



# 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 Harry A. Watson, Councilors Peter J. Bartinik, Jr., Heather Sherman Bond, Catherine Kolnaski, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Rita M. Schmidt, John F. Scott, Paulann H. Sheets, and James L. Streeter.*

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Tuesday, October 9, 2007

6:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

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#### SPECIAL MEETING

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

*Mayor Watson called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.*

2. **ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mayor Watson, Councilor Bartinik, Jr., Councilor Bond, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Sheets and Councilor Streeter

Members Absent: Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Schmidt and Councilor Scott

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

3. **Calendar and Communications**

*None.*

4. **Approval of Minutes**

**2007-0236 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 of October 2, 2007 are hereby accepted and approved.

**A motion was made by Councilor Streeter, seconded by Councilor Bond, to adopt.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

**2007-0072 Citizen Committee on Property Tax Relief - Update**

**Discussed**

*Councilor Bond asked that this item be considered at a later date to allow her more time to review the Committee's proposal.*

**2003-0198 Public Water & Sewer on Flanders Road/Industrial area**

**Discussed**

*Councilor Bond, Chairman of the Flanders Road Utilities Extension Committee, noted that the Committee has been meeting since July and has identified the routes with the greatest cost benefit to the Town. The Committee is currently exploring water extension options and funding options including phasing. The next meeting is October 29th.*

*Discussion followed on the differences between the current efforts of the Committee and the efforts of the consultants that prepared the study.*

**2007-0011 Joint Meeting with Board of Education (2007 Standing Referral)**

**Discussed**

*The Town Manager noted this meeting will likely not happen until the new Council is elected.*

**2007-0140 Town Property at Buddington/Old Buddington Roads****Discussed**

*This item was re-referred to the Committee of the Whole. The Town Manager has not yet received a suggestion from the Town Attorney on how to proceed. Town Manager Oefinger briefly reviewed possible options and further discussion was tabled to the next meeting.*

*Councilors Kolnaski and Schmidt arrived at 6:50 p.m.*

**2007-0238 Groton Heights School Reuse Task Force - Update****Discussed**

*Councilor Kolnaski was appointed to sit on the Committee.*

**2007-0007 Pending Litigation (2007 Standing Referral)**

**A motion was made by Councilor Sheets, seconded by Councilor Bond, to enter executive session at 6:55 p.m. to discuss pending litigation and to invite the Town Manager, Gary Schneider, and Town Attorney Eileen Duggan to attend.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

*The executive session ended at 7:39 p.m.*

**2007-0027 Burnett's Corners****Discussed**

*Town Manager Oefinger met with Jim Mitchell of the Burnett's Corners Preservation Society. Mr. Mitchell thought the Council had taken an action in the 1990s removing the property reversion clause, but there is no evidence to support that claim. The Public Works Committee previously reviewed the status of the project, but they requested further documentation from the Society, which was never received. A year or two later, a fire occurred in the structure, which prompted the engineering assessment.*

*Mayor Watson noted that the Council has started the process to reclaim the property.*

*Mr. Mitchell addressed the Council and apologized for not appearing before the Council sooner. He noted the Preservation Society is still alive, and the action that the Council has taken has renewed interest in the preservation effort. Mr. Mitchell asked the Council to reconsider its actions with respect to tearing down this historical structure. He noted there is a question of whether or not the building can be preserved and Mr. Mitchell asked for time to come back with a preservation plan for the Council's review. Mr. Mitchell introduced Bill Fossum who is responsible for the historic buildings in Ledyard.*

*Mr. Fossum, Chairman of the Ledyard Historic District Commission, noted that the historic districts in Ledyard are owned by the Town. Mr. Fossum recently restored Ledyard Center School and he feels the building in Burnett's Corners is in better shape than the Ledyard Center School. Mr. Fossum presented a series of photographs of the school building and described its condition as well as the extent of the work required to restore the building. He also reviewed funding sources. Mr. Fossum talked about his interest in preserving the Burnett's Corners property.*

*Mr. Mitchell asked for about six months to explore costs and contractor availability. Councilor Streeter suggested this will be a long term project and volunteers leave over time. He suggested three months. Councilor Sheets questioned the safety of the structure. Mr. Mitchell stated the condition of the building is no different than 10 years ago.*

*Mr. Mitchell responded to questions noting that there are approximately six members in the Preservation Society and some funding is available to the group. Mr. Fossum stated the cost to restore the Ledyard Center School was \$25,000 to \$35,000 and it took eight years.*

*Councilor O'Beirne noted an agreement a number of years ago to secure the building, but it has been wide open for some time. Mr. Mitchell stated the building has been closed off. Councilor Schmidt questioned the Town's liability.*

*The consensus of the Committee was to set a February 1st deadline, if the building is immediately closed off and secured, to allow Mr. Mitchell to present a plan showing estimated costs, a preservation plan, and timeframe.*

**2007-0237 Property Acquisition/Sale (2007 Standing Referral)**

**A motion was made by Mayor Watson, seconded by Councilor Bond, to enter executive session at 8:12 p.m. and invite the Town Manager to attend.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

*The executive session concluded at 8:35 p.m.*

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

*None.*

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion was made by Councilor Bond, seconded by Councilor Streeter, to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.*

*The motion carried unanimously.*