



Town of Groton, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes

Town Council Committee of the Whole

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

Mayor James L. Streeter, Councilors Bruce S. Flax, Bill Johnson, Catherine Kolnaski, Deborah B. Monteiro, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Deborah L. Peruzzotti, Paulann H. Sheets, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, April 27, 2010

7:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Streeter called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mayor Streeter, Councilor Flax, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Sheets and Councilor Watson
Members Absent: Councilor Johnson and Councilor Peruzzotti

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

3. **Calendar and Communications**

None.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

2010-0099 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 April 13, 2010 and April 19, 2010 are hereby accepted and approved.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Monteiro, to adopt with typographical corrections on page 3.

The motion carried unanimously

5. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

2010-0095 Resolution Approving Budgets for FYE 2011

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

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0096 Computation of Tax Rate for General Fund (FYE 2011)

Discussed

Councilor O'Beirne noted that this is the lowest amount of fund balance used in recent memory. Sal Pandolfo, Director of Finance, stated that the amount identified maintains a 7.5% fund balance.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0097 Computation of Tax Rate for Mumford Cove (FYE 2011)

Discussed

Councilor Sheets disclosed that she is a resident of Mumford Cove.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0098 Computation of Tax Rate for Groton Sewer District (FYE 2011)

A motion was made by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., seconded by Councilor Flax, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

Councilors Johnson and Peruzzotti arrived at 7:15 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Streeter, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Sheets and Councilor Watson

2010-0094 Amended Resolution for Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 Program Grant - Senior Center

Discussed

The Town Manager explained that the original resolution authorizing this grant was approved in 2009. After some time, the state asked for a corrected resolution specifically authorizing the Town Manager to enter into the agreement.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0021 Labor Negotiations (2010 Standing Referral)

A motion was made by Mayor Streeter, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that the members of the Town Council, together with Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Director of Administrative Services Doug Ackerman, Manager of Labor Relations Joyce Sauchuk and Town Attorney Eileen Duggan go into executive session at 7:18 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

The executive session concluded at 7:39 p.m.

A motion was made by Mayor Streeter, seconded by Councilor Watson, to approve the agreement with the United Steelworkers of America, AFL-CIO, Local Union 9411 and the funds necessary to implement that agreement by a majority vote of the Town Council.

The motion carried unanimously

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, to recommend a resolution authorizing the extension of the time frame for eligible members of the Groton Municipal Employees Association/United Electrical Local 222/Connecticut Independent Labor Union Local 62, Inc., to elect to participate in the 2010 Retirement Incentive Program Description for Members of the Groton Municipal Employees Association/United Electrical Local 222/Connecticut Independent Labor Union Local 62, Inc., under the same substantive terms and conditions as approved for the 2010 Retirement Incentive Program by the Council on February 16, 2010.

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0078 Groton Open Space Association (GOSA) Request for Endorsement of Hazelnut Hill Land Purchase

Discussed

Councilor Watson stated that he walked the property and he feels it is worthy of preservation.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Sheets, to support Groton Open Space Association's (GOSA's) grant application.

Councilor Kolnaski expressed concern because acquisition of this parcel has not been endorsed by any town land use agencies and the Town's priority should be applying for the grant for the Spicer property since this application will compete with the Town's application. Councilor O'Beirne supported endorsing the application and expressed concern that the land is designated for residential development despite the environmental constraints. Councilor Flax also expressed support for GOSA's application, but expressed his concern that GOSA may limit use of the trails and property. Councilor Johnson agreed with Councilor Kolnaski that this application will compete with the Town's application. Councilor Monteiro agreed there will be competition since funds are limited. Councilor Sheets stated that GOSA has received an endorsement from State Senator Andrew Maynard, the Inland Wetlands Agency, the Shellfish Commission, and the Jabez Smith House Committee. Councilor Peruzzotti asked if the Council's endorsement of GOSA's application is required and if anyone knows if the two applications would compete. The Town Manager noted that the Council's endorsement is required and his opinion is that GOSA's application will compete with the Town's application. Mayor Streeter also expressed the fear that the application will jeopardize the Town's chances at receiving the grant. Sidney Van Zandt of GOSA indicated that GOSA currently has an option on the property. Councilor Monteiro stated that the Town Council supports preservation of the property, but hopes that GOSA will continue to try to raise the necessary funds if they do not get the grant. Councilor Flax suggested there is a better chance of receiving the grant with two applications, and it would be better for GOSA to spend their money on open space rather than the Town paying for it. Additional discussion ensued on the merits of endorsing GOSA's application..

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 5 - Councilor Flax, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Sheets and Councilor Watson

Opposed: 4 - Mayor Streeter, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Kolnaski and Councilor Peruzzotti

The Mayor recessed the Committee of the Whole meeting at 8:13 p.m. to conduct the special meeting of the Town Council. The meeting reconvened at 8:26 p.m.

2010-0105 Change in Previously Authorized Board of Education CIP Project

Discussed

The Town Manager explained a request from Superintendent of Schools Paul Kadri to "re-purpose" funding that was approved in 2009 for video furnaces in the schools. The new proposal, which is similar to a subscription service, would accomplish the same goal, but by using a third party host for the videos. Although the proposal does not meet the current definition of a capital improvement project, the dollars have already been allocated and it may be appropriate for the Council to consider the request.

Councilor O'Beirne expressed his opposition to the proposal and feels this is a prime example of jumping on the latest technology before thinking it out. He suggested that the CIP funds be zeroed out and the Superintendent be asked to include it in his budget request next year along with an adequate analysis. The Councilors asked that Mr. Kadri be invited to a meeting to further explain his request.

2010-0100 Acceptance of a Portion of Great Brook Road

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

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0102 Acceptance of Pendleton Farm Lane

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

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0103 Acceptance of Open Space in Pendleton Farm Lane Subdivision

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

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0006 Joint Meeting with City of Groton (2010 Standing Referral)

Based on the Council's discussion with City officials during budget review, the Town Manager would like to set up a future meeting with the City of Groton to talk specifically about Thames Street. If there is going to be a referendum in November, the scope of the project needs to be identified. He suggested a meeting with the Thames Street Committee, the consultant, and City of Groton officials. Mayor Streeter requested a referendum schedule from the Town Clerk.

The Town Manager emphasized that the repair of the retaining walls damaged in the March flooding are a separate issue from how to proceed with the permanent rehabilitation of the road. Councilor Sheets asked about accessing FEMA funds for the Thames Street repairs and Mayor Streeter asked that all Councilors receive a copy of the Thames Street project plans for review. The Town Manager noted that the construction plans would not be useful for individual Councilors, but a workshop with the consultant may be. The Council asked the Town Manager to set up a meeting as soon as possible.

7. Consideration of Committee Referral Items as per Town Council Referral List

None.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

The Town Manager will not be in attendance at the May 11th Committee of the Whole meeting due to an RTM budget meeting conflict.

Mayor Streeter noted that Carol Kimball has a birthday coming up on May 14th and birthday cards can be addressed to the Fairview Odd Fellows Home.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Johnson, to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.