RTM

Don Bergmann, district 1:

I just want to say that there is an argument that can be made which I do not make at this time, that these kinds of loans, you should take all the money in for retirement with no loan provisions. I only mention that because there is some legitimacy of someone wanted to question this action.

By show of hands, the motion passes 32-0-1. Underhill abstains.

The secretary read item #4 of the call – To approve a sense of the meeting resolution to support gun control legislation in the United States and urge the President and Federal Legislators, as well as Connecticut State Legislators, to enact a ban on automatic and semi-automatic assault weapons and high-capacity magazine clips. Furthermore, to support closing the “gun-show loophole” that allows people to buy guns at trade shows and from private dealers without background check. By show of hands, the sense of the meeting resolution passes 29-1-3. Lowenstein opposed; Rubin, Timmins and Underhill abstained.

Presentation

Liz Milwe, 107 Harbor Road:

Sherry Jagerson is going to speak tonight and also Frank Hall. Tonight we have an opportunity to send a strong message to Washington and to our representatives in Hartford that our town, Westport Connecticut, wants common sense gun laws. We would be joining over 800 mayors around our country that are demanding President Obama and congress to step forward with a plan to stop gun violence. In the last week, over 650 Westport residents have signed a petition in support of a sense of the meeting resolution in front of the RTM this evening. The resolution states that our town wants a ban on semi-automatic and automatic weapons and we want to close the gun show loophole. Here are six comments from residents that signed our petition:

- “Let’s show the rest of the country how to begin this crucial effort.”
- “I am in complete favor of strict gun control. Thank you.”
- “This is not a constitutional issue and will not affect the Second Amendment.”
- “Let’s reduce the number of privately held weapons in this country. Let’s reduce the likelihood of weapons getting into the hands of the wrong people. Let’s leave our protection in the hands of the law enforcement professionals we hire to perform this service.”
- “I join with other concerned Westporters who seek to regulate the use of deadly weapons as we have seen over and over with disastrous results. Assault weapons are way too easy to obtain. There is no reasons an individual should have one of these weapons unless it is for military use.”
- “There is no place in this country for automatic or semi-automatic weapons. Please support all legislation to remove these weapons from the hands of ordinary citizens.

One of the last comments:

- “Thank you RTM members for this effort. I wish we had done it 10 tragedies ago but now is the time and may wisdom prevail.”

I could go on. I know there are a lot of people who want to speak to the resolution. I just want everyone to know here that the resolution was crafted by residents and many RTM members here tonight. It was a joint effort. I hope the RTM will pass this resolution and send a powerful message to our representatives and I am confident other towns will follow suit. I have the petition here. Because it is online, there are even more people signing.

Sherry Jagerson, 39 Woodside Avenue:

I joined this petition effort because Liz asked me to. Also, she made a very persuasive case that we can actually do something about this. Why here in Westport? Why not in the state where they are actually going to make the laws or Washington D.C. where they are actually going to make the laws? Why is it important that we take this up here, that we, the citizens of this town come together and speak out? This is what is important to me, that we as a Town as a whole say this is what is important to us: the health of our children, the safety of

our children, that we can go to our schools, that we can go to our movies, we can go out in public and do things and feel safe. That's what I think our town is here to do tonight, to take the automatic, the semi-automatic and the large capacity magazines off of the shelves, out of the stores, out of the gun shows, wherever they may be, even here in Stamford. Let's make that happen. We can make that happen here tonight. Tell our legislators that this is important, that we want to do that. They need to hear that this is important to Westport and, hopefully, other towns will take it up beyond this.

Frank Hall, 5 West Parish Road, serves the Unitarian Church:

Thank you members of the RTM for allowing us to make a few comments. I'll be brief. I don't think there's a lot of disagreement about the need for more sane and sensible regulation of firearms. The question tonight is whether or not the Representative Town meeting should be voting on this and should make a sense of the meeting gesture. My sense is, in ministering to people who are directly involved in this in the last few weeks is that there is a deep sense of despair that is founded in a sense of powerlessness. People feel that there is nothing we can do. The comments that I hear over and over have to do with the insanity of the lack of control of the automatic, semi-automatic and the ammunition clips and so forth. We know that change has to come. The question is where it is going to come from. People need to feel that they have some hope that something will happen, that someone will do something. Today, the members of the Westport/Weston Clergy Association met and were in unanimous approval of the petition and hope that the Representative Town Meeting will approve and make their voice heard and, by so doing, make our voices heard, you represent us, by some gesture being done. I was at the meeting today, listening to my colleagues and I thought of Edward Everett Hale's comment that maybe you are familiar with. In 1902, toward the end of his life, he said:

I am only one but still I am one. I cannot do everything but still I can do something. And I'm not going to allow the fact that I can't do everything prevent me from doing the something that I can do.

The something that can be done here tonight is the small but important gesture, I think, and a message to the people in Westport and, hopefully, by extension, others will do this, that at least people are saying stop. It's time for us to take a deep breath and take a look at the lack of control we have and do something to change that. I hope that you will do that tonight

Mr. Rose:

Before we turn to the public, just a couple of comments. First of all, to be very clear, we are not voting on an ordinance tonight. This is a sense of the meeting resolution to express the way, we, as representatives of the town, feel. It is not an ordinance so please don't confuse that. Secondly, according to charter, every Westport elector is allowed to get up and speak. I am going to extend the courtesy to a few of the elected officials who represent our town but might not happen to live in the town per se. Lastly, when you get up, if you could give your

name, spell the last name and your address. Please limit your remarks to about three minutes. It would be greatly appreciated.

