



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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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, February 28, 2012

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

SPECIAL MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Councilor Streeter convened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

In Mayor Somers' absence, a motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Streeter, to elect Councilor Flax Chairman pro tem.

The motion carried unanimously.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Streeter

Members Absent: Mayor Somers, Councilor Schmidt and Councilor Watson

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger and Executive Assistant Nicki Bresnyan.

3. Calendar and Communications

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

2012-0064 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 February 11, 2012 and February 14, 2012 are hereby accepted and approved.

A motion was made by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, to adopt.

The motion carried unanimously

5. NEW BUSINESS

2012-0051 Joint Meeting with Stonington Board of Selectmen (2012 Standing Referral)

Discussed

First Selectman Ed Haberek and Selectmen George Crouse and Glee McAnanly were present.

Chairman Flax asked if anyone had any questions or concerns. Councilor Streeter noted there has been some concern about Stonington's contribution to the Mystic and Noank Library. Mr. Haberek noted that he did a library cost analysis as part of budget development and he has increased Stonington's contribution to the Mystic and Noank Library by \$20,000 to create parity with Pawcatuck Library.

Councilor Watson arrived at 6:07 p.m.

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

Members Absent: Mayor Somers and Councilor Schmidt

Discussed

Mr. Haberek stated that he is confident that the numbers will be fine. He assured the Council that Stonington's dedication to the library continues and they look forward to supporting the library. Mr. Crouse noted that the proposed increase in funding from \$65,000 last year to \$85,000 this year is close to a 30% increase. Mr. Haberek feels that because the overall government budget is lower than last year, the Board will view this increase positively.

Councilor Schmidt arrived at 6:08 p.m.

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

Discussed

Councilor Peruzzotti asked if the funding formula previously developed was used at all. Mr. Haberek stated no, but he conducted a thorough analysis and he offered to send a copy to the Town. Councilor Peruzzotti questioned the status of other shared services. Mr. Haberek noted that the pumpout boat arrangement remains the same with Stonington providing in-kind services. Mr. Haberek stated that he has never received an invoice from the owners of the pumpout boat. The requests from the ambulance services have been fully funded. Councilor Flax noted there were questions about the ambulance budgets in Groton last year relative to unexplainable line items. Mr. Haberek indicated he had no problem and he praised the ambulance companies. Stonington Ambulance is now dispatched by Groton and Mr. Haberek believes the towns should be looking at more regional opportunities.

Mr. Haberek also participates in the Mystic Cooperative Task Force which is helpful. The Town representative has been helpful in updating Stonington on the bridge project. Councilor Johnson noted that the EDC is working on updating the website and he asked who to approach about a regional effort. Mr. Haberek indicated he would be happy to help and noted a regional effort is critical.

Mr. Haberek asked for an update on downtown Mystic. He noted this is a tough economic time and he would be willing to help work with the merchants to let people know that Mystic is open for business.

Councilor Streeter noted that the Council will be having a joint meeting with state legislators. He asked if there would be any value in inviting Stonington and its local legislators and Mr. Haberek stated it would be helpful.

Councilor Antipas stated that he is struck by the number of people who park at the Seaport and walk to downtown. He would like to see a trolley or water taxi. Also, he stated that the Mystic and Noank Library is small, but people are convinced that Stonington doesn't pay its fair share. He asked for the circulation numbers and noted that the Town Council has been asked to fund at Stonington's level.

Mr. Crouse noted that in real tax dollars, Stonington pays more than Groton even though Groton contributes twice what Stonington does. Mr. Haberek noted that Stonington has also contributed to capital improvements at other libraries, but he has never received a capital request from the Mystic and Noank Library.

Mr. Haberek noted that the regional transportation study completed last year identified some great opportunities for moving people around the region.

Town Manager Oefinger clarified that the parity referred to by Mr. Haberek is a reference to what Stonington does for Westerly Library, not with what the Town of Groton is doing for the Mystic and Noank Library.

Councilor Watson noted that the NLC Conference would be a good opportunity to address legislators, but no one is going.

