



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 Rita M. Schmidt, Councilors Dean Antipas, Genevieve Cerf, Joe de la Cruz, Bruce S. Flax, Bob Frink, Rich Moravsik, Deborah L. Peruzzotti and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Schmidt called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mayor Schmidt, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Cerf, Councilor de la Cruz, Councilor Flax, Councilor Frink, Councilor Moravsik, Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson

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

3. **Calendar and Communications**

None.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

2015-0179 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 June 9, 2015 are hereby accepted and approved.

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

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 8 - Mayor Schmidt, Councilor Antipas, Councilor de la Cruz, Councilor Flax, Councilor Frink, Councilor Moravsik, Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson
Abstain: 1 - Councilor Cerf

5. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

2015-0178 Noank School Public Gardens Task Force Report

Discussed

Robert Palm, Chairman of the Noank School Public Gardens Task Force, provided a brief history of the property and project, and listed the members of Task Force. The Task Force has held off on doing any work at the site until demolition is completed. The ribbon cutting event in April was very successful. The group raised funds and currently has over 100 volunteers. Mr. Palm presented a conceptual plan for development of the gardens. One idea is to recreate the outline of the school in plants. Mr. Palm has met with Town staff regarding the provision of water to the site, which is the most urgent need; the group will pay for the public water. Mr. Palm reviewed the conceptual plan. The community garden planting will not occur until next spring 2016 due to the need for water. The initial planting of the orchard will take place in the fall.

Councilor Cerf expressed disappointment that no gardens will be planted this year. Mr. Palm explained that there can be no activity on the site until demolition is complete and water is

available. Town Manager Oefinger explained that the delay with the demolition has been weather related.

Councilor Frink questioned the adequacy of the parking lot. Mr. Palm explained that the parking lot is existing and it is not expected that all of the volunteers or potential visitors will show up to the site at the same time. Adriana Lublin, a member of the Task Force, added that there will be fewer people visiting the site on a daily basis than the school had. Students from the high school will be involved in whatever area of the site they are most interested in.

Councilor Moravsik asked about bathrooms. Mr. Palm acknowledged that bathrooms may be a long-term need, but structures on the site will require discussion with Noank Zoning. The focus is on what the group can do right now. Councilor Moravsik also asked about electrical service, lighting, and security fencing. The Town Manager noted that issues at the site will be addressed as they come up; not everything will happen in the first year or two. The group has made tremendous progress organizing and moving the concept forward.

Councilor Flax expressed his appreciation that the group is taking its time to create the plan thoughtfully. Councilor Antipas feels the group's focus is gardening, and the other issues being raised are amenities. He expressed confidence that the Council would consider extending the group's deadline for reevaluation of the project if the project is underway.

Discussion followed on specific areas of the site including the orchard, the children's garden, and the community garden.

Councilor de la Cruz stated that he likes the concept, but he is still concerned about the potential loss of revenue to the Town during tough budget times.

Mayor Schmidt thanked Mr. Palm for attending the meeting.

2015-0175 Odd Fellows Home of Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act Program Application (2015)

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

The motion carried unanimously

2015-0176 Groton Public Library Neighborhood Assistance Act Program Application (2015)

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

The motion carried unanimously

2015-0167 Noise Ordinance

Discussed and Recommended no action taken

Town Manager Oefinger provided a brief overview of previous noise ordinance discussions, which became an issue of restricting activities and the need for equipment, calibration, and training. Discussion followed on issues such as the blight ordinance versus a noise ordinance, and noise generated by residential versus commercial development.

The Town Manager stated he could query CCM regarding similar communities that have noise ordinances.

Discussion followed on the difficulty enforcing a noise ordinance, the appropriate use of staff time, and the impact on downtown Mystic.

A majority of the Council did not want to pursue a noise ordinance.

A motion was made by Councilor Cerf, seconded by Councilor Frink, to look into noise ordinance guidelines.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 2 - Councilor Cerf and Councilor Frink
Opposed: 7 - Mayor Schmidt, Councilor Antipas, Councilor de la Cruz, Councilor Flax, Councilor Moravsik, Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson

2015-0008 Joint Meeting with City of Groton (2015 Standing Referral)

Discussed

With respect to joint meetings with various groups, Councilors indicated that they would like to meet with all of the groups, and they mentioned topics of discussion. When queried by the Town Manager about whether to hold special meetings or to incorporate the joint meetings into regular meetings, Councilors made no decision.

2015-0009 Joint Meeting with Board of Education (2015 Standing Referral)

Discussed

See discussion under #2015-0008 Joint Meeting with City of Groton (2015 Standing Referral) in 6/23/15 Committee of the Whole minutes.

2015-0010 Joint Meeting with Groton Long Point Board of Directors (2015 Standing Referral)

Discussed

See discussion under #2015-0008 Joint Meeting with City of Groton (2015 Standing Referral) in 6/23/15 Committee of the Whole minutes.

2015-0011 Meeting with State Legislators (2015 Standing Referral)

Discussed

See discussion under #2015-0008 Joint Meeting with City of Groton (2015 Standing Referral) in 6/23/15 Committee of the Whole minutes.

2012-0050 Potential Disposition of William Seely School Property

Discussed

Town Manager Oefinger stated that there is nothing new to share on this item at this time.

2014-0164 Police Chief Recruitment

A motion was made by Councilor Moravsik, seconded by Councilor Watson, that members of the Town Council, along with Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Human Resources Director Robert Zagami, and Town Attorney Eileen Duggan go into executive session at 7:27 p.m. pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 1-200(6)(A) for the purpose of discussing the potential appointment of a candidate to a non-union position.

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

The executive session ended at 7:55 p.m.

2015-0177 Town Manager Annual Evaluation (2015)

The Town Manager was asked to submit a summary self-evaluation for the Council's consideration.

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

None.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.