



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Town Council

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, February 21, 2012

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m. by Mayor Somers.

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

Members Absent: Councilor Johnson

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Office Assistant Lori Watrous.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Salute to the Flag was led by former Town Councilor Catherine Kolnaski.

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

Presentation of Plaques to Former Town Councilors

As a token of the Town's gratitude for their service, Mayor Somers presented plaques to two former Councilors. Paulann Sheets was a Town Councilor from November 5, 2003, through December 5, 2011, and Catherine Kolnaski was a Town Councilor from November 5, 1997, through December 5, 2011.

IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Kevin Trejo, 536L Shennecossett Road, stated that spending \$1.4 million to consolidate middle schools is unwarranted. He suggested that Fitch Middle School remain open; Pleasant Valley be closed and its students divided among Charles Barnum, Mary Morrison and Catherine Kolnaski; and West Side be converted into an elementary magnet school. Mr. Trejo believes that this would eliminate the need to purchase new portables, solve racial imbalance issues, create administrative savings, and lower Groton's educational costs.

Scott Aument, 127 Rogers Road, a member of the RTM from District 6 and a member of Friends for Affordable Education, agrees with Mr. Trejo that the middle school plan should be re-evaluated. He feels that the Town needs to be more careful with taxpayer dollars.

V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Councilor Flax asked whether there was a spreadsheet showing potential costs and savings for Mr. Trejo's plan. Mr. Trejo stated that he does not have a spreadsheet, but he can sit down with Councilors and discuss how his plan would work.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approval of Minutes

2012-0060 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of February 7, 2012 are hereby accepted and approved.

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

b. Administrative Items

2012-0046 Special Trust Fund Contributions

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

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

Lois Constantine - \$25.00 - Maritime Academy Miscellaneous

Joellen Anderson - \$200.00 - Library Miscellaneous

Alan M. Major - \$66.00 - Library Miscellaneous

Mystic Congregational Church - \$158.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

c. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List

2009-0039 Recommendations of the Task Force on Climate Change and Sustainable Community

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2012-0033 Senior Center Modifications

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2012-0037 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Implementation Committee Request

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2012-0043 Energy, Efficiency and Conservation Committee Membership Modification

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2011-0257 Groton Parks Foundation - Memorandum of Understanding

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2012-0020 Reappointment of Raymond Munn and Michael Kane to Planning Commission

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2012-0026 Department of Transportation Division of Highway Safety Equipment Grant

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2012-0039 Aquarion License Agreement

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2012-0054 Appointment of Mark Somers to the Historic District Commission

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2012-0055 Appointment of Karen Morton to the Board of Assessment Appeals

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2012-0056 Appointment of Deborah Monteiro to Board of Assessment Appeals

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2012-0059 Miscellaneous and Ad Hoc Committee Appointments

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2012-0065 Resolution to Not Reappoint Nancy Mitchell to Historic District Commission

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

Passed The Consent Calendar

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Streeter, to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried unanimously

VII. COMMUNICATION REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)

a. Town Councilors

Emails and letters were received regarding the Historic District Commission, the budget, pre-K schools, liquor law changes, and the Mystic & Noank Library.

Councilor Streeter reminded citizens that the Groton Education Foundation will hold a fund-raiser, "Groton's Dancing with the Stars," on March 9, 2012.

Councilor Antipas attended the Chamber of Commerce annual meeting.

Councilor Watson attended Foxwoods 20th Anniversary Celebration. He, along with Councilor Peruzzotti, met with the Town Manager to discuss Council goals.

Councilor Peruzzotti attended an Economic Development Commission meeting.

Councilor Schmidt attended two Arts Committee meetings, one in Danielson and the other in Hartford.

2012-0071 Library/Senior Center Veterans Memorial Plaza

LIBRARY/SENIOR CENTER VETERANS MEMORIAL PLAZA

Councilor Streeter requested a referral to upgrade the veteran's memorial near the Groton Public Library to include individuals from Desert Storm, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting

The Town Clerk stated that the next RTM meeting will be on March 14, 2012, at the Senior Center.

c. Clerk of the Council

No report.

d. Town Manager

The Town Manager announced that there will be a Subase Coalition Steering Committee meeting on February 23, 2012. He received a letter from the State Historic Preservation Office regarding Groton's Historic District, its history, and qualifications for members. Mr. Oefinger also highlighted some of the items from the Weekly Status Report. The Town Manager stated that the total net Grand List for 2011 (including real estate, personal property, and motor vehicles) fell approximately 3.6%. He noted that CCM's annual Day on the Hill at the State Capitol will be March 21, 2012.

