



Town of Groton, Connecticut

Meeting Agenda

Town Council

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

Mayor Harry A. Watson, Councilors Heather Sherman Bond, Kathryn M. Brown-Tracy, Catherine Kolnaski, Deborah B. Monteiro, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Rita M. Schmidt, Paulann H. Sheets, and James L. Streater

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

8:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

SPECIAL MEETING

I. ROLL CALL

II. CONSENT CALENDAR

All matters listed under Item II (Consent Calendar) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. No separate discussion of these items will take place, unless cause is shown prior to the time Council votes on the motion to adopt.

a. Approval of Minutes

2009-0032 Approval of Minutes (Town Council) Resolution - Consent

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of January 20, 2009 are hereby accepted and approved.

b. Administrative Items

2009-0027 Special Trust Fund Contributions Resolution - Consent

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts contributions to the Town as follows:

Sandy McMillin - \$250.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
George Marshall - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary
Stonington Lodge #26 IOOF - \$50.00 - Social Services Discretionary
Various Donations - \$235.88 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program
Pfizer United Way Campaign - \$20.00 - Library Miscellaneous

c. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List

2008-0122 Joint Meeting with the Stonington Board of Selectmen Referral

2008-0243 Reuse of Colonel Ledyard School Referral

2008-0281 Authorization of Agencies, Authorities, Boards, Commissions and Committees Referral

2009-0014 FYE 2008 CAFR Referral

2009-0021 Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut Grant - Mystic & Noank Library Referral

2009-0022 Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut Grant - Bill Memorial Library Referral

2009-0037 Appointment of James Mitchell to Board of Assessment Appeals Referral

2009-0038 Appointment of Maureen Lage to Board of Assessment Appeals Referral

III. NEW BUSINESS

2008-0243 **Reuse of Colonel Ledyard School** **Referral**

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A PROCESS FOR LEASING THE COLONEL LEDYARD SCHOOL TO THE CITY OF GROTON

WHEREAS, recent construction of new schools has left the Town of Groton with properties that are currently unused, including the Colonel Ledyard School, situated within the City of Groton, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council deems it to be the best use of that school, and to be in the long term interest of the Town's taxpayers, that the Town retain ownership of the property for civic purposes, and

WHEREAS, the City of Groton has stated its urgent need for space adjacent to its Municipal Building, and

WHEREAS, leasing the Colonel Ledyard School property to the City at a nominal rent could also allow for other, concurrent use of some part of the school, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager may conduct negotiations over all terms and conditions of a lease of the Colonel Ledyard School property in favor of the City of Groton, such lease to be returned to the Town Council for final approval, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the interest of due diligence concerning the value of a Town property that may be leased, sold, or otherwise encumbered, the Town Manager is directed to obtain a standard professional appraisal of the Colonel Ledyard School property, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Council refers this matter to the Groton Planning Commission for consideration under CGS Section 8-24.

Legislative History

10/8/2008 Mayor Referred Town Council Committee of the

10/14/2008 Town Council Committee of the Whole Discussed

Town Manager Oefinger noted that the disposition of some of the schools including Colonel Ledyard School has been delayed until an analysis can be done of Groton Public Schools storage needs. Some storage is currently taking place at Groton Heights School, William Seely, and the Administration Building.

An assessment is currently underway to determine if any schools are suitable long term to meet the storage needs of the Groton Public Schools.

Gary Schneider, Director of Public Works, noted that this analysis involves looking at the locations of the vacated schools, determining if warehouse storage is allowed in the zone; looking at building and fire codes requirements, determining the need for a freight elevator, examining the infrastructure available for sprinklers if required, and evaluating interior and exterior modifications.

The consensus of the Committee was to wait for the storage needs assessment and to discuss this issue with the City of Groton at the October 27th joint meeting.

10/27/2008 Town Council Committee of the Whole Discussed

See City of Groton Committee of the Whole minutes of 10/27/08.

1/27/2009 Town Council Committee of the Whole Recommended for a Resolution

The Town Manager noted that the Council recently received a report on Board of Education storage needs indicating that money will be needed to either build a facility or retrofit a school. The Council directed the Town Manager to have the vacant school properties appraised. Once the appraisals are completed, there would have to be a discussion of how best to value the Colonel Ledyard School property considering potential demolition costs and contributions that the City has made through taxes. There is also a possibility of leasing

the property rather than selling it.

Mayor Popp indicated that he is looking for a time frame. The City has space needs that will either be addressed by eliminating the auditorium at the Municipal Building or using the Colonel Ledyard School.

