



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Representative Town Meeting

Moderator Kevin Power, Representatives Jean-Claude Ambroise, Joe Baril, Nancy E. Barnhart, Alicia Bauer, Nancy E. Beckwith, Michael Collins, Nancy M. Congdon, Warren T. Cooper, Luanne E. DeMatto, Syma Ebbin, Peter Fairbank, Nancy E. Gilly, Patrice Granatosky, Dolores Harrell, Keith L. Hedrick, Lynn Crockett Hubbard, Michael Dean Johnson, Rosanne E. Kotowski, Elizabeth Luck, Jackie Massett, Carole McCarthy, Roscoe Merritt, Constance Miller, Karen F. Morton, Scott Newsome, Dana C. Parfitt, Richard J. Pasqualini, Jr., Tim Plungis, Kristen L. Powers, Don Pratt, Betty A. Prochaska, John F. Scott IV, Jack Sebastian, Dana S. Semeraro, Joan Steinfeld, Irma Streeter, Mark Svencer, Archie C. Swindell, Robert A. Warn and Lori A. Watrous

Thursday, April 28, 2011

7:00 PM

Groton Senior Center

ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING

A. ROLL CALL

Moderator Kevin Power called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

31 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

The Moderator reported that Reps. Beckwith, Collins, Sebastian and Swindell called to say they are unable to attend this meeting. He stated that Rep. Beckwith will be absent on May 4, 9, 11 and 16 and that Rep. Barnhart will be absent on May 4 and 9.

Members Present: Moderator Power, Rep. Ambroise, Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Congdon, Rep. Cooper, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Hubbard, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Luck, Rep. Massett, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Miller, Rep. Morton, Rep. Parfitt, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. Plungis, Rep. Powers, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Prochaska, Rep. Scott, Rep. Semeraro, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter and Rep. Warn

Members Absent: Rep. Bauer, Rep. Beckwith, Rep. Collins, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Svencer and Rep. Swindell

(Rep. Lori Watrous was elected prior to the regular RTM meeting on May 11, 2011; her name does not appear in roll calls or votes for sessions prior to that date.)

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Town Councilor Bill Johnson, City Councilor Marian Galbraith, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

B. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The members observed a moment of silence followed by the Salute to the Flag led by Rep. Pasqualini.

C. CALL OF THE MEETING

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher read the Call of the Meeting.

2011-0078 Annual RTM Budget Meeting

RESOLUTION SETTING RTM BUDGET MEETING DATE ON THE 2011-2012 ANNUAL TOWN BUDGET

WHEREAS, Section 9.3.1 of the Groton Town Charter requires that the Town Council determine the date for the annual budget meeting of the Representative Town Meeting, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Annual Budget Meeting of the Representative Town Meeting will be held on Thursday April 28, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at the Groton Senior Center, Newtown Road, Groton, Connecticut.

D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

Louise Hoffman, 114 Irving Street, Mystic, asked the RTM to approve the Mystic & Noank Library full budget funding request. She feels that Groton's three libraries each provide unique and various services to the community. She appealed for full funding, stating this will allow the Mystic & Noank Library to restore Thursday hours that were cut due to the reduction in funding approved by the RTM last year.

Jane Brannegan, 15 Gravel Street, Mystic, spoke about the increased use of the Mystic & Noank Library by residents for computers, movies and best-sellers due to the tough economic times. She stated that the staff and Friends of the Library diligently work on various fund-raisers, but it is not enough to make up for last year's budget cut.

John Porter, 20 Bank Street, Mystic, requested approval of \$186,000, so that full services can be restored by the library.

John Heller, 19 Packer Lane, Mystic, asked the RTM to approve the Council's figure for the Education account. He stated that he favors the Phase II Plan and feels it is what the community should be doing to improve education in Groton.

Vincent Galante, 305 Judson Avenue, Mystic, spoke on behalf of the residents of Judson Avenue concerning the long-term drainage problems and damage to resident vehicles and homes. He noted that the problem worsened when the Town approved two additional housing developments to the north and south of Judson Avenue without any improvements to the storm water drainage system. He reported that an engineering study was completed that recommends improvements to the drainage system to resolve the problems. He noted that Phase II construction at Claude Chester will also impact the already over-burdened system. He asked the RTM to approve the CIP account for Judson Avenue drainage so work can begin.

Richard Semeraro, 202 High Street, Mystic, wants a no tax increase budget. He asked for no wage increases for any employees. He urged the three police departments to consider merging and is upset that nothing was accomplished subsequent to the budget proceedings of last year. He feels that if New York City can merge its departments, it should be possible for Groton. He asked for reductions in the budget requests of all three police departments.