Gail Lavielle, State Representative for 143rd district:

Thank you for extending this courtesy to us. As people who represent you, it's very useful for us and very helpful that you do express views and do things like this. It helps us make decisions on your behalf. This is a serious issue. There isn't anything, probably, more serious than violence. Because it's so serious, it has to be dealt with very seriously. Those of us who represent you and those you represent, we need to do what you've sent us to do which is to look at this very calmly, comprehensively and intelligently and find what needs to be done, really needs to be done, to stop violence; in this case, by making sure that firearms never, never, never fall into the hands of someone who may cause violence. Right now, we are seeing a number of individual proposals. Some make sense, some don't, depending on how you're looking at it. That will go on for a while. We'll have a public hearing process. That's a good thing because we get to hear what everyone thinks. Passions are very high coming from all perspectives in this debate that we need to have. I have to say that most of what I've heard from constituents in my three towns including Westport has been rational and civilized. Advocates for change are very respectful to the Second Amendment and gun owners recognize that there is work to do to change the status quo and, apparently, there is something wrong with the status quo because we have so much violence. So, I will make two points. One is that, I think, as you all know, Connecticut has an assault weapons ban. It does list the weapons it refers to but, while all other states that have such a ban also have a high capacity magazine ban, Connecticut doesn't. So the question comes up whether the continued availability of the magazines, the legality of them, actually makes the ban on assault weapons that are listed in the statutes pretty meaningless. It takes the teeth out. This is an inconsistent situation. I find it very inconsistent and it needs to be resolved. That's why there's a high likelihood that a high capacity magazine ban has a good chance to pass. That's why I support it and why I support you in this endeavor. We will need a good definition of exactly what high capacity is in Connecticut. It differs from state to state. That said, many gun owners who have spoken or written to me have mentioned that there are other things to look at too...storage process. Those who have gone through the permit process, willingly and gratefully, think there could be some improvements, improvements relating to trafficking, maybe some buy back programs. There are many things to do but this is a place to start. The other thing that I would say is there is always the worry that, whatever Connecticut does, might not be effective because other weapons and different procedures are just across our state borders or even farther away in other states. That's why federal action is also important and I believe you have taken that into account, too. That's why I applaud your including the Federal Government in your call for action. In fact, I applaud your whole initiative, in general. We have the serious responsibility to represent you in making these decisions. We can do it only if we understand what you are

thinking. So, I thank you for your consideration and your work on this and I thank you for helping us to make your case.

Toni Boucher, State Senator, 26th district which includes most of Westport:
The events of Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown Connecticut has devastated our state. It has horrified our country. It's true. All eyes are on Connecticut to lead the way in this way even though we are considered one of the states with the most gun laws and protections of anywhere in the country. Yet, there is still so much work to do. Everywhere we go, the subject does come up, in state and out of state. Those that own guns, those that do not. Those that feel that we should ban all weapons, those that feel we should have a balanced view. There are those that feel that there should be absolutely no gun laws at all. There are those that are concerned about the Second Amendment. There are those that feel it is an out of date amendment. There is great, great emotion on all sides. There have been a great many organizational meetings in all of our towns. I applaud Liz and all of the others that have brought this petition forward. I believe it is incredibly helpful to us to get a sense of the community, a sense of the elected leaders in your community, a sense of the public. I am so glad that people are, many for the first time, getting involved in the political process. It's too bad it didn't happen on many other issues that we have of great importance to the state, but this has risen to a level where now we have the public's attention. It's very important to us to get the feedback. On this specific resolution, number four, as mentioned the term of "assault weapons" has been used and banning of such in Connecticut. When we get into automatic and semi-automatic assault weapons, it raises some confusion. There are some differences on that. I think focusing on the magazine size because that can make many types of weapons into an assault weapon depending on the number of rounds. There will be a lot of discussions and public hearings on this to get into the details of it but, in fact, many of the items here are important. We have tried to close some loopholes on gun shows but more can be done. We do background checks here in Connecticut that many other states don't do outside of our area but we have done that. There are other things, as well, that need to be addressed that I'm hoping to bring forward and others bring forward. That is, we cannot grandfather, which we have in the past, those that have what would be termed *assault weapons*. So, we have to remove the grandfathering clause so that it pertains to everyone including current gun owners, as well. We have to stop exempting out of state residents from our Connecticut gun laws. That's another area we should concentrate on. We should take a look at, and we've gotten some good language from legitimate gun owners, to really tighten storage language if residents have guns in their homes, how they should be stored or if they should not have them at all if there are individuals who have certain mental conditions that make them at risk. As we saw here, this was one of those cases. There's much to be done on that. Having that said, there are other distracting issues that have come up such as disclosing the names of legitimate gun owners, things such as taxing a bullet. Those may not be as readily acceptable to the general legislative body. Some of the other items I mentioned, I believe we

will get to a very good language that will get support on both sides of the aisle. That's my hope that this is one of those things that the vast majority can agree on. We should be a model for the rest of the country. I applaud what you are doing. I support it. I hope that other towns will take similar steps. I hope you won't be dissuaded by certain terms. I would suggest making some of it more general when it comes to the actual guns we are talking about and really concentrate on magazines and other issues we've mentioned. We will have an extensive public hearing process where we will all learn a great deal more but, at the end of this process, we hopefully will get to some good outcome. I hope they don't forget, as well, the issue of adequate services for the mentally ill in our state.

