



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, September 26, 2017

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Flax called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

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

Also present were Town Manager John Burt and Assistant to the Town Manager Nicki Bresnyan.

3. Calendar and Communications

Councilor Morton reported that she attended the City Council meeting on September 9/18/17. She reported on the City Ethics Board findings and City residents' concerns with the recommendations of the Charter Revision Commission. It was also reported that no one at the Submarine Base has been notified of another BRAC rounds, and Groton is in good shape if one is scheduled.

Councilor Nault attended a State of Groton and Ledyard Chamber lunch meeting, a Chamber breakfast on a Pfizer update, and Senator Blumenthal's press conference.

Councilor Moravsik attended a USS Groton Sail meeting, a SEAT meeting, and a Board of Education meeting.

Mayor Flax noted a Submarine Base New London Joint Land Use Study open house at the Nautilus Memorial tomorrow. There will be an AOPA Fly-In event on 10/6 and 10/7, and they are seeking volunteers. Grasso Tech is collecting donations for Puerto Rico and the victims of hurricane Maria from 10/2 to 10/6.

Councilor Nault noted she attended a fundraiser for the Library at the Engine Room in Mystic.

Councilor Antipas has spoken with members of the fire districts regarding use of the former SCRRA building on Flanders Road. Many have an interest, but someone must broker the conversation between the fire districts and Public Works.

4. Approval of Minutes

2017-0213

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 September 12, 2017 are hereby accepted and approved.

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

The motion carried unanimously

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

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6. NEW BUSINESS

2017-0211 Presentation by Town's Actuary

Discussed

*Mayor Flax introduced the Town's Actuary, Tim Ryor of Hooker and Holcombe who will be presenting retirement plan options for new employees including a Defined Contribution plan and hybrid Defined Contribution/Defined Benefit plan.*

**A motion was made by Mayor Flax, seconded by Councilor Moravsik, that the Town Council Committee of the Whole, along with Town Manager John Burt, Human Resources Director Robert Zagami, Town Attorney Eileen Duggan and consulting actuary Timothy Ryor, go into executive session at 6:09 p.m. for the purpose of discussing strategy and/or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining and retirement benefit negotiations with multiple bargaining units. This action is taken without prejudice to the Committee's right to discuss these matters in a private meeting pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-200(2).**

**The motion carried unanimously**

Discussed

*The executive session concluded at 7:50 p.m.*

2017-0209 Contingency Transfer for Wage Increases

Discussed

*Cindy Landry, Director of Finance, described the request for a contingency transfer to cover wage increases for various labor unions and moving/wage expenses for the new Town Manager. She asked that this transfer be referred to the RTM under Rule 6.5.3 to expedite it.*

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

**The motion carried unanimously**

2017-0214 Modification of Retirement Plan for Non-Union Police Officers

Discussed

*Town Manager John Burt explained this request to modify the non-union police retirement plan to bump up retirement benefits for three non-union positions in the Police Department to address a compression factor with union police retirees.*

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

*Discussion followed on the details of the proposed modification, and the motion and second were withdrawn. Discussion was postponed until later in the meeting to allow Town Attorney Eileen Duggan and Director of Human Resources/Risk Management Bob Zagami to confer.*

*Later, Attorney Duggan clarified the existing provisions in the retirement plan and two options for the Council to consider for increasing the benefits. Mr. Zagami noted the intent was to mirror the language in the union pension plan, which would be his recommendation.*

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

**The motion carried unanimously**

2017-0210 Department of Transportation Easement - Route 1/Newtown Road

Discussed

*Mayor Flax explained this request from the State Department of Transportation for an easement on Route 1 in the vicinity of Newtown Road for a traffic signalization device. The State will pay*

*the Town \$500.*

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

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2017-0212**

**Filling the Office Assistant II, Assessment Position in the Finance Department**

**Discussed and Recommended no action taken**

*Town Manager Burt noted that a process has been put in place that requires the Town Manager and Town Council to sign off on the filling of any vacant positions. Cindy Landry, Director of Finance, explained the request to fill a front line position in the Assessor's Office. If not filled, the Assessor or Assistant Assessor must fill in.*

**A motion was made by Councilor Nault, seconded by Councilor Morton, to approve the filling of the Office Assistant II position in the Assessor's office as an exception to the hiring freeze.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

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

*None.*

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

*Councilor Watson requested a referral to the Personnel and Appointments Committee regarding a proposed Little League Tournament in the Town. The Mayor made the referral.*

*Councilor Nault suggested that Town Councilors should pay to attend the Martin Luther King, Jr. dinner and CCM convention rather than the Town. Discussion followed. Assistant to the Town Manager Bresnyan noted that the Town has for many years budgeted an amount which is considered a donation for the Martin Luther King Scholarship Trust Fund. If Councilors choose to go to the fundraising dinner, the Town has historically paid for Councilors, but not spouses or guests.*

*Councilor Nault would like a presentation from the USS Groton Sail Committee. Town Manager Burt noted that this has already been requested.*

*Councilor Antipas requested a referral to the Rules Committee to include presentations by department heads on the agenda.*

*Councilor Grim requested a referral on contributing to the City of Groton's cost (\$15,000) to draft a TIF policy for the Five Corners and Thames Street areas.*

*Town Manager Burt noted issues of regulatory concern with the use of the former SCRRA building by the fire districts, and stated he will continue to look at the issue.*

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion was made by Councilor Nault, seconded by Councilor Grimm, to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m.*

*The motion carried unanimously.*