Robert Beaulieu, 250 Elm Street, Noank, feels that the Board of Education (BOE) budget is realistic if the Phase II plan passes. He stated that Phase II will provide education budget savings for years to come.

Kevin Trejo, 536 Shennecossett Road, asked for a zero tax increase this year. He noted that many residents and senior citizens can't afford any tax increase due to the current economic crisis. He does not see any benefits to the community from the tax increase with this budget proposal. He stated that the BOE should be held to a zero increase.

Lorraine Santangelo, 331 Tyler Avenue, spoke on behalf of the Jabez Smith House Committee for which she serves as chairman. She identified the needs of the house and explained what the CIP funding would be used for.

Bill Gill, 140 Irving Street, Mystic, stated that he chose his residence because it is within walking distance of a library. He strongly supports full funding of the Mystic & Noank Library because he feels that it is vital to the health and well-being of the community and offers lifetime learning opportunities. He feels it was spiteful of the RTM to reduce Groton's funding last year based on the failure of Stonington to pay its fair share.

Neil Gardner, 111 Mitchell Street, urged the RTM to cut the budget so there is no tax increase and

noted that they are representatives of the people who elected them. He feels that residents can't afford the current government and asked that non-essential items be cut.

Michael Kane, 51 Jupiter Point Road, asked the RTM to support the Council figure for the Education budget. He feels it is important that Groton have the best education system possible.

Beth Tillman, 925 River Road, Mystic, requested the RTM to approve the funding for the Eastern Connecticut Symphony which is the last cultural item in the Town budget. She talked about the history of funding the arts from ancient times to the present and cited the benefits to the community.

Natalie Billing, 15 Ashby St., Mystic, asked the members to consider whether they believe that this budget would be approved at a town-wide budget referendum. She feels that it would not, since the tax increase is significant. She suggested that the RTM consider a modest 1% reduction in all accounts; no contributions to fund balances; closing one middle school regardless of the referendum results; no new positions; elimination of the videographer for education channel 19; and no expansion of pre-kindergarten and full-day kindergarten, since it is not mandated. She requested that the same standard be applied to Town Operations, subdivision and BOE budgets in regard to funding and no employee wage increases. She stated that if the RTM does not reduce this budget, it may be reasonable to support changing the Town Charter to include a budget referendum.

Stephen Alfield, 47 Somerset Drive, Mystic, addressed the concerns of long-term flooding and damage to homes in this area. He noted that improvements are recommended by the Town engineering study to improve the inadequate storm drainage system. He stated that the problem worsened when additional housing units were approved by the Town without improvements to the existing problematic system. He asked the RTM to approve the CIP for Judson Avenue drainage.

Michael Kononchik, 259 Judson Avenue, Mystic, echoed the sentiments of Mr. Alfield and asked the RTM to approve the funding that is necessary to correct the constant flooding in this area.

E. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

2011-0090 FYE 2011 Fourth Quarter Transfers

This matter was Referred to the RTM Finance Committee, due back on June 8, 2011.

2011-0096 Reauthorization of Water Pollution Control Facility Additions and Improvements

This matter was Referred to the RTM Finance Committee, due back on June 8, 2011.

F. BUDGET UPDATE/DISCUSSION

None.

G. COMMITTEE REPORTS

RULES & PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

Chairman Scott read the minutes of the meeting held on April 20, 2011. (Minutes are on file.) Motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Johnson and so voted unanimously.

Account 1001 - Legislative Policy

A MOTION for \$44,572 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Johnson.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$43,436 was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. Kotowski's rationale is that the RTM should start making reductions in this account since it includes the expenses for Town Council and RTM.

In response to the Town Manager, Moderator Power stated it is not up to the RTM to direct the

Town Manager what to cut in an account.

The vote on the amendment of \$43,436 carried 27 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. DeMatto, Ebbin, Scott and Steinfeld.)

Account 1006 - Legal Services

A MOTION for \$422,950 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Johnson.

The Town Manager answered questions about possible arbitration with subdivisions and the expiration of union contracts.

The vote on \$422,950 carried unanimously.

Account 1010 - Executive Management

A motion for \$293,133 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Luck and so voted unanimously.

Suspension of the Rules

A motion to suspend the rules to consider additional accounts was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Luck. A two-thirds vote is required.

The vote to suspend the rules was defeated 19 in favor, 12 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ambroise, Barnhart, Congdon, DeMatto, Ebbin, Gilly, Granatosky, Hedrick, Johnson, Luck, Massett, McCarthy, Miller, Parfitt, Powers, Prochaska, Scott, Semeraro, and Steinfeld. Opposed: Reps. Baril, Cooper, Hubbard, Kotowski, Merritt, Morton, Pasqualini, Plungis, Pratt, Streeter, Warn, and Power.)

