



Town of Groton, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes

Town Council Committee of the Whole

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Mayor Harry A. Watson, Councilors Peter J. Bartinik, Jr., Natalie Burfoot Billing, Heather Sherman Bond, Catherine Kolnaski, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Paulann H. Sheets, Thomas J. Skrmetti, and Elissa T. Wright.

Monday, July 19, 2004

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

SPECIAL MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Watson, Councilor Bartinik, Jr., Councilor Billing, Councilor Bond, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Sheets and Councilor Skrmetti
Members Absent: Councilor Wright

Mayor Watson reported that Councilor Wright called to say she was unable to attend the meeting.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent and Executive Assistant Nicki Bresnyan.

3. NEW BUSINESS

2003-0288 Town Council Goal Setting

Discussed

Facilitators Kevin Lopes and Craig Gilbert distributed a working document based on the last discussion. Mr. Gilbert noted two items not addressed during the last meeting are the City of Groton secession issue and local populace/town critical infrastructure protection/preparedness.

Mr. Lopes noted that mission statement items, as agreed upon by the Council, should cover a 10-year period. All goals should then fit within the mission statement, or the mission statement should be changed.

Mr. Lopes led the group in an exercise. He explained the difference between planning and organization. Planning is a process that works out in advance a certain way to do things, identifying the things you need to do to be successful in the future. Mr. Lopes asked Councilors to write down the top five things the Town Council should be planning.

Organization involves arranging the activities the Council has resolved to do in a way that completes the task and assigns the necessary resources. Mr. Lopes asked Councilors to write down the top five things the Town Council needs to organize in the short term.

The eight Councilors then broke into two groups of four to identify the same items as a group.

Items identified by the two teams are as follows:

Plans

Tax Reform (Local and State)

Balance quality of life vs. economic development

Balance quality of life and services vs. affordability

Maintenance of infrastructure

Draft ordinances with respect to protecting quality of life

Develop a strategic plan
Economic development
Protect environment
(security awareness)
Prudent fiscal management
Quality education Facility development

Organization (specific, attainable, measurable)

School facilities schedule

Charter revision

Set up expectations

Appoint commission

Report schedule

Status updates

Go/No Go

Mechanism to implement POCD

Revaluation process

Information to citizens before

Decide when

Choose company

Rules/contract?

Presentation plan

Address City secession issue

Council plan of action

Communicate expectations

Committee presentation?

Engage/lobby legislature

Implement Shellfish Task Force

Implement Watershed Commission

Improve communication

Influence interaction

Presentation of projects

Action item reports

Develop schedule/implement

Review for new Councilors

(Binder/presentations)

Councilor Bartinik left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Roll Call: Members Present: Mayor Watson, Councilor Billing, Councilor Bond, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Sheets and Councilor Skrmetti
Members Absent: Councilor Bartinik, Jr. and Councilor Wright

Discussed

Discussion followed on ways to update newly elected Councilors on issues. Councilors then discussed the revaluation process. The Town Manager noted that the most equitable revaluation is annual statistical revaluation.

Councilors indicated they were happy with the working document, noting the need to wordsmith. The group felt that #5 should be revised to add "protecting the environment" in place of "increasing property values", and #6 should be eliminated entirely.

The Council also wanted a new #1 goal indicating they support promoting the health, safety and general welfare of the community, and fostering public awareness and active participation in safeguarding the community.

The Council thanked Mr. Lopes and Mr. Gilbert for their help facilitating the sessions.

2004-0241

Expanding Permanent School Building Committee Membership

Discussed and Recommended no action taken

Councilor Sheets noted that problems getting a quorum at the Permanent School Building Committee meetings. Since the Town is undertaking a multi-year project, she feels that expanding the Committee will provide protection against vacancies that will occur.

Rick Norris, Chairman of the Permanent School Building Committee, noted that it would be up to the Committee to decide how to use their alternates in the absence of regular members.

A motion was made by Councilor Sheets, seconded by Councilor Bond, to adopt a change in the Permanent School Building Committee membership to add two alternate positions.

Councilor O'Beirne expressed concern that the committee would become unwieldy if it were nine members. Councilor Billing concurred noting that a larger committee could bog down the process.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 2 - Councilor Bond and Councilor Sheets

Opposed: 5 - Mayor Watson, Councilor Billing, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr. and Councilor Skrmetti

4. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Councilor Sheets, seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, to adjourn at 8:25 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.