



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 Bruce Flax, Councilors Dean G. Antipas, Diane Barber, Greg Grim, Rich Moravsik, Karen F. Morton, Bonnie Nault, Deb Peruzzotti, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, May 9, 2017

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Flax called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Flax, Councilor Barber, Councilor Grim, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Morton, Councilor Nault and Councilor Moravsik
Members Absent: Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson

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

3. Calendar and Communications

Councilor Morton noted receipt of an e-mail from a resident who wanted to recharge their car at the Town Hall Annex, but the spaces were occupied by cars parked for a meeting. She asked residents to please respect the restriction to electric cars at the charging station.

Councilor Nault attended the public hearing on the Water Resource Protection District Zoning Regulation Amendment.

Councilors Barber and Nault attended a time capsule event at the Library on May 5th.

4. Approval of Minutes

2017-0119 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 March 30, 2017 and April 26, 2017 are hereby accepted and approved.

Discussed

Councilor Moravsik asked for a correction to the minutes of April 26th regarding the motion and discussion on #2017-0094 Vergennes Court Project. Councilor Antipas suggested that under the rules, this request may have to be referred to the Rules Committee. Councilors agreed to watch the videotape of the meeting and submit any suggested changes to the minutes for consideration at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

2017-0119 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 meeting of March 30, 2017 are hereby accepted and approved.

A motion was made by Councilor Antipas, seconded by Councilor Nault, to adopt.

The motion carried unanimously

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

2017-0116 FYE 2017 Contingency Transfer for AFSCME-Supervisors Wages

Discussed

Cindy Landry, Director of Finance, described the request for a transfer from Contingency for wage increases associated with the AFSCME Supervisors contract in the amount of \$8,182.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2017-0117 Connecticut Surface Transportation Block Grant - Thomas Road Multi-Use Path

Discussed

Town Manager Mark Oefinger explained that the SCCOG was recently advised by the State Department of Transportation that Enhancement Funding for the Thomas Road Multi-Use Path may not be available when the project is ready to be constructed, but there are funds available in the Connecticut Surface Transportation Block Grant. The new funding source will not change the funding of the project, but will allow DOT to choose which source to use for the project at the time of construction.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2017-0115 Interlocal Agreement for Regional Community Enhancement Task Force

Discussed

Police Chief L.J. Fusaro was present to request approval of an interlocal agreement for the Regional Community Enhancement Task Force. The agreement would allow Groton Town police officers and those from the cities of Groton and New London and the towns of Ledyard, Stonington, and Waterford to work together. The Council must authorize the agreement. The Town Attorney has indicated that a public hearing is not required for this agreement.

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

Councilor Antipas expressed concern that Groton could in effect be providing resources for another town. Chief Fusaro stated he does not feel that would be an issue, and the Town benefits from the agreement more than the other participating entities. In addition, there is a mutual aid agreement with the other towns that is already in place. Chief Fusaro explained the type of collaboration that takes place on the Task Force.

The motion carried unanimously

2017-0120 Office of Policy and Management Body-Worn Recording Equipment (BWRE) Reimbursement Grant

Discussed

Police Chief L.J. Fusaro explained that OPM issued a grant application for body-worn cameras a year ago. At the time, Chief Fusaro researched the grant and decided not to pursue it because of certain requirements attached to the grant. The Chief has now reconsidered. The grant for FYE 2017 would fund 100% of the equipment and the first year of a digital services contract. After the first year, the Town would need to fund the contract. The purchase must be made by June 30th. Other costs include annual maintenance, storage, and redaction tools.

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

Discussion followed on potential liability issues, preliminary cost estimates, the lifecycle of the

equipment, and alternatives and costs.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 6 - Councilor Barber, Councilor Grim, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Morton, Councilor Nault and Councilor Moravsik
Opposed: 1 - Mayor Flax

2017-0090 Combined Planning and Zoning Commission

Discussed

Director of Planning and Development Jon Reiner, Assistant Director Deb Jones and Town Attorney Mike Carey were present. Mr. Carey distributed a memorandum on the subject for the Committee's consideration. At a previous meeting where this item was discussed there were two unresolved issues: 1) establishing a Planning and Zoning Commission by resolution or ordinance; and 2) abolishing the existing commission(s) or appointing one commission or the other as the Planning and Zoning Commission. Mr. Carey noted that while the joint commission can be established by ordinance or resolution, the Council must appoint one commission or the other. Mr. Carey reviewed Charter requirements. He recommended that the joint commission be established by ordinance rather than resolution for a number of reasons. Mr. Carey expressed no preference as to which commission should be designated as the joint commission, and he noted the option of increasing the size of the commission.

