severance check

first installment; on Monday, the start of the new fiscal year, O'Neill will receive the rest, about $9,000.

Selectman Nancy P. Habbal, who eventually cast the swing vote that gave O'Neill the retirement package, said she was pleased at the outcome.

While she said she did not want to dismiss the petition, she said that sometimes people sign petitions without full knowledge of the issue.

"People sign petitions because a lot of times they don't want to refuse the person who's asking," she said. "Walter Miller has to realize that we were elected by people of Winsted to administer this government and if they don't like the decisions we make they sure as hell are going to let us know in November."

The severance package was offered to O'Neill in an effort to save a police officer's job. Under the 1991-92 budget, a captain's job is eliminated. At first, Capt. Jerold E. Silverio's job was cut. But under the union contract, because of his seniority, Silverio could choose to take the job of an officer below him, and so on down the line, until the last officer hired would be out of a job.

The board began negotiating with Silverio for severance pay that would allow him to retire and save a junior officer's job. However, O'Neill, who had more seniority than Silverio, argued that the package should be offered to him and not Silverio.