Councilor Peruzzotti participated in the Mystic Mobility Study, which is available for review on line. A number of people moving opportunities were identified, but any changes will require full commitment from all stakeholders.

It was agreed that the next joint meeting would be sometime in June in Stonington.

Town Manager Oefinger noted that the Town's legislators are coming in March 6th at 6:00 p.m.

2012-0062

Groton Heights School Reuse Task Force Final Report

Discussed

Janet Downs introduced the other members of the Task Force who were present: Catherine Kolnaski, who chaired the Task Force, Bill Hart, and Peter Ganacoplos. Ms. Kolnaski noted that the Task Force was comprised of a great group of people. She acknowledged Janet Downs for taking the minutes and preparing the final report.

Ms. Downs noted that her great aunt was the principal of Groton Heights School and she shared artifacts from the school with the Council.

The Groton Heights School Reuse Task Force was created in 2007; members were appointed and began meeting in 2010 with staff support from Town personnel. The Task Force reviewed two reports on the school prepared by Public Works, toured the building, and reviewed property boundaries and building condition. The Task Force established early on that any reuse of the building will require City Planning and Zoning action and extensive renovation of the building to address handicap accessibility.

The cost to bring to the building up to code in 2003 was estimated at \$6 million. The building is currently vacant and some minor vandalism occurs that is addressed immediately. The yearly cost to keep the building stable is just over \$20,000. The building is used periodically for emergency services training.

The property consists of several parcels, one of which is owned by the Bill Memorial Library (formerly used as a playground). There is also a paper street (Library Street) that impacts the property. A land swap with the Bill Memorial Library was discussed and presented to the trustees, but the proposal is not under consideration at this time.

The Task Force recognizes the building's unique historical character and its significance to the surrounding neighborhood. The Task Force reviewed supplementary information and an appraisal of \$489,000. Playground equipment has been removed from the site. There are no known hazardous materials. The building is deeded separately from the land for educational purposes. The property is zoned R5.2 zoning, with the major allowed uses being one and two family residential, parks, and day care.

The Town Manager reported to the Task Force that he has received inquiries about the building from various entities. Neither the Town nor the City has any interest in the site. The Task Force reached out to some entities, but no interest in the property was expressed. There was an early indication from LEARN that they may be interested.

The Task Force undertook a community survey regarding reuse of the site. Overwhelmingly, respondents wanted the building saved and in public not private ownership. Ms. Downs noted the preferred uses by rank with educational facility being number one. The Task Force was hopeful that LEARN would want the property and meetings were suspended for a time to allow LEARN to

determine its needs. But a communication was subsequently received stating that LEARN was not interested.

The Task Force discussed amending the City Zoning Regulations to allow reuse of the building. A matrix of alternative uses was developed showing various impacts and issues, which Ms. Downs reviewed. After considering all of the choices, the Task Force recommends against demolishing the structure and recommends against subdividing the property into residential lots. The Task Force made four recommendations as follows:

- 1) Actively solicit interest in the property with preference given to educational uses.
- 2) Making the zoning regulation changes necessary to support desired uses.
- 3) Retain the property until the economy improves and then market it.
- 4) Retain the property and seek grants to renovate it so that space could be rented to non-profits and community groups.

Mr. Downs reviewed the four charges given by the Town Council to the Task Force when it was created and how they were met by the Task Force.

Councilor Watson asked if the Council needs to accept the report. The Town Manager stated yes, but not necessarily tonight. He encouraged Councilors to review the information provided in the appendices to the report.

Chairman Flax asked how involved the neighborhood was in the process. Ms. Downs reported that the Task Force had only two visits from neighbors, but the four members of the Task Force present and Archie Swindell are all neighborhood residents. Although there was not a lot of public participation at the meetings, there were quite a few responses to the survey.

Councilor Streeter asked when it would be necessary to start the zone change. The general feeling of the Task Force was that the zoning amendment should be done before the property is marketed. The Town Manager suggested that if it is the desire of the Town Council to move forward, he would start with an informal discussion with City officials and then make a formal application to the City Planning and Zoning Commission.