Suzanne Sheridan, 277 A North Avenue:

Representative Steinberg was here earlier and had to leave for a meeting and asked me to read this. He says:

I want to start by thanking the RTM for taking up this resolution. I know that there are members who don't care for sense of the meeting resolutions, in general, mainly because of their lack of "consequence". In my seven years on the RTM, we took up few of them. But there have been exceptions, rare exceptions. I submit this resolution meets the standard for such an exception. We face a real challenge as a state and as a nation. I wish we didn't need to have tragedies such as Newtown to compel us to take action on such a long-term important problem. But Connecticut is now in the public spotlight and we can, in the coming legislative session, provide an example for the rest of the country. Let it be a good one. We need not dispute whether it's a good idea for virtually everyone to be entitled to carry a gun. It's enshrined in the Second Amendment and upheld in the courts. But it's another thing to say that everyone should carry a gun, that everyone should be able to carry whatever kind of weapon they want, that everyone should be allowed to carry weapons wherever they want. It makes me wonder what kind of society we have when we'd prefer to turn all our public spaces into fortresses in order to protect our most vulnerable, rather than trying to reduce the pervasiveness of killing machines. Because that is what they were designed to do: kill people more efficiently than an arrow or sword could do. It's not clear, at this juncture, what action the legislature will take. From an informal poll of my colleagues, I believe that bills to limit the size of ammunition magazines and to broaden the definition of banned assault-type weapons have a good chance of reaching the floor for a vote. So, the RTM's resolution is pertinent in its specific language. Other proposals, and there will be many, will be considered, but there's no way of telling about their prospects. I think it is possible that grassroots support for sensible gun regulation could play a significant role in swaying some votes, perhaps making a critical difference in passing a bill. If every Connecticut community made such a strong statement of their desire for constructive practical change, I think it would be hard to ignore it in Hartford. Westport sets a progressive example so many ways. It's one of the reasons I'm

proud to represent the town in the legislature. Tonight, please make an exception to take a stand on an issue of concern to all citizens of the state. Thank you for your willingness to debate and vote on reducing gun violence.

Karin Driscoll, 21 Catamount Road:

Thank you to all the speakers and to the RTM for the opportunity to speak. I would like to express my unequivocal support for the RTM's sense of the meeting resolution to convey our community's support for common sense gun control legislation on a state and federal level, particularly, measures like the ban on automatic and semiautomatic assault weapons and high capacity magazine clips, closing these gun show loopholes and ensuring background checks. I think we all recognize that this resolution addresses matters that are beyond the scope of the RTM's usual activities – – – budgets, town finances and the like. But that doesn't mean that it's not important for the RTM to take up this issue. If the RTM passes this resolution, it communicates to State and Federal Legislators Westport's view that reasonable steps should be taken immediately to address the urgent problem of gun violence. It will be our town's voice counteracting those of well-financed lobbying groups who represent the interests of weapons manufacturers. And, it will send an important message to our neighbors in Newtown that we do not intend to stand by without doing all we can to ensure that their suffering is not again endured by others. If every town stood up, as we have the chance to do tonight, we might be a brave enough civil society not find ourselves mourning the loss of our neighbor's children ever again; to stop hanging our heads for a moment every time we hear about another senseless shooting like the one in Newtown just weeks ago. Though, we are, unfortunately, subject 24/7 news cycle that seems to move onto a new issue every day, we must not turn the channel on this story. It is our responsibility, as a town, to show our unwavering support for sensible gun control laws. Newtown residents are our neighbors. They are members of the Fairfield County community; friends, teachers here in Westport; the kids our kids play soccer with, my kids play soccer with. Let's not be afraid to make a symbolic act and take steps towards a safer Westport and a safer country. The RTM's resolution is sensible, it's compassionate and reflects the views both of Westport's community and the majority of Americans and responsible gun owners across the country. Thank you very much to the RTM.

Mr. Rose:

When you come up, if you have prepared remarks, if you could give us a copy of them, you would make the secretary's life a lot easier.

Mina Thomas, 6 Fermilly Lane:

I just want to thank the RTM for hosting this meeting and allowing us all to speak on this important topic. As I am privileged enough to live in Westport, I am also on the Board of the Westport Young Women's League, the Junior League, New Neighbors of Westport, as well as the largest parenting forum in our county, CT Moms Online, which has, since Dec. 14, branched off to a group called Enough

where parents of young kids, we have had enough of the talk and we need some action. We are here tonight to ask for some action to support this resolution for the RTM. There are many grassroots organizations and efforts but by passing this tonight it will send a strong message to our community, our legislators and to me and the young mothers here in Westport. I have a first grader, the same grade that was affected in Newtown. Through the forum, I have had many opportunities to visit Newtown and, specifically, Sandy Hook. The only difference between Newtown and Westport is our zip code. People move there for the good schools. People move there for their outdoor concerts and for their great playhouse. Sandy Hook Elementary looks exactly like Saugatuck and Kings Highway. It could have been Long Lots. It's important, with this being so close to home, that we acknowledge this and make a stand and say that this is how we, Westport residents feel and this is what we support. It is through those avenues that I was given a statement from Congressman Jim Himes that I'd like to read to you. The Congressman said on Jan. 8:

I am writing to add my strong support for the citizens' petition before the Representative Town Meeting (RTM) this evening and respectfully ask the members of the RTM to consider this symbolic sense of the meeting resolution as a demonstration that the people of Westport are taking a stand against gun violence that plagues us as a nation. We were all horrified, angered, and saddened by the catastrophe in Newtown. Time and time again, at Columbine, at Aurora, Tucson, we have let slip opportunities to reduce and prevent these recurring tragedies. That must not happen again. Neither sportsmen, nor those interested in self-preservation need 30 round clips or rapid fire weaponry. These weapons have one purpose and that is for rapid killing. During my time in Congress, I have worked hard to implement sensible gun regulations and proudly co-sponsored legislation designed to ban high capacity magazines, fix our broken background check system, and assure those who traffic in illegal guns are met with harsh criminal penalties. Going forward, I remain committed to reintroducing a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition clips, tightening up on gun show loopholes and preventing those with a history of violence or instability from acquiring these weapons. As we move forward from this tragedy, I believe we can implement policies that strike a balance between promoting safe, legal and responsible gun ownership and addressing the epidemic of gun violence that affects communities, large and small, across our country.