The Town Manager suggested that the two Councils discuss how the property will be used. There is no identified Town use for the property, and as it sits vacant, the building is deteriorating.

Councilor Bond asked the City to put a proposal in writing regarding how the building will be used and whether the City wants to purchase or lease the property. Mayor Popp stated that it does not matter if the property is purchased or leased. With respect to uses, one option is to move the police department there. There is also a need for public meeting space and the gymnasium could be used for recreation programs. The City needs a commitment from the Town about whether the property will be leased or sold to the City, or put on the market. The City is prepared to use the facility immediately.

Councilor Streeter asked the Town Manager to make the appraisal for this property a top priority so that this issue can be resolved in about a month. He added that he would hate to lose the auditorium space at the Municipal Building.

**1/27/2009 Town Council Committee of Motion
the Whole**

to take Colonel Ledyard School out of consideration as a storage facility, appraise the property, and proceed with negotiations to transfer the property (lease or sale) to the City of Groton.

Councilor Bond thinks the building should be leased and therefore there is no need to wait for the appraisal. Councilor Sheets feels the value should be ascertained whether the property is leased or sold. The Town Manager suggested that the resolution include a referral to the Planning Commission under CGS 8-24. The Council concurred.

A motion was made by Councilor Bond, seconded by Councilor Streeter, to amend the original motion to not do an appraisal.

Councilor Sheets feels it is bad policy to not obtain an appraisal of the property. The Town Manager stated he is envisioning retaining the land and leasing the building for \$1 a year. Negotiations with the City would involve potential uses, length of the lease, etc. If the Council is considering negotiating a price for the lease, then an appraisal should be done by both parties.

A motion was made by Councilor Bond, seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, to amend the motion to do the appraisal, and move forward with negotiations to lease the property to the City for \$1 per year.

Councilor O'Beirne sees no need for an appraisal if the Council is committed to leasing the property to the City for \$1. The Town Manager noted that the lease will still have to go to the RTM and there may be a requirement for a public hearing.

The second motion to amend carried unanimously.

The first motion to amend and second were withdrawn

2008-0281

**Authorization of Agencies, Authorities, Boards,
Commissions and Committees**

Referral

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING AND APPROVING A GUIDEBOOK TO BOARDS AND
COMMISSIONS**

WHEREAS, the 2008 Charter Revision Commission Final Report recommended that an authoritative guidebook to boards and commissions (ABC) be adopted by the Town Council to replace the descriptions in the 1987 Town Charter, and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Town Charter contains the following:

Section 8.1.6 Guidebook

Descriptions of individual ABC shall be in accordance with the laws which have established them and delineated in a Council-approved Town publication: "Guidebook to the Agencies, Authorities, Boards, Commissions, Committees and Councils."

and,

WHEREAS, the Town Council has reviewed the Town Clerk's proposed publication which delineates all permanent and/or statutorily-authorized ABC, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council adopts and approves the "Guidebook to the Agencies, Authorities, Boards, Commissions, Committees and Councils" adding the subtitle "including the Authorized ABCs", and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Office of the Town Clerk be responsible for the maintenance and publication of said "Guidebook" including any future addendum, and that the Office be authorized to make minor revisions upon notification to the Town Council, and that all major revisions be reviewed and approved by the Town Council.

Legislative History

11/5/2008	Mayor	Referred	Town Council Personnel/Appo
1/13/2009	Town Council Personnel/Appointments/Rules /Legislation Committee	Referred	Town Council Committee of th
1/27/2009	Town Council Committee of the Whole	Recommended for a Resolution	

Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox distributed new Registers and Town Charters.

With respect to the Guidebook to Boards and Commissions, the Town Clerk hopes to publish an addendum in the future that lists regional and temporary committees.

Discussion followed on the title of the guidebook and other suggestions made by the Personnel Committee.

1/27/2009	Town Council Committee of the Whole	Motion	
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that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution and that the title "Guidebook to the Agencies, Authorities, Boards, Commissions, Committees and Councils including the Authorized ABCs" be used

2009-0014

FYE 2008 CAFR

Referral

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE FYE 2008 AUDIT REPORT

WHEREAS, the Town Council has considered the annual audit of the Town of Groton's finances, covering the fiscal year from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008, and

WHEREAS, the Council has discussed the audit findings with the manager of the audit team from the firm of Blum Shapiro, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town of Groton accepts and files the FYE 2008 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), the Auditor's Reports and Management Letter.