2012-0005

Joint Meeting with Board of Education (2012 Standing Referral)

Discussed

Board of Education members in attendance were Beth Gianacoplos, Kim Watson, Chaz Zzulka, and Chairman Kirsten Hoyt (by video conference), along with Paul Kadri and Wes Greenleaf.

- Vision Committee Report

Ms. Hoyt noted that the Vision Committee Report has not progressed from where it was when the two groups met on February 11th. The Town Council was tasked with finding funds for an architect for the next phase of school renovations. Town Manager Oefinger noted that \$75,000 is proposed in FYE 2013 CIP for a design professional and a lot of work has already been done by previous architects.

- Town Council/RTM/Board of Education Liaison Committee

Councilor Watson noted he has discussed this item with Mr. Peruzzotti and a meeting cannot be held until Mr. Peruzzotti returns from a one month absence. Councilor O'Beirne expressed surprise that meetings would not be held because one person could not be there. Mr. Zzulka and others agreed. Councilor Watson and Mr. Peruzzotti volunteered to co-chair, but that should be decided by the group. Ms. Hoyt noted that the Board needs to appoint a fourth member. Councilor Peruzzotti volunteered to organize a meeting of the group.

- Travel Expenses

Councilor Watson asked that this item be added to the agenda. The Council has not taken any trips and with the budget coming up, he asked what the Board of Education does for professional development and training. Councilor Watson requested the travel policy for Administrators and Board members and stated he will be looking at this line item closely at budget time. Mr. Kadri noted that line item was significantly reduced a couple of years ago and there is a lump sum, streamlined process for travelling. Councilor O'Beirne noted that staff travel is more significant than Board of Education travel.

2012-0066

Board of Education Supplemental Appropriation Request

Recommended for a Resolution

The Board of Education approved the request for supplemental appropriation by consensus on February 13th. The request for the appropriation was previously submitted to the Mayor and Town Manager in the form of an e-mail from Wes Greenleaf. Councilor O'Beirne noted that there has been no formal application for \$1.4 million. He expressed concern with the process and the lack of an overall plan as well as the fact that work is already taking place and the funding is not approved.

Ms. Gianacoplos noted that the vote to close a middle school was a short term solution not a long term plan. The Board looked at the budget for this year and next year and consolidation will save more money than will be spent. There are too few students to support three middle schools. Ms. Gianacoplos hopes that the long term solution will come out of the Vision Report and a new task force. To accomplish the consolidation for school year starting in September, the process must be started. The Board has received updates from the Superintendent at every meeting. Mr. Kadri added that the consolidation is necessary to sustain the budget until a long term plan is formulated. He has made sure that any money spent is being spent in buildings that will be used in a long term solution and he assured the Council that this plan is backed up by details.

Mr. Zzulka noted that the goal is to have two middle schools with 500 students each. Wes Greenleaf noted that the program must be fit to the facility. One two-room portable is proposed for West Side Middle School. He reviewed related issues and modifications to classrooms and other rooms that will be completed by the school maintenance department. A wireless network will also be installed.

At Cutler Middle School, two two-room portables are proposed. Mr. Greenleaf reviewed modifications that will be completed by the school maintenance department to the kitchen, media center, classrooms and other rooms. A School Based Health Center will be established at Cutler. Additional parking will be constructed and Mr. Greenleaf is working with Public Works to see if they can do of the work.

Mr. Greenleaf emphasized the importance of moving forward quickly. He is doing as much preliminary work as he can, but there are a number of steps in the process including permitting.

The costs associated with in-house work are for materials only. Councilor O'Beirne asked who would be maintaining the schools if the work is done in-house. Any overtime costs would be absorbed by the Board of Education.

Councilor Streeter questioned the wireless network. Mr. Greenleaf explained that since this is a short term solution, they will be running channels in the corners and attaching wireless access points to avoid asbestos abatement, otherwise internet access in the buildings would be wired.