I plead with the RTM as the mother of a first grader and a one year old representing hundreds, if not thousands, of my fellow mothers, don't let this come any closer to home before we make a stand.

Jill Bicks, 189 Imperial Avenue:

I was one of the original signers of this petition and I am so thrilled to be here tonight listening to our state and federal representatives support this endeavor. I was sitting around at a dinner party right after this happened, feeling horrible, and saying to the other people in the room, what can we do? That was a dinner party

that Liz was at. Liz Milwe, she knows what to do. She started organizing this petition. It feels so good to know that that conversation got the attention of people who can make something happen in just a few short weeks. Today, as I was cooking dinner, I was listening to NPR and they had a special report on what President Obama is doing right at this very minute to get momentum on this issue. The report discussed how many really important things he has going on, whether it is the fiscal cliff, or the budget negotiations or the debt ceiling and on and on and on. This is the time for this issue to get traction. If towns like ours can create that momentum, we will get it done. If it's not done now, when would it ever get done? Thank you so much for taking the time to consider this. I can't be as eloquent as the people before me but I absolutely endorse everything that they said.

Jim Whamond, 3 Elliot Lane:

I fear I may not be very popular. I don't have, my command of the English language does not give me the words to properly describe the evil that happened in Newtown a couple of weeks ago. Perhaps evil is just the word to go with. In the days since, people have understandably sought to find solutions to keep this type of event from ever occurring again. There has much debate in homes, offices, elsewhere. It has been a high topic on everyone's list. Many feel that new gun restrictions, viewed as reasonable or common sense, are the answer and they will bring with them safety and security. Others, myself included, worry about the erosion of liberty and government infringement upon law abiding citizens associated with further gun restrictions. I hear some in the audience already disagreeing with my position. My purpose tonight isn't to debate specifics of any gun restriction law or any gun control proposals. I'm here to support the concept of liberty and keeping government out of the lives of law abiding citizens. This may sound hokey. To me, it's quite important. Once our liberties are allowed to erode, you can never get them back. With this framing, I urge you to vote against this resolution. I realize this is probably a very unpopular position in this room and in this town. I realize people in this audience probably view me as perhaps uncaring, perhaps out of touch, perhaps a gun nut, or worse. I assure you, I am none of these. I am a father. I care deeply about safety. I however firmly believe that further restrictions on guns and on our liberty are not the answer to this crisis.

Iain Bruce, 9 Winding Lane:

I apologize for not having prepared remarks. I wasn't sure I was going to talk tonight so I apologize in advance if my comments are in some disarray. Members of the RTM, many of you are friends of mine who have known me for a long time. My wife served as a member of this body for four years. I am going to ask you to do something that I don't think anyone else is. Uniquely, perhaps, I'll take no position on this ordinance. I know it's not an ordinance, Hadley, I apologize. It's a sense of the meeting resolution. Before you cast your votes, I ask you to search deeply within your souls, to look at yourselves in the metaphorical mirror and ask yourselves whether it is worth the exploitation of the death of children to make a

political statement. What I just said may sound harsh. As most of you are aware, 27 months ago, my 18 year old son died. He died in a six story fall from his dormitory window. It's not a secret. He had been drinking. While the Town of Westport was pouring out its love and support for our family, cooking meals, walking our dog, pouring us coffee, in Canada, my son's death was being exploited by politicians, by activists and by others to make political statements and to pursue goals that they had long held. Every statement of someone, a university administrator, a coroner, a police officer, a mayor, a politician, an editor of Canada's largest circulation newspaper, to the effect, that he wanted to insure that my son had not died in vain, comments I just heard in connection with Newtown, was a cruel, brutal, virtually inhuman blow to my heart, my head and my guts. You can tell yourselves all day long that you are not exploiting the deaths of children in pursuing this resolution, but the fact is, you are and you will be. It is a fact. You can rationalize to your heart's content. I would submit to you that the question of what to do with the death of a child is not up to politicians or elected representatives or the public at large. If it's up to anyone, it may be up to God, if you believe in God. It may be up to the family. What to do with the death of our son is something that my wife and my daughter and I struggle with daily and expect to struggle with daily for the rest of our lives. Your lives have gone back to normal after the shock of Newtown but the lives of those 26 families will never go back to normal. But it is up to them to decide what to do with what they have been given, with the hand they have been so cruelly dealt. I submit that it is not up to you. I submit that it would be an act of extraordinary hubris to take that upon yourselves. That's my view. I ask that you search your hearts and search your souls and be aware of that perspective before you cast your vote.

Ms. Flug read the resolution and it was seconded by Mr. Rubin.

RESOLVED: That upon the request of at least 20 electors of the Town of Westport, the following sense of the meeting resolution is hereby adopted:

We the members of the Westport Representative Town Meeting support gun control legislation in the United States and urge the President and federal legislators, as well as Connecticut state legislators, to enact a ban on automatic and semi-automatic assault weapons and high-capacity magazine clips. Furthermore, we support closing the "gun-show loophole" that allows people to buy guns at trade shows and from private dealers without background checks.

Mr. Rose:

It has been moved and seconded by Mr. Rubin to approve the resolution.

Members of the RTM

Melissa Kane, district 3:

I think the public and our State Representatives and Federal Representative have spoken incredibly eloquently about the reasons why this resolution is so important and should be passed. And I think the Interfaith Clergy Council's endorsement of the resolution says pretty much everything. I just want to briefly

address why I helped to write and am a principal petitioner on the resolution. I believe that this town and this body, the RTM, have a responsibility to do what is right; to act in response to our wounded neighbor, to help forward the conversation about ending gun violence and to help push ideas into action. Despite emotional responses of all kinds, historically, very little has happened legislatively after mass shootings. Legislators are just afraid to tackle this subject. Quite simply, there is nothing controversial about this resolution. It is not about Second Amendment rights. It is about requesting, as people have mentioned, sensible legislation which should have been enacted or not allowed to expire, long ago. And though the resolution is somewhat symbolic, it also has the potential to be very powerful. By speaking as a municipality, we give our national and state representatives the encouragement they clearly need in order to act and we lead the way for other municipalities to follow suit. And they will. A sense of the meeting resolution of this kind is a bit unusual but there is certainly precedent for a vote of this nature by this body. And there is certainly precedent for our town to take the lead on an issue. This is Westport. We do the right thing. And what we do gets noticed. I really hope we'll do the right thing tonight. Thank you.