Mr. Reiner explained that combining the commissions was recommended in the recent marketing study that was done for the Town. Mayor Flax questioned the mechanics of the action to designate one commission as the joint commission. Discussion followed on the increase in workload and whether existing commissioners would remain. Mr. Reiner suggested that staff's workload will not change much and applicants may save money by attending fewer meetings with their professionals.

A motion was made by Councilor Nault, seconded by Councilor Moravsik, to combine the Planning and Zoning Commissions by ordinance.

A motion was made by Councilor Antipas, seconded by Councilor Barber, to amend the motion to designate the Planning Commission as the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Discussion followed on the size of the Commission and possibly increasing it. Mr. Reiner expressed concern with increasing the size of the Commission.

A motion was made by Councilor Grim, seconded by Councilor Nault, to amend the motion to include language in the ordinance for a maximum of seven members with three alternates.

The second motion to amend carried unanimously.

The first motion to amend carried unanimously.

The motion carried unanimously

Councilor Antipas left the meeting.

Members Present: Mayor Flax, Councilor Barber, Councilor Grim, Councilor Morton, Councilor Nault and Councilor Moravsik

Members Absent: Councilor Antipas, Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson

2017-0128 Planning and Economic Development Project Funding Update for FYE 2017

Discussed

Director of Planning and Development Jon Reiner, Assistant Director Deb Jones and Manager of Economic and Community Development Paige Bronk were present to provide an updated on planning and economic development projects.

Mr. Reiner noted that a number of projects were deferred in the current year budget and the funds were used, along with salary savings, for the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) initiative. Additional

salary savings have been identified and Mr. Reiner would like the Council's endorsement to move forward with the following projects: Poquonnock Bridge design guidelines, wayfinding signs, economic development web site, and analysis and implementation of housing and economic development strategies. No additional funds outside of Planning and Development Services' budget are required.

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

Mr. Reiner explained the numbers and how funds for the projects were shifted to TIF. The Town Manager noted that the department head has the discretion to spend to the bottom line, but out of an abundance of caution Mr. Reiner is making sure that the Council is fully aware of how the operating budget is being spent.

Mayor Flax suggested asking the consultant on the housing and economic development strategies effort to examine the impact of education on the views of those moving into town.

The motion carried unanimously

Councilor Antipas returned to the meeting.

Members Present: Mayor Flax, Councilor Barber, Councilor Grim, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Morton, Councilor Nault and Councilor Moravsik
Members Absent: Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson

2017-0075 Disposition of William Seely School Property

Discussed

Town Manager Oefinger stated the intent to update the Town Council on discussions with real estate broker Lisa Whitney who was in attendance with Gretchen Chipperini.

A motion was made by Mayor Flax, seconded by Councilor Nault, to enter executive session at 7:47 p.m. to discuss the disposition of the William Seely School property and to invite Director of Planning and Development Jon Reiner, Assistant Director Deb Jones, Manager of Economic and Community Development Paige Bronk and Town Manager Mark Oefinger to attend.

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

Lisa Whitney entered the executive session at 8:20 p.m. and left at 8:55 p.m.

The executive session concluded at 9:00 p.m.

A special meeting of the Committee of the Whole was scheduled for May 16th at 6:00 p.m. to discuss this item.

2017-0113 Pfizer Local Community Grant - Senior Center

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

The motion carried unanimously

2017-0088 ARC Neighborhood Assistance Act Program Application (2017)

Discussed

The only Neighborhood Assistance Act Program application received was from ARC New London County, Inc. There were no comments at the public hearing held by the Council.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2017-0044 Town Manager Search Committee

A motion was made by Mayor Flax, seconded by Councilor Morton, to enter executive session at 9:09

p.m. to discuss the Town Manager search effort and to invite Director of Human Resources Bob Zagami to attend.

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

The executive session concluded at 9:33 p.m.

A motion was made by Councilor Barber, seconded by Councilor Nault, to authorize Mayor Bruce Flax to execute a written agreement reflecting the terms discussed in executive session with the selected candidate for the position of Town Manager subject to review by the Town Attorney and modifications within a reasonable scope.

The motion carried unanimously

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

None.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

A special meeting of the Committee of the Whole was scheduled for May 11th at 6:30 p.m. to discuss pending litigation with Odd Fellows.

Mayor Flax noted that the new Town Manager is expected to start on July 5th. Mayor Flax and the Council asked Town Manager Mark Oefinger to stay on until July 14th. Mr. Oefinger stated he is only available to stay until July 11th.

Councilor Grimm requested a referral on the Town's pension fund and Mayor Flax made the referral..

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Moravsik, seconded by Councilor Barber, to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.