Mr. Greenleaf addressed reimbursement rates. The only portion of the project that is reimbursable

is the portable classrooms. Groton's reimbursement rate is currently 50-57% which would equate to \$500,000 to \$570,000. Many of the proposed modifications are permanent. If the Town chooses to renovate the buildings in the future, the work will not be wasted and the portables can be used to replace older portables at other schools.

Chairman Flax noted that the zero increase operating budget would be higher if the middle schools were not being consolidated. He understands the need to move forward, but he suggested that there is a better way to convey the information. Chairman Flax asked what would happen if the \$1.4 million is not approved. He noted that the Council does not feel confident.

Ms. Gianacoplos asked about the process. The Town Manager stated that formal action by the Board of Education is a start. He will also be looking for documentation that the middle school consolidation plan has been adopted by the Board. The next step depends on the Town Council's action which includes identifying the source of the money. The proposal would then go to the RTM, perhaps under an expedited provision in March. Mr. Oefinger cautioned that the RTM has not had a chance to review the issue.

Mr. Zezulka restated Councilor Flax's question. Mr. Kadri explained that past decisions have led to this point. The issue of too few students was identified a number of years ago. The first step was to identify a global plan, but that did not go forward. Middle school consolidation was planned last year, but a public groundswell delayed the closing. Staff was consolidated at that time to save money. The decision this year was what school to close, which is why the community meetings were held. The Board ultimately chose to close Fitch Middle School. Mr. Kadri calculated the overall savings from consolidation at \$2.7 million. The Board was apprised of the costs associated with not consolidating. Mr. Kadri noted that if this appropriation is not approved, there will not be enough space for classes and programs.

Councilor Peruzzotti expressed concern that this is not going to fly simply because of communication. She suggested that the two groups assure that everyone is on board that this is the best plan before going to the RTM.

Councilor Peruzzotti asked where the money would come from. The Town Manager explained that there is \$750,000 in Capital Reserve but he noted that next year's CIP request is close to \$4 million. There is \$350,000 in Contingency, but fourth quarter transfers are anticipated. The Town can look into closing out CIP projects and consider cancelling some CIP projects. Addition, there is \$985,000 in DOD funding. An absolute last resort would be Fund Balance, but the Town Manager could not recommend that option because it could affect the Town's bond rating. Although there may be grant reimbursements, the Town must locally fund the entire amount of the project before the grant can be submitted. Reimbursed funds could then go back into Capital Reserve to the projects that were cancelled.

Mr. Kadri noted that he cannot wait for the FYE 2013 budget appropriation and meet the September 1st deadline. He suggested that the Town could go out and finance the project over a five year period making it a minor allocation of funds for this year. Reimbursed funds would then pay down the principal.

Ms. Gianacoplos noted that the consolidation represents a recurring savings. Town Manager Oefinger asked what the annual savings would be for the \$1.4 million investment. Mr. Kadri noted that the savings have already been recouped.

Mr. Zezulka noted that seven schools have been closed in the Town and Board of Education CIP projects have been delayed for years.

Ms. Hoyt noted that this solution needs to happen to keep the budget lower and it will buy time to

develop a long term plan.

Ms. Watson noted that the plan is to move forward with a new task force. The middle school consolidation is part of a process.

Councilor Johnson expressed concern that the Board voted the most expensive of the short term plans (closing Fitch Middle School). He feels there should be a shared cost between the Town and the Board. Councilor Flax asked why that was the choice.

Mr. Kadri explained that West Side cannot be closed because of transportation issues. Although portable classrooms would not be needed at Fitch Middle School, the infrastructure costs would be much greater, and unlike the portables, those costs are not reimbursable by the state. Additionally, the community wanted to keep Cutler and West Side open. Ms. Gianacoplos reiterated what was stated by Mr. Kadri. Mr. Greenleaf added that there are serious parking problems at Fitch as well as building condition concerns. Also, closing West Side would result in split teams at Fitch and Cutler.

The Town Manager noted that if the Council wants to move forward, there should be discussion on funding sources. He suggested that a resolution be subject to receiving an affirmative vote on the plan from the Board of Education. In addition, the Town Manager noted that the Town cannot bond projects over \$750,000 without the approval of the voters and the administrative costs of bonding below \$750,000 add a 10% premium.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, to approve \$1,410,800 for the middle school consolidation plan subject to affirmative action by the Board of Education and identification of funding alternatives, not to include Fund Balance, by the Town Manager.