e. Town Attorney

No report.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**a. Community & Cultural Development - Chairman Schmidt**

No meeting, no report.

b. Economic Development - Chairman Johnson

No meeting, no report.

c. Education/Health & Social Services - Chairman Watson

No meeting, no report.

d. Environment/Energy - Chairman Peruzzotti

No meeting, no report.

e. Finance - Chairman O'Beirne

Councilor O'Beirne read the minutes of February 14, 2012, which are on file in the Town Clerk's office.

f. Personnel/Appointments/Rules - Chairman Flax

Councilor Flax read the minutes of February 14, 2012, which are on file in the Town Clerk's office.

g. Public Safety - Chairman Streeter

No meeting, no report.

h. Public Works/Recreation - Chairman Antipas

No meeting, no report.

i. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Somers

Mayor Somers stated that the resolutions on tonight's agenda are a result of the Committee of the Whole meeting. The group also had discussions regarding baseball field litigation, a community or aqua-therapy pool, and establishment of a task force to look into generation of revenue.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

X. NEW BUSINESS**2011-0257 Groton Parks Foundation - Memorandum of Understanding**

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE GROTON PARKS FOUNDATION TO MANAGE GRANTS FOR THE COPP PROPERTY

WHEREAS, the Groton Parks Foundation, Inc. has received two grants from the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to create a meadow/field and to improve the existing trail system at the Copp Property, and

WHEREAS, the Groton Parks Foundation would like the Town to manage the projects with the Foundation retaining the responsibility to pay invoices for the projects, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council authorizes Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Groton Parks Foundation, Inc. to manage the Copp property grants for a meadow/field and trail system improvements, and to proceed with the two projects.

A motion was made by Councilor Peruzzotti, seconded by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2012-0026 Department of Transportation Division of Highway Safety Equipment Grant

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION OF HIGHWAY SAFETY EQUIPMENT GRANT

WHEREAS, the Groton Town Police plans to utilize The Connecticut Department of Transportation's Division of Highway Safety Equipment grant funding to obtain traffic cones and traffic signs to supplement the existing inventory for use at OUI sobriety checkpoints and seatbelt checkpoints increasing the visibility for all motorists entering the transition area and activity areas of the spot checks and reduce the risk to officers assigned to work within those areas, and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the grant is to remain in compliance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices as published by the Federal Highway Administration, increasing overall safety by enhancing visibility for motorists entering transition areas and activity areas of any spot checks conducted and reduce the risk to officers assigned to work within those areas further supporting the driving under the influence law enforcement efforts in the prevention, detection, and

apprehension of OUI offenders, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton Police Department participates in and regularly conducts OUI sobriety checkpoints and Seatbelt checkpoints each year, and

WHEREAS, during the years 2008 through 2009 the Town of Groton has made over 500 OUI Arrests and investigated over 100 OUI related crashes (21 with injuries and 3 fatalities), and

WHEREAS, with the purchase of new traffic safety equipment it is expected the Town of Groton Police Department will increase the number of OUI sobriety check points conducted in a calendar year, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger may apply for the Connecticut Department of Transportation's Division of Highway Safety Equipment grant with an anticipated total state grant funding portion of \$3,000 (86%) and the additional police department soft match (14%) portion of \$488.45 as provided under the grant provisions.

A motion was made by Councilor Streeter, seconded by Councilor Flax, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2012-0039

Aquarion License Agreement

RESOLUTION APPROVING A LICENSE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN AND
AQUARION WATER COMPANY FOR PARKING SPACES

WHEREAS, Aquarion Water Company of Connecticut is a domestic corporation having an office at 600 Lindley Street, Bridgeport, CT 06606 ("Aquarion") and owns a 0.48-acre parcel of real property located at 258 High Street, Groton, Connecticut, which contains Aquarion's High Street Booster Station Facility; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton ("Town") operates a facility for public recreation at 230 High Street, Groton, Connecticut, adjoining Licensor's property on the south and east; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council desires, pursuant to a License Agreement, to utilize a portion of Aquarion's High Street Booster Station Property for the purpose of providing off-street parking for Town employees, agents, and members of the public utilizing the public recreation facility, the specific location of such parking spaces to be determined by Aquarion; and

WHEREAS, in exchange for such license, Aquarion requires no fee, but requires that the Town accept responsibility and any resulting liability from its acts or omissions on the licensed premises during its authorized term; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger may execute the License Agreement referred to herein along with any ancillary documents that may be required.