Ms. Talmadge:

I too was a petitioner on this petition and for all the reasons that other people have mentioned, I will be supporting it. This is not just Newtown. It has been continuous. I really believe we must implement tighter restrictions on guns and ammunition. We must restrict current sales and production and advanced production techniques. When the Second Amendment was drafted, a firearm required 30 seconds to a minute to reload. We limit the speed of our cars. Unlimited speed for a tool whose only purpose is to kill or maim is, quite simply, insane, in my view. You may or may not be aware that the three Selectmen in Weston are currently drafting a gun control ordinance in that community with three main points. First, it bans assault weapons and automatic weapons as well as high capacity magazines which they say are not appropriate for their town for sporting purposes. Second, it requires safe and secure storage of weapons when they are not being used. Third, it requires registration of firearms in the town. Coincidentally, Jane Brody's Personal Health column in the New York Times entitled "Keeping Guns Away From Children" pointed out that just two months before Newtown, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a new policy statement on firearm-related injuries to children. I quote from her article here:

Murder and accidental shootings were not the academy's only concerns.

Suicides among the young are typically impulsive and easy access to lethal weapons largely determines the outcome.

The article draws on an article in the New England Journal of Medicine written by pediatricians from Boston Children's Hospital and contain some shocking statistics including:

1. Every day in the United States, seven children and young adults between the ages of one and 24 die from gun-related injuries. That makes guns the second leading cause of death in young people, twice the number of

deaths from cancer, five times the deaths from heart disease and 15 times the death from infections.

2. The United States has the dubious distinction of leading high income countries in fire arm homicides, suicides, and unintentional deaths among young people. Among American children, ages five to 14, an international study showed that firearm suicide rates were six times higher and death rates from unintentional firearm injuries 10 times higher than other high income countries.

In the article, the doctors pointed out that little children explore their world without understanding danger and, in one unsupervised moment, an encounter with a gun can end in a fatality. School age children who see guns used in television, movies or video games don't necessarily understand that people who are really shot may really die. Additionally, among teenagers who may fight over girlfriends, sneakers or have their judgment impaired by drugs or alcohol, a fistfight may cause transient injuries but a gunfight may kill rivals, friends or innocent bystanders. The pediatricians wrote that among depressed adolescents, they say less than five percent of suicide attempts involving drugs are lethal but 90 percent of those involving guns are. Finally, and I find this shocking, the article states that in a 2006 study of gun owning Americans with children under the age of 18, 21.7 percent stored a gun loaded; 31.5 percent stored one unlocked and 8.3 percent stored at least one gun unlocked and loaded. In households with adolescents ranging in age from 13-17, firearms were left unlocked 41.7 percent of the time. The article concluded that preventing access is key which relates back to the local laws that they are discussing in Weston requiring secure storage. So, yes, I am supporting this resolution as a tiny step towards making many potential changes because as a civil society we must change. To simply stay the course is unacceptable

Ms. Batteau:

I don't know if Iain is still here. In any case, there is no way to speak to the issue to a parent who has lost a child. I find myself in the strange position tonight of knowing both of the the children who were lost, mentioned by their parents tonight, having loved one of them, having a friend whose child committed suicide by gun, of having my own son come home as a four year old come home and say, 'Guess what. Matt and I went and saw in his dad's bedside drawer, he took out a gun and showed me a gun.' What do you do? I hadn't planned to say those things but I think they all bear speaking about. We're not going to redress the Newtown situation tonight or the Columbine situation or at any other situation. In fact, I was at dinner the night of the Newtown tragedy when one of the people I was having dinner with received a phone call that his bike ride the next morning was cancelled since his friend's son had been murdered. What do you do? We are not having this conversation to come up with the definitive answer to the problem of gun violence in America. We're not the Supreme Court; however, Warren Berger was the Chief Justice of that court appointed by Richard Nixon, not exactly a leftwing radical. After leaving the bench, Berger said, that contrary to the views espoused by gun groups, the Second Amendment "doesn't

guarantee the right to have firearms at all. The concept of a citizen's right to bear arms," he went on to say "has been one of the greatest pieces of fraud, I repeat the word fraud," he said, "on the American public by special interest groups that I have seen in my lifetime." In the highly controversial 5-4 decision in the 2008 case of District of Columbia vs. Heller, the Supreme Court held, Judge Antonin Scalia, again, not known for his left wing sentiments, he, however, was clear to specify that ...like other rights, the right secured by the Second Amendment is not unlimited. It is not a right to keep and carry any weapon, whatsoever, in any manner whatsoever for any purpose. Moreover, he added, the second amendment protects only "the sorts of weapons that were in common use in the 18th century." It, therefore, does not protect M15 rifles and the like. Just after the Sandy Hook tragedy, the President of our country announced, "This time the words need to lead to action. That fact that this problem is complex can no longer an excuse for doing nothing. It's not enough for us to say this is too hard so we're not going to try. We're also not going to get this done until the American people decide it's important. We bear responsibility for every child because we are counting on everybody else to help look after ours. This is our first task. That's how we as a society will be judged." So, we, in this room are the American people. We are representatives of the Town of Westport Connecticut. We have a responsibility. We have a voice. It would be disingenuous to act as though legislators at all levels do not listen more closely to us than they may do to other communities so our responsibility becomes that much greater. Yes, the causes of all problems are multi-faceted. The resolution we have here starts by addressing the most significant cause of the problem. What we are considering tonight is not the language of a local ordinance, as has been said, as Weston is doing, so we don't need to be concerned with getting the word crafting exactly perfect this go round. What we have is the opportunity and the voice to use our voice to say Second Amendment rights are not unlimited. Get control. If only because we care about our children and their children and how we will be judged. We must speak up. We have to say get this done.