The Town Manager noted that the DOD funds are under the control of the Board. Any action by the Board of Education should include authorizing the use of DOD funds. Mr. Kadri noted that staff and the chairmen should sit down to discuss funding sources and to allow him time to explore financing. The Town Manager noted that it has been too difficult to get everyone together to meet and time is of the essence. Councilor Streeter suggested "splitting" the cost between the Town and Board of Education.

Jean-Claude Ambroise, RTM Moderator, asked Mr. Greenleaf and Mr. Kadri to identify the cost savings associated with the plan for the RTM, emphasizing that an accurate, detailed, organized, logical plan showing costs versus savings will be helpful.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

2011-0218 Fitch High School Baseball Field - Update

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Antipas, that the Town Council, along with Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Superintendent of Schools Paul Kadri, Town Attorney Eileen Duggan, and the following members of the Board of Education: Kirsten Hoyt, Chaz Zzulka, Kim Watson, and Elizabeth Gianacoplos, go into executive session at 9:05 p.m. pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 1-200(6)(B) to discuss a potential claim related to improvements to the Fitch High School Baseball Field.

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

The executive session concluded at 9:40 p.m.

2011-0195 Efficiency of Town and Board of Education Services

Tabled

2012-0068 Purchase of Parks and Recreation Software - Update

Discussed and Recommended no action taken

Doug Ackerman, Interim Director of Parks and Recreation, noted this item is for informational purposes. Previously, the Council authorized using \$35,000 in funds from the Parks and Recreation special revenue fund for recreation software. Staff did a comprehensive review of software needs and identified a better, more integrated software package with a total cost of \$70,558. Mr. Ackerman is recommending purchasing the software using the \$35,000 from the special revenue fund with the remaining funds coming from salary savings. The software maintenance is \$7,000 per year which will be paid from the special revenue fund. The Council concurred with the expenditure and method of funding.

2011-0238**Road Reconstruction Bond Ordinance****Discussed**

Town Manager introduced the subject and noted that if the Council desires a November referendum, the process will have to start in April.

Gary Schneider, Director of Public Works, explained this is a policy decision of whether or not to bond for road reconstruction activities. Historically, road reconstruction has been funded by operating budgets or as a capital improvement project.

The second issue is the amount of the bond. Pavement Management Plans have been developed for the Town, City and Groton Long Point that looked only at the pavement condition, not drainage or other issues. Mr. Schneider reviewed three funding scenarios and the impact on the backlog of road project. Consideration was also given to funding cycles. The bonding could be done in two five year cycles or one cycle extended for five years. The recommended length of payment is 10 years.

Mr. Schneider reviewed items that should and should not be included in the expenditure of the funds. The Town would have to identify the roads to be done in the bond referendum.

Councilor Streeter asked if the work would be done in-house. Mr. Schneider would recommend it be done in house to provide a better level of service and to save 10-15%. The City and Groton Long Point contract out their road work. A 6% factor for bidding and inspection in the City and Groton Long Point would be included.

Town Manager Oefinger noted that the Town has not been disciplined in funding road reconstruction. A bond referendum offers huge advantages from a programming and planning standpoint. For example, the Town would review roads with Groton Long Point and the City of Groton every four years instead of every year.

Councilor Antipas noted that the prices cited are heavily dependent on the price of crude and they have not been adjusted since 2007.

Councilor Johnson asked if a ten year plan could be developed and an ordinance passed to require a yearly contribution. The Town Manager noted that Councils and therefore ordinances can change and it's a matter of discipline.

2012-0069**Police Station Renovations****Discussed**

Gary Schneider, Director of Public Works, noted that in 2008 funds were approved to address the processing and detention areas at the Police Station that were built in 1977. This project also involves strengthening the facility to withstand a Category 3 hurricane, constructing a vehicle shelter to cover the patrol vehicles, and replacing mechanical and electrical equipment in the firing range. Mr. Schneider reviewed the costs noting that the total referendum would be \$5,104,911. If staff is directed to proceed with the referendum in November, the costs will be

reviewed again.

