



Town of Groton, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes

Town Council Committee of the Whole

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Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Mayor Bruce Flax, Councilors Dean G. Antipas, Diane Barber, Joe de la Cruz, Greg Grim, Karen F. Morton, Bonnie Nault, Deb Peruzzotti, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, July 26, 2016

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING - REVISED

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 de la Cruz
Members Absent: Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger (6:15 p.m.) and Executive Assistant Nicki Bresnyan.

3. **Calendar and Communications**

None.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

2016-0190 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 July 12, 2016 are hereby accepted and approved.

A motion was made by Councilor Nault, seconded by Councilor de la Cruz, to adopt.

The motion carried unanimously

5. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

2016-0181 Market Analysis Presentation

Discussed

Director of Planning and Development Services Jon Reiner and Community and Economic Development Manager Paige Bronk were present to make a PowerPoint presentation on the Market Analysis done for the Town. Copies of the report were previously distributed to Councilors. Mr. Reiner stated the purpose of the presentation is to discuss strategies and action steps.

Initiatives completed to date are the Market Analysis, Zoning and Subdivision Regulation audit, Plan of Conservation and Development update, and budgeting of funds. The Market Analysis provided information on industry trends, commuting patterns, and the residential market.

Councilor Watson arrived at 6:07 p.m.

Roll Call: Members Present: Mayor Flax, Councilor Barber, Councilor Grim, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Morton, Councilor Nault, Councilor de la Cruz and Councilor Watson
Members Absent: Councilor Peruzzotti

Discussed and Recommended no action taken

Mr. Bronk reviewed areas of job growth including ship and boat building, restaurants, financial and office, and healthcare. Electric Boat job growth is a factor to consider. Mr. Bronk noted industrial business market opportunities and challenges including the lack of infrastructure and ready to go commercial sites. Commuting patterns show that most of Groton's labor force lives outside of town. Residential market opportunities and challenges include an inadequate supply of rental housing.

Mr. Reiner and Mr. Bronk reviewed five key strategy areas: Route 1 redevelopment; quality of place; Route 117 Opportunity Area; incentives (risk reduction); public property redevelopment.

The action plan consists of four main projects: digital marketing; increasing collaboration; reinvigorating the built environment; and redefining how business is done. Mr. Reiner reviewed initiatives associated with the projects and prioritization.

Mr. Reiner and Mr. Bronk provided a brief overview of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and noted that a more in-depth presentation will be provided at a later date.

Mr. Reiner and Mr. Bronk responded to questions and comments from Town Councilors.

Discussion followed on including the Thames Street area in the report and highlighting Groton's education system.

2016-0193**Additional Resolution on Mystic Education Center Brownfield Grant****Discussed**

Jon Reiner, Director of Planning and Development, explained that the State Department of Economic and Community Development requires a specific resolution for the grant application submittal/acceptance that was previously approved by the Council. No details of the grant have changed.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2015-0178**Noank School Public Gardens Task Force Semiannual Report****Discussed**

Clint Wright submitted and read a report from the Noank School Public Gardens Task Force and passed around pictures of the site. The Task Force would like to add two members and they are recommending Eric Larson from Prospect Hill Road and a student from either Fitch High School or Grasso Tech. A September work day is scheduled including a pot luck dinner. The Task Force would also like to investigate the possibility of constructing a seasonal ice skating rink. Mr. Wright encouraged Councilors to walk the site and provide comments or suggestions.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Grim, to expand the Noank School Public Gardens Task Force from seven to nine members and make appointments as recommended by the Task Force.

Councilor Antipas clarified that the 9th position is reserved for a Fitch or Grasso Tech student. Mr. Wright addressed maintenance of the property and the level of effort needed. Councilor de la Cruz expressed his desire that the gardens not cost the Town any money.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0006**Labor Negotiations (2016 Standing Referral)**

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Nault, that the members of the Town Council, along with Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Director of Human Resources Bob Zagami, and Town Attorney Eileen Duggan go into executive session at 7:43 p.m. to discuss #2016-006 Labor

Negotiations.

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

Councilor Watson left the executive session at 8:10 p.m. The executive session concluded at 8:35 p.m.

Roll Call: Members Present: Mayor Flax, Councilor Barber, Councilor Grim, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Morton, Councilor Nault, Councilor de la Cruz and Councilor Peruzzotti
Members Absent: Councilor Watson

2016-0005 Pending Litigation (2016 Standing Referral)

A motion was made by Councilor Antipas, seconded by Councilor Nault, that the members of the Town Council Committee of the Whole, Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger, Groton Tax Assessor Mary Gardner, Director of Finance Cindy Landry, and Town Attorney Eric Callahan go into executive session at 8:41 p.m. pursuant to General Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B) for the purpose of discussing strategy and negotiations related to pending litigation and/or pending claims concerning the tax appeal filed by Odd Fellows Home of Connecticut, Inc. d/b/a Fairview.

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

The executive session concluded at 9:03 p.m.

2016-0192 Miscellaneous and Ad Hoc Committee Appointments - School Readiness

This matter was Recommended for a Resolution.

This issue was raised by Kevin Trejo of Children First Groton who asked that a Council representative attend the School Readiness Council meetings. The consensus was to appoint Councilor Harry Watson, who had previously expressed an interest in serving, as the Mayor's designee.

2016-0187 Library of America/National Endowment for the Humanities Grant

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

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0188 Groton Education Foundation Grant - Library

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

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0194 Town Council/Board of Education Joint Task Force on Shared Services

This matter was Recommended for a Resolution.

Mayor Flax noted that at the last joint meeting with the Board of Education, the groups discussed forming a joint task force on shared services. The Board of Education has suggested names and the Mayor requested volunteers. Councilors Morton and Grim and Mayor Flax volunteered to serve on the task force.

Mayor Flax will contact the Chairperson of the Board of Education.

2016-0007 Property Acquisition/Sale (2016 Standing Referral)

A motion was made by Mayor Flax, seconded by Councilor Barber, that the members of the Town Council, along with Town Manager Mark Oefinger, go into executive session at 9:20 p.m. to discuss the potential acquisition of a number of parcels pursuant to General Statutes Sec. 1-200(6)(D) and to discuss the sale/lease of a Town-owned parcel.

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

The executive session concluded at 9:50 p.m.

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

None.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Flax noted the City met last night regarding Branford Manor, and he asked for an update on the project. The Town Manager noted that there have been staff meetings with the City and representatives from Related, and a presentation is expected at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

Councilor Morton noted she has questions on the City Highway Budget report in the Weekly Status Report. She cited unexpended funds in the account even though the Town's funding is being held in escrow. The Town Manager noted that the City augmented the funding provided by the Town. Councilor Morton indicated she would provide additional information to the Council and Town Manager.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.