At 8:25 p.m., the Moderator recessed the meeting until May 4, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

Budget Session - Wednesday, May 4, 2011

Moderator Kevin Power called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

36 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

Members Present: Moderator Power, Rep. Ambroise, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Collins, Rep. Congdon, Rep. Cooper, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Hubbard, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Luck, Rep. Massett, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Miller, Rep. Morton, Rep. Parfitt, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. Plungis, Rep. Powers, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Prochaska, Rep. Scott, Rep. Semeraro, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Swindell and Rep. Warn

Members Absent: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Beckwith, Rep. Newsome and Rep. Svencer

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Town Police Chief Kelly Fogg, Deputy Chief Michael Crowley, Captain Steve Smith, Parks & Recreation Director John Silsby, Parks & Recreation staff, City Mayor Dennis Popp, City Mayor-Elect Marian Galbraith, City Police Chief Bruno Giuliani, City Finance Director Michael Hillsberg, Groton Long Point President Bob Congdon, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Chairman Parfitt read the minutes of the meeting held on April 25, 2011. (Minutes are on file.)

A Motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Parfitt, seconded by Rep. Pasqualini and so voted unanimously.

Account 1024 - Public Safety

A MOTION for \$6,399,815 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Parfitt, seconded by Rep. Pasqualini.

Rep. Parfitt noted that the Council restored \$80,000 to this account subsequent to the committee

meeting to provide funds for community policing.

Rep. Plungis requested a Republican caucus at 7:17 pm. The meeting reconvened at 7:49 p.m.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,369,166 was made by Rep. Plungis, seconded by Rep. Kotowski. Rep. Plungis's rationale is to move the FYE2011 figure with a modest reduction of \$30,000 which he feels is reasonable.

Chief Fogg noted that the committee figure eliminated community policing and the additional reduction of \$30,000 would impact other items in this budget.

Members discussed the impact of eliminating the Poquonnock Bridge community policing program and the effectiveness, merits, costs and quantitative data measuring the usefulness of the DARE program.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,479,815 was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded by Rep. Pasqualini. Rep. Sebastian's rationale is to move the Council's figure that restored \$80,000 for community policing which he supports wholeheartedly.

Chief Fogg enumerated the various benefits of the DARE program.

Rep. Kotowski voiced her support for the amended figure of \$6,369,166. She feels that modest reductions to accounts are necessary based on the loss of State revenue and to prevent an increase in taxes.

Discussion continued on what services would be eliminated with the first amended figure of \$6,369,166.

The vote on the amendment of \$6,479,815 was defeated 11 in favor, 25 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Bauer, Collins, Cooper, Merritt, Pratt, Prochaska, Sebastian, Scott, Steinfeld and Streeter.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,392,358 was made by Rep. Ambroise, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. Ambroise stated that reductions must be shared by all employees and that changes are needed in contractual agreements. He is recommending salary reductions to several administrative positions and elimination of longevity payments.

The vote on the amendment of \$6,392,358 was defeated 15 in favor, 21 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ambroise, Collins, Congdon, DeMatto, Ebbin, Granatosky, Luck, Massett, McCarthy, Powers, Prochaska, Scott, Semeraro, Steinfeld and Swindell.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,435,486 was made by Rep. Baril, seconded by Rep. Granatosky. Rep. Baril stated that this figure would restore community policing which is vital to the constituents of District 1. He noted the numerous improvements since the inception of the program in the Poquonnock Bridge area.

Rep. Sebastian supports Rep. Baril's amendment. He feels that it would provide a safer neighborhood and an increased sense of security for the public biking and walking trails that pass through this area.

The vote on the amendment of \$6,435,486 was defeated 17 in favor, 19 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Bauer, Collins, Congdon, Ebbin, Granatosky, Harrell, Massett, McCarthy, Merritt, Powers, Pratt, Prochaska, Scott, Sebastian, Streeter and Steinfeld.)

Rep. Ambroise stated he will not support the amended figure of \$6,369,166, since it would reduce

the number of patrolmen due to the costs of the collective bargaining agreements.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,398,000 was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Harrell. No rationale was provided.

Rep. Granatosky will support this amended figure. She commented on Rep. Baril's admirable fight for his constituents and Rep. Sebastian's support for Poquonnock Bridge community policing.

The Town Manager clarified that this figure would not address Poquonnock Bridge community policing since it is \$1,000 less than the Town Council's first approved number prior to its reconsideration of this account.

