



Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road
Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Town Council Committee of the Whole

Mayor Heather Bond Somers, Councilors Dean G. Antipas, Bruce S. Flax, Bill Johnson, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Deborah L. Peruzzotti, Rita M. Schmidt, James L. Streeter, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

SPECIAL MEETING

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Somers called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr. and Councilor Watson
Members Absent: Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Schmidt and Councilor Streeter

3. **Calendar and Communications**

None.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

2012-0202 Approval of Minutes (Committee of the Whole)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council Committee of the Whole meetings of June 12, 2012 and June 19, 2012 are hereby accepted and approved.

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Mayor Somers, to adopt.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 5 - Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Johnson, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr. and Councilor Watson
Abstain: 1 - Councilor Flax

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

2012-0101 Labor Negotiations (2012 Standing Referral)

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Antipas, that the members of the Town Council, together with Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Director of Administrative Services Doug Ackerman and Manager of Labor Relations Joyce Sauchuk go into executive session at 6:09 p.m. for the purpose of discussing strategy and/or negotiations with respect to current and pending collective bargaining with multiple bargaining units. This action is taken without prejudice to the Council's right to discuss these matters in a private meeting pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §1 200(2).

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

Mayor Somers reported that the Town Council received an update on various labor negotiations.

2012-0204 United Steelworkers Contract and Pension Agreement

Recommended for a Resolution

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Flax, that the members of the Committee of the Whole approve the tentative agreement and the expenditure of funds necessary to implement the tentative agreement between the Town and the Steelworkers union.

O'Beirne noted that he will not support the agreement the way it is written. Mayor Somers noted that no one is forced to join the union. They can instead choose to pay agency fees.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 5 - Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson and Councilor Watson
Opposed: 1 - Councilor O'Beirne, Jr.

2012-0200 Adoption of an Ordinance Changing and Redefining the Voting Districts**Tabled**

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher requested that the Committee of the Whole table the next two items. Town Attorney Mike Carey feels that the Town 'may be jumping the gun' because of timing and the Town may run into a problem with the ordinance becoming effective before the November election. Further discussion of this item was tabled to July 10th.

2012-0201 Resolution Authorizing Use of a Description of the Ordinance Changing and Redefining the Voting Districts**Tabled****2012-0169 Introduction of an Ordinance for Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation****Discussed**

Town Manager Oefinger explained that the next four items on the agenda relate to the bond ordinance for road maintenance and rehabilitation. The ordinance language references a separate document that provides background on the program and inputs from the Town, City, and Groton Long Point. The document lays out the costs and projects by calendar year. Road work is estimated at approximately \$10.9 million. The financing cost of bond issuance is approximately \$305,000.

Councilor Peruzzotti arrived at 7:10 p.m.

Roll Call: Members Present: Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson
Members Absent: Councilor Schmidt and Councilor Streeter

The Town Manager noted there will be changes to the schedule over time, but the document represents the best estimates at this time. In response to Councilor Flax, the Town Manager noted that costs were developed by each of the entities. Councilor Flax asked if it would be better to hire a contractor to do the entire project. The Town Manager explained that the assumption is that the three entities would do the road work in whatever way they have typically done it in the past. Councilor Johnson asked why the Groton Long Point bridge is not included in this program. The Town Manager explained that it is a separate CIP project and is considered a bridge project, not a road project. Given the cost of the bridge project, it may have to be bonded. Gary Schneider, Director of Public Works, noted that a public information meeting on the bridge project will be held in the next six to eight weeks. Councilor Johnson asked if the project could be included in this bond, but the Town Manager noted that he does not have cost or timing information for the project.

Councilor Flax noted that Public Works indicated at budget time that they can only do \$1 million per year and they have stated they will not contract out any of this work, but the yearly estimates for the Town work exceed \$1 million. Mr. Schneider indicated that the cost of asphalt has inflated the prices. The Town Manager explained that there has also been an effort to work on roads in the same area at the same time. There may be some slippage to the next year, but in order to capture the financing costs, the Town would rather upfront the costs.

Councilor Watson questioned the City's inclusion of 10% contingency. Discussion followed on the differences in the numbers. For example, the Town's numbers do not include sidewalks or concrete curbing, but they do include catch basin tops. The Town Manager explained that numbers were provided to the City and Groton Long Point and it was left up to them to determine how they would spend the money.

Councilor Antipas noted that he did not originally support the plan, however he sees some merit to spreading the cost out over 10 years.

Sal Pandolfo, Director of Finance, provided the fiscal impact statement for bonding. He presented information on principal and interest payments for the time period, the estimated mill rate increase and the annual cost on a median home assessment. The highest increase is in year 2017-2018. The Town Manager noted there are a number of assumptions included in the information including the interest rate. There will be up to five bond issues with 10 year terms. Discussion followed on the interest being paid. Mr. Pandolfo reviewed a table and graphic showing the impact on the mill rate based on existing debt, pending debt on Thames Street, and proposed debt on Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation.

Mr. Pandolfo then reviewed a Comparison of Current Debt Limit to Statutory Debt Limit and the Town Council Policy. With this bond, the projected Town debt would be at 9.3% of the State Statute debt limit and 18.6% of the Council limit. In the highest year, debt service would be 5% of General Fund Expenditures (versus the 10% limit). Councilors also received a table showing outstanding debt as of June 30, 2012.

A motion was made by Mayor Somers, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

Councilor Johnson does not feel that the Town should be paying interest for road maintenance, but he will support the referendum. Councilor Flax and Councilor Antipas agreed with Councilor Johnson

The motion carried unanimously

2012-0205 Fiscal Impact Statement - Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Project

Discussed and Recommended no action taken

See discussion in 6/26/12 Committee of the Whole minutes under 2012-0169 Introduction of an Ordinance for Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation.

2012-0170 Setting Public Hearing Date on an Ordinance for Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Flax, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The Town Manager explained that on July 10th, there will be a special meeting of the Town Council for the public hearing that will then recess for a Committee of the Whole meeting to consider adoption of the ordinance. The Town Council meeting will then reconvene to take action on the ordinance. The goal is to have the RTM receive the ordinance at their July 11th meeting

The motion carried unanimously

2012-0171 Referral of Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Project to Planning Commission Under CGS 8-24

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2012-0196 Mystic Streetscape Project - Update

Discussed

Town Manager Oefinger provided an update on work in downtown Mystic, noting that some work has been delayed by rain. It is anticipated that paving will begin on Friday and finish on Monday. Paving cannot occur on Tuesday or Thursday due to the Wednesday, July 4th holiday and statutory requirements that restrict road closures on the days before and after a holiday.

2012-0157 OpSail 2012 - Update

Discussed

The Town Council has received invitations to the barbecue at the Shennecossett Yacht Club and

the Captains' Ball at Ocean Beach, both on Sunday, July 8th. Last minute arrangements are being made for transportation of sailors to the barbecue. The Council has also received an invitation to join the Governor at Harkness for the Parade of Sail on Saturday, July 7th.

6. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Antipas, to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.