John McCarthy, district 9:

In March 2011, State Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on Senate Bill 1094. The bill was entitled An Act Banning Large Capacity Ammunition Magazines. It was to prohibit the possession of certain ammunition feeding devices that accept more than 10 rounds. On March 23 or 24, the Judiciary Committee held a hearing. That's about as far as it went because they had hundreds of people write letters and say we are opposed to this using the same arguments you hear about banning anything having to do with weapons. These arguments were all made. It's actually a fascinating... I'm using that word fascinating in an ironic sense. Search the 2011 legislative session SB 1094, and you'll get a hyperlink page of over 200 names of individual citizens of Connecticut who wrote to the State Legislature and you'll actually read the letters that they wrote. Reading those, in light of what's happened in Newtown, it's sickening. It's sickening in that the only voices that spoke out in favor of this bill were the three Mayors of Bridgeport, New Haven and Hartford. Those were literally the only

three people on this page who spoke in favor of this legislation that would ban any magazines greater than 10 rounds. Why is this important? What this did is actually ban these magazines. It would have made it illegal to possess these in the State of Connecticut. Had Mrs. Lanza, a law abiding woman, by most accounts, had seen this bill pass, she might not have bought these; I don't know when she bought the magazines, or she might have turned them in or disposed of them. Her son may not have had 30 rounds magazines in his possession when he went into the school in Newtown. How many children would be alive today if he had to use only a 10 round magazine and had to reload four or five extra times? How many little six year old children would be alive today? I'm not looking to exploit these children that have died. I'm looking to make sure that there's not any more. That's one of those things that we need to do. Those of us who were not personally affected by this, that's what we need to do. I'm pretty sure that God is not going to come down today and make everybody perfect and do away with evil in the world but there are certain things we can do as individuals, as human beings that can possibly lessen the pain of others in the future.

Mr. Meyer:

John hit a home run. Thank you. I want to thank Toni Boucher. She got an earlier plane to speak here tonight. And Gail also. I'm proud to be their campaign managers for both those two legislators who spoke before. Ron Malone had a statement that everyone has something but not everybody has said it. So, I'm going to take a different stance here. This is from the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence. They issue a scorecard which ranks states on the basis of their laws to prevent gun violence. Top scores are: California was number 81, New Jersey was 72, then comes Massachusetts and New York with 65 and 62 and Connecticut was 58. That means we want to increase our support of gun control. We banned plastic bags, didn't we? We were a leader doing that. We were the first town east of the Mississippi banning plastic bags. In 1969, this RTM voted to remove the troops from Viet Nam. The front page of the New York Times. Tonight, let's go three for three. John, you were great.

Mr. Klinge:

It's an old saying, better to light one candle than curse the darkness. Westport is good at lighting those kind of lights. This is the kind of a situation where we are being asked to do just that. I'll be honest, since Columbine, I have been at dozens of dinner parties and cocktail parties and conversations and people saying, 'Aren't these assault weapons stupid. Who would want one of those?'

It kind of took Newtown for me to say, "That's it. No mas." I think it is time to stand up and be counted. We all spent days and days in front of the TV set listening to the talking heads explain how this could happen and what does it mean and it's a mental health problem and guns don't kill people, people kill people. When you think about it, you can't kill 26 people with your bare hands in two minutes or three minutes. Weapons do kill people in the hands of the wrong people. I'm not naïve enough to say any legislation is going to take away these

kind of weapons. We are not going to do house to house searches. They are not going to go away. But, perhaps, if some action from Westport rolling forward, the Federal Government says, no more sales of these, they are not available. No more large bullet clips. Maybe in 30 or 40 years, they won't be around and things will be different. But the mental set will be different from the time we pass that kind of legislation. You can't legislate against stupidity but you can in favor of common sense. This is an example of common sense. Anecdotally, I actually once shot an AK 47. I was in Viet Nam on vacation trip and then you go to the Kuchi Tunnels and if you want to shoot an AK 47 you go out in the middle of the jungles. There are a couple of posts. You can blast away with 20 shots for 20 bucks. Frankly, I found it totally unsatisfactory. It was very noisy. I didn't get a thrill killing a tree or whatever I hit. I can't imagine hunting a deer or a moose or a bird with an AK47 or a 30 shot pistol. So, I can't justify the need for these things in the public's hands, whether they are locked up properly or not. So, I do think it's time to stop cursing the darkness and move forward. Westport, we are good at this. We do get noticed. We'll get notoriety. It's not self serving. It really shouldn't be but we'll all feel better about ourselves and about our town if we do something to begin to move things forward. I certainly endorse this sense of the meeting resolution and hope we can get a few more lights lit in Connecticut and around the country.

Lois Schine, district 8

I was in Australia on Dec. 14 and if you think this thing was heard all over the United States. No, it was heard all over the world. The world is wondering why this civilized country has more murders per population than any other civilized country in the world. This is one step, hopefully, in a way, to control it. As people have said, this does not affect the Second Amendment. If somebody wants to keep a hand gun, they can get properly licensed and keep a hand gun. Nobody needs an assault weapon. Even hunters can't use them. I think we should pass this resolution tonight and hope that many other towns will do the same thing, that all of our legislators, state-wide and nationally, understand that the public is behind setting up more controls.