Discussion continued about changes in the budget over the last decade and the effects on community policing.

The vote on the amendment of \$6,398,000 was defeated 13 in favor, 23 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ambroise, Congdon, DeMatto, Ebbin, Granatosky, Harrell, McCarthy, Pasqualini, Pratt, Sebastian, Steinfeld, Swindell and Power.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,408,815 was made by Rep. Scott, seconded Rep. Granatosky. Rep. Scott suggested that if this figure is approved, money from professional development and the DARE program can be re-allocated to restore Poquonnock Bridge community policing.

Members discussed the State requirements for police certifications and training to reduce the Town's liability insurance. The Police Chief will decide where reductions are made in services or personnel.

The vote on the amendment of \$6,408,815 was defeated 13 in favor, 23 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Bauer, Congdon, Ebbin, Granatosky, McCarthy, Merritt, Powers, Prochaska, Pratt, Scott, Sebastian, and Steinfeld.)

The vote on the amendment of \$6,369,166 was defeated 14 in favor, 22 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Fairbank, Gilly, Harrell, Hedrick, Hubbard, Johnson, Kotowski, Massett, Morton, Parfitt, Plungis, Prochaska, Warn and Power.)

The vote on \$6,399,815 carried 27 in favor, 9 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Baril, Harrell, Hedrick, Hubbard, Johnson, Kotowski, Plungis, Steinfeld and Power.)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chairman Hedrick read the minutes of the meetings held on April 21 and April 26, 2011. (Minutes are on file.)

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Sebastian and so voted unanimously.

Chairman Hedrick clarified the committee actions for both the City of Groton and Groton Long Point highway accounts.

There was consensus for a short recess at 8:53 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 9:03 p.m.

Republican Floor Leader Massett requested a caucus at 9:04 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 9:30 p.m.

Account 10900 - City of Groton Police

A motion for \$2,311,480 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Parfitt.

The Moderator noted that restoration of funding to this account requires a two-thirds vote.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$2,221,752 was made by Rep. Gilly, seconded by Rep. Johnson. This is the figure approved by the Town Council.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$2,195,906 was made by Rep. Pasqualini, seconded by Rep. Parfitt. Rep. Pasqualini explained this is a 5% decrease since this account has increased approximately 7% over the last two years while the Town Police account has decreased.

Rep. Granatosky will be supporting the committee figure. She stated that the City's budget differs from the Town's since it includes benefits, insurance and Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) in the police account.

The vote on \$2,195,906 was defeated 15 in favor, 21 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Cooper, Fairbank, Gilly, Hubbard, Johnson, Kotowski, Massett, Morton, Parfitt, Pasqualini, Plungis, Power, Pratt, Prochaska, and Warn.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Semeraro, seconded by Rep. Cooper. Rep. Semeraro's rationale is that the Groton Long Point police account was reduced to \$0 last year and there has not been significant action taken on the study to assess the need for three individual police departments.

Members commented on the requirements of the Town, City and Groton Long Point Charters, differences in the demographic areas of the three police departments, and levels of service.

Rep. Collins will not support this amendment. He feel this is a drastic reduction that is short-sighted due to the number of police actions in the City versus the Town.

City Mayor Popp and Mayor-Elect Galbraith addressed the differences in police standards, patrol districts and amount of police activity between the City and the Town. Ms. Galbraith cited figures for police activity and spending for the City versus the Town.

Rep. Cooper does not support funding three individual police departments.

Members discussed the statistics provided, the Town's cost to provide police protection to the City, the need for efficiency in providing police protection to all residents, and consolidation of police services.

The fact that the police study has not been completed was addressed by the Town Manager.

Moderator Power cautioned that this is a budget discussion and not a discussion about consolidation of police services or the Charters of the City of Groton, Groton Long Point and the Town.

Rep. Cooper will support the figure of \$0 due to the tough economic times.

Rep. Swindell opposes the figure of \$0 since the Town police budget has already been approved without money to provide any police service to the City.

The Moderator explained that accounts can be revisited.

The vote on the amendment of \$0 was defeated 5 in favor, 31 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Cooper, Kotowski, Plungis, Semeraro, and Warn.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$2,308,367 was made by Rep. Ambrose, seconded by Rep. Granatosky. Rep. Ambrose stated that this figure represents a decrease in the police chief's salary as an

example in order to obtain concessions from collective bargaining units.

Several members commented on how to determine if a motion is frivolous.

The Town Manager noted that the Council figure reflects a reduction due to redundant City police dispatch service.

