



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, Joe de la Cruz, Greg Grim, Karen F. Morton, Bonnie Nault, Deb Peruzzotti, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Flax called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Flax, Councilor Barber, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Morton, Councilor de la Cruz and Councilor Watson

Members Absent: Councilor Grim, Councilor Nault and Councilor Peruzzotti

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

3. Calendar and Communications

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

None.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

6. NEW BUSINESS

2015-0289 Year Round Expanded DUI Enforcement Grant

Discussed

Police Chief L.J. Fusaro explained the grant is designed to target DUI offenses in the community by providing enhanced traffic enforcement and spot checks throughout the year, especially during holiday times. This is a recurring grant in the amount of \$64,500, including a \$16,125 match.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2015-0290 Electric Vehicles and Charging Stations Grant

Discussed

Town Manager Oefinger explained this grant opportunity, which is similar to the state's hybrid vehicle program. The grant pays for the delta between the cost of a gas powered vehicle and the cost of an electric vehicle. Funding is also available to pay for the installation of electric charging stations. At this time, staff is not sure of the timing of funding or the timing of planned passenger vehicle purchases.

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

Discussion followed on the purpose of the incentive program, long term investment in electric vehicles, and possible locations for the charging stations.

The motion carried unanimously

2015-0178 Noank School Public Gardens Task Force Semiannual Report

Discussed

Robert Palm, Noank School Public Gardens Task Force, read a presentation that provided background on the Task Force and its mission. He reviewed the main elements of the proposed gardens. Planting was delayed until demolition of the school building and provision of a water source by the Town. The cost of the water will be borne by the Task Force. Mr. Palm noted an opening ceremony held in the summer and a community planting event in November. The Task Force's emphasis continues to be on education and gardening rather than recreation. There are currently more than 80 volunteers and the group has received \$2,600 in donations.

For 2016, the work plan including planting early spring crops in March; planting 20 fruit trees in the orchard in April; and recreating the school outline in green in May. There will not be a lot of planting in the area of the school because of the poor quality of the fill material. Instead the group will plant in a composted trench around hardscape. In June, the Task Force will conduct fundraising and request permits for a storage shed. Harvesting will occur in the fall and surplus crops will be distributed. Clean up for the year takes place in November.

Mr. Palm addressed donation of the surplus, plans for bee demonstrations, water payment, veteran stone installation, and the group's commitment to organic principles moving forward.

2015-0286 Trails Coordinating Task Force - Update/Term Extension**Discussed**

Mark Berry, Director of Parks and Recreation, on behalf of the Trails Coordinating Task Force, asked the Town Council to extend the term limit of the Task Force. Mr. Berry reviewed goals and accomplishments of the Task Force and requested a three year extension.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2015-0006 Labor Negotiations (2015 Standing Referral)

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Antipas, that the members of the Town Council, together with Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Director of Human Resources Robert Zagami, Police Chief L.J. Fusaro, and Town Attorneys Eileen Duggan and Kristi Kelly go into executive session at 6:44 p.m. for the purpose of discussing strategy and/or negotiations with respect to 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 Section 1-200(2).

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

The executive session ended at 7:44 p.m. The Committee of the Whole recessed and reconvened at 7:52 p.m.

A motion was made by Councilor Barber, seconded by Councilor Watson, to approve the request for funds necessary to implement the agreement between the Town and Groton Municipal Employees Association/United Electrical Local 222, Connecticut Independent Labor Union Local 86, Inc., Affiliated with United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

The motion carried unanimously

Town Manager Oefinger asked the Committee of the Whole to add an item to the agenda regarding pending litigation.

2015-0005 Pending Litigation (2015 Standing Referral)

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Antipas, to add 2015-0005 Pending Litigation (2015 Standing Referral) to the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously

A motion was made by Mayor Flax, seconded by Councilor Watson, that members of the Town Council,

together with Town Manager Mark Oefinger and Town Attorneys Matthew Auger and Eileen Duggan go into executive session at 7:55 p.m. pursuant to General Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B) to discuss pending claims and/or litigation and to update the Council on the status of same.

The motion carried unanimously

Discussed

The executive session ended at 9:02 p.m.

2015-0285 Town Council Orientation

Discussed

Town Manager Oefinger distributed orientation binders to new Councilors and updates for returning Councilors. Orientation materials include a number of resource documents and an overview of department issues and projects. Discussion followed on the need to identify a time for a full Council orientation.

2015-0288 Town Attorney Appointment

Discussed

It was noted that the Town Council has 120 days from the date of the election to select a Town Attorney.

A motion was made by Councilor Barber, seconded by Councilor Antipas, to put the Town Attorney appointment out to bid.

Councilor Antipas distributed a Request for Proposals for Town Counsel Service for Groton, Massachusetts dated July 23, 2015. Councilor Watson suggested that the current Town Attorney be asked to make a presentation to the Council first. Councilor de la Cruz feels the issue should be debated by the full Council when all members are present. The consensus was to include the item on the next Committee of the Whole agenda and include information about issuing an RFP as well as a presentation by Suisman Shapiro.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Antipas, to postpone discussion of this item.

The motion carried unanimously

2015-0287 FOI Presentation by Tom Hennick on 12/15/15

Discussed

Town Manager Oefinger noted that Tom Hennick will be making an FOI presentation on December 15th at a special meeting of the Committee of the Whole.

2014-0202 City Highway Budget Committee - Update

Not Discussed

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

Recommended for Deletion:

2015-0018 Fishtown Road Pump Station Rehabilitation/Effluent Pump Station Refurbishment Bond Ordinance

Recommended for Deletion

2015-0216 Creation of Town Poet Laureate Position

Recommended for Deletion

8. OTHER BUSINESS

2015-0291 Local Prevention Council Grant for Ledge Light Health District

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor de la Cruz, to add Local Prevention Council Grant for Ledge Light Health District to agenda.

The motion carried unanimously

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

The motion carried unanimously

Councilor Marley-Barber asked for a referral to set up a Charter Revision Commission, and Mayor Flax noted that will be happening in the future.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Antipas, to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.