A motion was made by Councilor Antipas, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2012-0020

Reappointment of Raymond Munn and Michael Kane to Planning Commission

RESOLUTION REAPPONTING RAYMOND MUNN AND MICHAEL KANE TO THE
PLANNING COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Raymond S. Munn, 26 Middlefield Street, Groton Long Point, is hereby reappointed to the Planning Commission for a term expiring 12/31/16, and be it further

RESOLVED, that Michael D. Kane, 51 Jupiter Point Road, is hereby reappointed to the Planning Commission for a term expiring 12/31/16.

Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

*A motion to approve Resolutions 2012-0054 Appointment of Mark Somers to the Historic District Commission, 2012-0055 Appointment of Karen Morton to the Board of Assessment Appeals, and 2012-0056 Appointment of Deborah Monteiro to Board of Assessment Appeals was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti.
VOTE on Motion carried 7 In Favor, 1 Abstain. (Abstain: Somers)*

2012-0054 Appointment of Mark Somers to the Historic District Commission

RESOLUTION APPOINTING MARK J. SOMERS AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Mark J. Somers, 67 Ramsdell Street, is hereby appointed as an alternate member to the Historic District Commission for a term ending 12/31/15.

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 7 - Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Streeeter and Councilor Watson
Abstain: 1 - Mayor Somers

2012-0055 Appointment of Karen Morton to the Board of Assessment Appeals

RESOLUTION APPOINTING KAREN F. MORTON AS AN ALTERNATE TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

RESOLVED, that Karen F. Morton, 67 Mariners Lane, Mystic, is hereby appointed as an alternate member to the Board of Assessment Appeals for a term ending 12/31/12.

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 7 - Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Streeeter and Councilor Watson
Abstain: 1 - Mayor Somers

2012-0056 Appointment of Deborah Monteiro to Board of Assessment Appeals

RESOLUTION APPOINTING DEBORAH B. MONTEIRO TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

RESOLVED, that Deborah B. Monteiro, 70 Spyglass Circle, is hereby appointed as a member of the Board of Assessment Appeals for a term ending 12/31/13 pursuant to Town Ordinance No. 253.

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 7 - Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Streeeter and Councilor Watson
Abstain: 1 - Mayor Somers

2012-0059 Miscellaneous and Ad Hoc Committee Appointments

RESOLUTION MAKING APPOINTMENTS TO MISCELLANEOUS AND AD HOC COMMITTEES

WHEREAS, the Town Council makes appointments to miscellaneous and ad hoc local and regional committees as well as appointing liaisons to other groups, and

WHEREAS, upon its election every two years the Town Council should reconsider these appointments, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the following individuals are appointed to the groups as noted:

Boating Advisory Board Liaison - Councilor Dean Antipas
 Economic Development Commission Liaison - Councilors William Johnson and Deborah Peruzzotti
 Golf Advisory Board - Councilor James Streeter (ex-officio, non-voting)
 Long Island Sound Advisory Council - Councilor Harry Watson
 Mystic Cooperative Task Force - Mayor Heather Somers
 New London Ledge Lighthouse Board of Directors - Councilors James Streeter and Rita Schmidt
 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Implementation Advisory Committee - Councilor Bruce Flax
 Pequot Woods Board of Trustees - Councilor Frank O'Beirne
 Sister Cities Committee - Councilor William Johnson
 Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments - Mayor Heather Somers and Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger (Alternate)
 Southeastern Connecticut Regional Resources Recovery Authority - Gary Schneider and John Carrington (Alternate)
 Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority Representative Advisory Board - Councilor Dean Antipas and Resident Mary Lou Smith
 Town Council/RTM/Board of Education Liaison Committee - Councilors Frank O'Beirne, Deborah Peruzzotti, Harry Watson and Bruce Flax

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2012-0065 Resolution to Not Reappoint Nancy Mitchell to Historic District Commission

RESOLUTION TO NOT REAPPOINT NANCY A. MITCHELL TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that the Town Council does not reappoint Nancy A. Mitchell of 711 Cow Hill Road, Mystic, whose term expired on 12/31/11, to the Historic District Commission.

A motion was made by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 7 - Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Streeter and Councilor Watson
 Opposed: 1 - Councilor Schmidt

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

By consensus, the next Committee of the Whole meeting will be on February 28, 2012, at 6:00 p.m.

2012-0072 Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) Legislative Agenda

SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (SCCOG)
 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Councilor O'Beirne requested a referral to discuss items that Southeastern CT Council of Governments (SCCOG) is considering regarding Southeastern CT Water Authority and Southeastern Area Transit (SEAT). He noted that the position of the Council needs to be determined on these items before they are voted on at the SCCOG meeting.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 8:19 p.m. was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Schmidt and so voted unanimously.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk
Clerk of the Council*

Lori Watrous, Office Assistant