Mr. Mall:

When I was 12 years old, I asked my parents if I could get a 22 to go Jack Rabbit hunting. My mother and father said to me, 'No. You don't have anything to kill.' Guns do kill. I don't have any kind of political agenda but I do want to be able to say I've had enough of being terrorized by the National Rifle Association. I want to be able to look in the mirror tomorrow morning when I shave and say I had the courage to stand up and say these assault weapons should be banned. These magazine clips should be banned. I don't know a single hunter, I have brothers-in-law that are hunters and members of my family that are hunters; they have pistols and so forth. I'm not against gun ownership. I'm against assault weapons. That's what they do. They assault. They terrorize us. Our own police force, they are outgunned when they come up against something like this. To say we need more guns, the good guys with guns will stop bad guys with guns. It didn't stop

the shooter in Newtown. He used his own gun on himself. It didn't stop the shooters in Columbine. They used their guns on themselves. It didn't stop the shooter in Tucson. It didn't stop the shooter in Aurora. So good guys with guns stop bad guys with guns? That's why we have a police force. So, when I shave tomorrow morning, I'm going to be able to say, I had the courage to say I've had enough of the insanity of the National Assault Rifle Association.

Matthew Mandell, district 1:

I don't think I can add more of a reason why we should be banning these. But tonight we are also discussing the reason why the RTM should be voting on a sense of the meeting resolution. The reason is we need to amplify what the residents of this community have been telling us. We need to send a message to the next level up that we want to ban assault weapons. We want to tell Hartford to take action. We stand with Columbine. We stand with Aurora. We stand with Newtown. Tomorrow New Canaan, Weston, Wilton all must stand with us as we tell Hartford we want action should be taken. Tonight is the first step to tell people up from us and that's why we should be doing the sense of the meeting resolution. It specifically doesn't change what is happening in Westport but the spirit of Westport moves forward and that's why we should be doing this.

Velma Heller, district 9:

First, I want to applaud the work of my colleagues who wrote this petition. I feel that the wording was not only well-crafted, it was appropriately general and appropriately specific to target what is really a very common sense statement that is important and lasting. When I say targeted, there was no pun intended. I was also very impressed by the eloquence of our state and federal legislators who indicated the importance of supporting this kind of petition, giving the rationale as it did, that what we have to say does make a difference, that when we take a stand, it's something that people listen to. There's another whole level of how this affects me. Maybe it's a recognition of one's own mortality at a certain time but this whole situation impacts me very personally. It brings to mind some of my experiences as an administrator and teacher and it brought back, in a very personal way, a variety of tragedies that I experienced, losses of children, violent things that occurred. What it makes me think is that all of this is, yes, as Lois said, there is a global reaction but it's very personal. It's personal because, right now, I happen to have a student who was in that school that was affected. This is a student teacher. It's all very personal. We are much more connected than anybody recognizes. This is not about any sort of using for political purposes. This is about a recognition that we are all in this together and that we all have to protect one another. That's why we're here. We are taking care of one another. So, anything we do in taking a stand at this time is about saying to everybody out there, let's do what is the right thing. Let's do what is the commonsense thing, not to step on the toes of people who want to go hunting, but to say what is it that is going to say someone else's right to own a gun hurt other people. That's why we have to take a stand to end the possibility of that kind of harm to others. I urge you to support this petition. It makes a difference

Mr. Bergmann:

I would like to just to pick up on a thought that has been expressed by many: Jack Klinge, with his single candle, Frank Hall, with his small steps. Small steps are really important. I think about this issue a little bit when I think about Mothers Against Drunk Driving and that woman who started that whole process and, frankly, converted this nation to a whole different approach and thought process relating to drinking and driving. That was a small step and maybe this will be a successful small step as well

Sean Timmins, district 2:

I am Chairman of the Public Protection Committee and we have not had a chance to meet on this so I am probably going to abstain this evening for that reason only but I'd also like to invite the First Selectman up to tell the public and the RTM about some events that transpired tonight during our meeting that the public has to be aware of.

Mr. Joseloff:

I was going to speak during the public session but I was called out of the auditorium for a reason I'll explain in a moment. What I was going to say during the public session is that, as some of you know, I'm not in favor of generally bringing sense of the meeting resolutions to the RTM on international issues. But, as Jonathan Steinberg said, there is time for exceptions and this is an exception. It's a very important matter. Westport does need to take a stand. I applaud those who brought this petition forward. My first contact with gun violence occurred shortly after I was elected to the RTM. It was also the same year that I became an EMT. I was out on a call as an EMT and the call was a 16 year old who shot himself in the head playing Russian Roulette. The 16 year old died in my arms in the ambulance on the way to the hospital. It's certainly something never want to see again. Certainly, it's left an impression on me. In our debate on gun control, we have to be reasonable. The incident that Sean Timmins was referring to tonight potentially could have been very dangerous. Somebody brought into this auditorium a b-b rifle and a box of ammunition purchased, I understand, earlier today. The point, I'm not quite sure, what the intent was but it put a plain clothes detective who was in the auditorium in a very dangerous position not knowing, of course, somebody waving a rifle at this podium tonight what the intent was. I urge everyone to be moderate in their talk about gun control and to beware that in our zeal to control guns that we don't, in effect, become somebody who endangers the lives of others and there was potential for that tonight. I'm glad that it turned out alright. Thank you for listening.

Mr. Rubin:

Clearly, in light of everything we heard this evening, it's very compelling not to do anything but vote in favor of this but, in light of what Sean just said, and I, too, am a member of the Public Protection Committee, we have not had a chance to discuss this; we have not had a chance to vet it. A lot of people will disagree with

that. Especially, since Newtown, we have had plenty of chance to vet it. For that reason, I will abstain tonight, not because of the facts that I heard tonight but because of the process that we should be going through.