Legislative History

1/5/2009	Mayor	Referred	Town Council Committee of th
1/27/2009	Town Council Committee of the Whole	Discussed	

Director of Finance Sal Pandolfo explained that an annual audit is required by the Town Charter, and state statutes require that financial statements be published each year by December 31st. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) is a communication and informational document that is also used by bond rating agencies, investors, and creditors when the Town seeks bonding.

The report consists of three sections: Introductory; Financial; and Statistical. It is accompanied by a management letter, which raises IT security issues that are being addressed.

Vanessa Rossito of Blum Shapiro reviewed the document section by section, and answered questions posed by

Councilors. Councilor Bond asked if the Board of Education will be asked to respond to the concerns raised about its practices.

1/27/2009 **Town Council Committee of the Whole** **Recommended for a Resolution**

2009-0021 Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut Grant - Mystic & Noank Library Referral

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN AN AFFIDAVIT FOR A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT FOR MYSTIC & NOANK LIBRARY

WHEREAS, the Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut has announced the availability of a grant program called the "Love our Libraries Initiative" for 13 area libraries, and

WHEREAS, the Mystic & Noank Library is proposing that these funds be used to provide an area for, and increase services to, teens; add technology; and rearrange the collection to make the space more efficient and user-friendly; and

WHEREAS, a condition of the Community Foundation grant is the assurance, by the Town, that the receipt of grant funds will not be used to displace funding or budget appropriations that would normally have been given to the Mystic & Noank Library, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger is authorized to sign a letter of intent, on behalf of the Town Council, to comply with the Foundation's criteria for the Mystic & Noank Library's grant application.

Legislative History

1/14/2009 **Mayor** **Referred** **Town Council Committee of tt**

1/27/2009 **Town Council Committee of the Whole** **Discussed**

Town Manager Oefinger explained that this request, and referral 2009-0022, are for authorization for the Town Manager to provide an affidavit stating that these grants will not result in a reduction of Town funding for the Mystic & Noank Library or the Bill Memorial Library. The Town Manager described the proposed activities associated with each grant.

1/27/2009 **Town Council Committee of the Whole** **Recommended for a Resolution**

2009-0022 Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut Grant - Bill Memorial Library Referral

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN AN AFFIDAVIT FOR A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT FOR BILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY

WHEREAS, the Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut has announced the availability of a grant program called the "Love our Libraries Initiative" for 13 area libraries, and

WHEREAS, the Bill Memorial Library is proposing that these funds be used to provide additional meeting space at their facility, and

WHEREAS, a condition of the Community Foundation grant is the assurance, by the Town, that the receipt of grant funds will not be used to displace funding or budget appropriations that would normally have been given to the Bill Memorial Library, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger is authorized to sign a letter of intent, on behalf of the Town Council, to comply with the Foundation's criteria for the Bill Memorial Library's grant application.

Legislative History

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| | 1/14/2009 | Mayor | Referred | Town Council Committee of t |
| | 1/27/2009 | Town Council Committee of
the Whole | Discussed | |
| | <i>(See 1/27/09 Committee of the Whole discussion under #2009-0021 Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut Grant - Mystic & Noank Library.)</i> | | | |
| | 1/27/2009 | Town Council Committee of
the Whole | Recommended for a
Resolution | |
| 2009-0037 | Appointment of James Mitchell to Board of Assessment Appeals | | | Referral |
| | RESOLUTION APPOINTING JAMES MITCHELL TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS | | | |
| | RESOLVED, that James Mitchell, 711 Cow Hill Road, Mystic, is appointed as an alternate member of the Board of Assessment Appeals for a term ending 12/31/11. | | | |
| | <u>Legislative History</u> | | | |
| | 1/13/2009 | Town Council | Recommended for a
Personnel/Appointments/Rules Resolution
/Legislation Committee | |
| 2009-0038 | Appointment of Maureen Lage to Board of Assessment Appeals | | | Referral |
| | RESOLUTION APPOINTING MAUREEN J. LAGE TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS | | | |
| | RESOLVED, that Maureen J. Lage, 120 Anchorage Circle, is appointed as an alternate member of the Board of Assessment Appeals for a term ending 12/31/11. | | | |
| | <u>Legislative History</u> | | | |
| | 1/13/2009 | Town Council | Recommended for a
Personnel/Appointments/Rules Resolution
/Legislation Committee | |

IV. ADJOURNMENT