Police Chief Crowley noted that this section of the building has not been touched since it was built in 1977. He described the facilities and noted that the cell doors do not meet current safety standards. The camera system is antiquated and there are blind spots. Going forward, the goal is to seek accreditation at the state and national levels, which will result in insurance reductions. Also, in 2010, legislation was passed making 16 and 17 year olds juveniles and they must be separated from adults, but there is only one cell for juveniles. The Sally Port can accommodate only one car only whereas most new departments have two or three. If multiple people are arrested, there is a wait as they are being processed. In addition, there is no secure interview room. The indoor firing range has eight bays, but not all of them are functioning. The equipment is so old, the Town cannot get parts.

The Town Manager suggested that the Council tour the facility.

2012-0070 Judson Avenue Drainage

Tabled

2012-0048 Purchase of Spicer Properties, Thomas Road

Discussed

The Town Manager is seeking authorization from the Town Council to start the acquisition process for the Spicer properties on Thomas Road. The terms and conditions discussed in executive session are acceptable to the Spicer family and there is a time deadline associated with the state grant.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2012-0067 Acceptance of Roads and Open Space in Great Brook Estates Resubdivision Phases II and III

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

The motion carried unanimously

2012-0007 Meeting with State Legislators (2012 Standing Referral)

Discussed

There will be a meeting with the state legislators on March 6th at 6:00 p.m. Councilors were asked to forward topics for discussion to the Town Manager.

2012-0040 Town Council Goal Setting

Tabled

2012-0073 Proposed Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Groton Concerning Highway CIP Projects

Discussed

The Town Manager noted that he has had a number of meetings with the City about comparative budgets as well as discussions about adding items to the Capital Improvement Program. A draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was prepared, but upon further review by the Town Attorney, it doesn't appear that the Town can sign the MOU. The MOU would allow City projects to be placed in the CIP and only be acted on by the Town Council, but there is a provision in the charter stating that the RTM must approve all CIP projects.

2009-0166 Townwide Police Assessment

Discussed

Police Chief Mike Crowley noted that this item has been discussed for a number of years. He met

with the Chiefs from the City and Groton Long Point a few months ago. The study will look at the most effective and efficient police services for all of Groton. All three chiefs agree that it should be an independent study. There are two agencies that specialize in this type of study. A rough draft of an RFP was drafted by Chief Giuliani and reviewed by the Town's Purchasing Agent.

The Town Manager wanted to bring this to the Council because of discussions on the topic that occurred at goal setting. Identifying what it would cost the Town to provide police services to the City and Groton Long Point would be a quicker, shorter, analysis than a Town-wide police assessment. Time is of the essence to determine the scope of the project because funding expires June 30th.

Councilor Johnson is interested in identifying the cost for budgeting purposes that can be reviewed every five years or so. If that comes out of the overall study, he is fine with conducting a more comprehensive study. Councilor Peruzzotti stated she is interested in the efficiency aspect and answering some of the questions that have been asked for many years. She supports the RFP and full assessment.

It is unknown how long the study will take because a consultant has not been chosen. Councilor Watson asked if the study would address facility needs. Chief Crowley noted that could be included in the study.

Councilor Flax expressed support for the study to identify how the assets are being used by the three departments and how to be more efficient. Chief Crowley noted that all three chiefs have committed to providing access to the consultant.

Discussion followed on specifics of the study. Chief Crowley noted this is simply an RFP at this point and further discussions about how to conduct the study will be held with the chosen consultant. Councilor Johnson wants to make sure that the study identifies how much it would cost the Town to provide the same level of service to the City and Groton Long Point.

The Town Manager emphasized that this is not a consolidation study because the Town cannot force consolidation.

The consensus of the Council was to proceed with issuing the RFP (revised as discussed).

6. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Peruzzotti, seconded by Councilor Antipas, to adjourn the meeting at 10:58 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.