Mr. Lowenstein:

When I first heard about what was happening in Newtown, when my wife and I, on the 14th of December were driving up to Albany to visit our daughter who had just given birth to her first child, we decided not to tell her. She didn't learn about it until Monday. The images have been constant since then. Even yesterday in the Connecticut Post, there was an interview with somebody. You cannot read these things without welling up. Yesterday, Velma Heller, myself, Elaine Whitney and Nancy Harris attended a Connecticut School Symposium on security up in Southington. A lot of things happened. A lot of it was practical information. I don't know about Velma but, for me, a woman from the University of Southern California spoke. Her name was Marlene Wong. She talked about it from the emotional point of view. She didn't talk about guns at all. That was not her subject. She talked about recovery, what happens after something like this happens. If I were to draft an ideal resolution for the RTM to consider, it would not be what is in front of you tonight. It would be a resolution expressing our deepest sympathy and condolences to the people of Newtown and, especially, to the families that were impacted directly by what happened on Dec. 14. If something is to be done and I think of John McCarthy with his list of how many hundreds of people who wrote against what was proposed by the State Legislature, it's up to individual people to write letters to the State Legislature and the committees. The actions that are proposed tonight will have very little impact on government action. The actions of individual citizens, people who have names and who vote, will have much more impact than anything we do tonight in passing this resolution, if we pass this resolution. I'm not sure how I'm going to vote yet. I won't know until my name is called. I really feel the answer is an individual action on something like this. Toni, Gail, Jonathan, they listen to people who write. They don't listen to a body. We are just a political body. If we want to take action in this RTM, maybe we should follow the Weston model. Maybe we should propose laws. We did it with the plastic bags. We were kind of a small group who did it geographically and we did it in our town. If there is any possibility of action to be taken, it should take action at an ordinance level where we can have impact. Forgetting about the sense of the meeting resolutions in general, the list that goes on back to 1950 less than one year after the RTM was formed. I asked Patty Strauss to research it for me. It's very difficult. The electronic stuff is not there. It's difficult to find the information. We're just another political body. We have no power on this thing, The power is in the people, not just the RTM. That's what I think we should be doing. You may be aware that the President has set up a site where if 25,000 signatures appear, the White House will respond. The first big hit was when the State of Texas decided they wanted to secede from the Union. Since then, there have been a huge number of signatures on gun control, ownership, the sale and possession of weapons. I just don't think the RTM is the place where the action should be taken. It's noble. It's

well-meaning but it doesn't do anything. I think getting people to write letters to the State and Federal Legislature is the most important thing that we can do.

Gil Nathan, district 9:

I just wanted to get up here to say to our legislators, both state and federal that the invocation tonight was about paying attention to the small things in life. It's not always the big picture. Take the time. Do the work. Whether or not you are in favor of restricting guns in any way, pay attention to details. People are using terms like *assault weapons* and *large ammunition clips*. Define it. Stop hiding behind what they are. Say seven shots per clip or an assault weapon is "XYZ" and any new gun has to be approved before it is in a category of an assault rifle. There are a lot of ways around that. You want to close gun show loopholes, make sure you close other loopholes, that is, if you are in favor of restricting guns. I'm not trying to give a political view here. I'm just saying pay attention to the details. Think about other things. Why should someone be able to buy a tactical vest that is bullet proof? What is the purpose of that? The only thing is to protect you from getting shot. I don't know anyone who walks around the streets wearing a bullet proof vest who is not a law enforcement official. So, let's think about the other things that go into it and pay attention to the details. No matter what your opinions are and to be very conscious of how other people perceive it. We had a gentleman tonight tell us that you don't want to exploit those families. That makes me think a lot about it. I don't know that these resolutions have much of a place, in my opinion, for what we do. If we were to propose an ordinance for our town, I think that's something we should discuss and do and that sends a real message. To our legislators, if this is something you want to do, pay attention to the details and put the details in there. I think it's very important.

Ms. Cady, District 1:

I think it's really important to remember that we represent the people and I think it's really important to remember the cumulative effect that we can begin. After all, when the plastic bag ordinance came through we had no idea how it would spread.

By show of hands, the sense of the meeting resolution passes 29-1-3. Lowenstein opposed; Rubin, Timmins, Underhill abstained..

Mr. Rose:

I will send a copies of this under the RTM letterhead to the President and our Senators and State Legislators.

The meeting adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia H. Strauss
Town Clerk

Jacquelyn Fuchs

by Jacquelyn Fuchs
Secretary

Attendance: January 8, 2013

DIST.	NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	NOTIFIED MODERATOR	LATE/ LEFT EARLY
1	Don Bergmann	X			
	Diane Cady	X			
	Matthew Mandell	X			
	Cornelia Olsen	X			
2	Catherine Calise	X			
	Jay Keenan	X			
	Louis Mall	X			
	Sean Timmins	X			
3	Jimmy Izzo	X			
	Melissa Kane	X			
	Bill Meyer	X			
	Hadley Rose	X			
4	Jonathan Cunitz, DBA		X	X	
	David Floyd	X			
	George Underhill	X			
	Jeffrey Wieser	X			
5	Dewey Loselle	X			
	Richard Lowenstein	X			
	Paul Rossi	X			
	John Suggs	X			
6	Hope Feller	X		X	7:40 P.M.
	Paul Lebowitz	X			
	Catherine Talmadge	X			
	Christopher Urist		X	X	
7	Arthur Ashman, D.D.S.	X			
	Allen Bomes	X			
	Jack Klinge	X			
	Stephen Rubin	X			
8	Lee Arthurs	X			
	Wendy Batteau	X			
	Carla L. Rea		X	X	
	Lois Schine	X			
9	Eileen Flug	X			
	Velma Heller, Ed. D.	X			
	John McCarthy	X			
	Gilbert Nathan	X			
Total		33	3		