The vote on \$2,308,367 was defeated 10 in favor, 26 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ambroise, Baril, Collins, Ebbin, Granatosky, Hedrick, McCarthy, Powers, Scott and Sebastian.)

Members discussed the duties and salaries of City dispatchers.

The vote on \$2,221,752 carried 21 in favor, 16 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Ambroise, Baril, Bauer, Collins, Congdon, Cooper, Ebbin, Granatosky, Harrell, Hedrick, Luck, McCarthy, Merritt, Powers, Sebastian and Steinfeld.)

Account 10901 - City of Groton Highway Maintenance

A motion for \$1,935,422 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,900,000 was made by Rep. Gilly, seconded by Rep. Kotowski. The Town Manager explained the procedure for approval of City and Groton Long Point highway maintenance accounts and stated that the RTM has no authority to change the Council figure.

Rep. Gilly withdrew her motion.

The vote on \$1,935,422 carried 28 in favor, 1 opposed, 7 abstaining. (Opposed: Rep. Power, Abstaining: Reps. DeMatto, Ebbin, Fairbank, Gilly, Johnson, Kotowski and Plungis.)

Account 10904 - City of Groton Street Lighting

A motion for \$111,457 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Johnson.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$109,224 was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Johnson. Rep. Kotowski stated that this is last year's figure.

Rep. Granatosky will not support the amended figure because it would affect street lighting after a reduction in the City police account. She feels this could affect the safety of City residents.

Rep. Ambroise supports the amendment since he feels there are a significant number of street lights that could be eliminated without affecting public safety.

The vote on the amendment of \$109,224 was defeated 17 in favor, 19 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ambroise, Cooper, Gilly, Harrell, Hubbard, Johnson, Kotowski, Miller, Morton, Parfitt, Pasqualini, Plungis, Prochaska, Scott, Semeraro, Warn and Power.)

The vote on \$111,457 carried 27 in favor, 9 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Ambroise, Harrell, Hubbard, Johnson, Kotowski, Parfitt, Plungis, Prochaska and Semeraro.)

MOTION TO RECESS until Monday, May 9, 2011 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Luck.

Moderator Power stated that City of Groton officials will not be available on Monday, May 9. He commented that the remainder of the accounts scheduled for this meeting would also have to be rescheduled. He reminded members that the RTM must complete its deliberations by midnight on

May 25, so comments may be limited in subsequent budget sessions.

The vote to recess was defeated 17 in favor, 18 opposed, 1 abstention. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Bauer, Collins, Ebbin, Fairbank, Granatosky, Harrell, Luck, Merritt, Miller, Pasqualini, Powers, Pratt, Prochaska, Sebastian, Swindell and Warn, Abstaining: Rep. Cooper.)

Rep. Fairbank left at 10:20 p.m.

There was consensus to continue with the remaining accounts.

Total for Account 1090 - City of Groton: \$4,268,631

Capital Item - Pavement Management Program Implementation - City

A motion for \$420,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Granatosky.

Rep. Hedrick explained the handout concerning this account that was distributed prior to this meeting.

MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Ebbin.

POINT OF ORDER was raised by Rep. Ambroise, that ten minutes of discussion had not elapsed since discussion began.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Plungis, seconded by Rep. Johnson.

Democratic Floor Leader Granatosky requested a caucus at 10:22 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 10:30 p.m.

MOTION TO RECESS was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded by Rep. Harrell.

POINT OF ORDER was raised by Rep. Hedrick that a motion is on the floor.

The vote to recess was defeated 2 in favor, 33 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Harrell and Sebastian.)

Rep. DeMatto supports the figure of \$0 since all Town paving projects have been reduced to \$0.

The vote on the amendment of \$0 carried 29 in favor, 6 Opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Baril, Collins, Granatosky, Hedrick, Merritt and Sebastian.)

Capital Item - Thames Street Retaining Wall Project

A motion for \$1,208,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

In response to members' questions on eliminating the use of Capital Reserve Funds, the Town Manager explained that this retaining wall repair is not part of the Thames Street Rehabilitation Project. He noted that the project is receiving matching federal funds due to the catastrophic failure in March 2010, and that the Town's contribution must be made or the federal funding will be lost.

The vote on \$1,208,000 carried unanimously.

MOTION TO RECESS was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded by Rep. Baril.

The vote to recess was defeated 16 in favor, 19 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Bauer, Collins, Cooper, Harrell, Massett, Merritt, Miller, Pasqualini, Pratt, Prochaska, Sebastian, Steinfeld, Streeter, Swindell and Warn.)

Account 10910 - Groton Long Point Police

A motion for \$208,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Granatosky.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Semeraro. This is last year's budget figure. Rep. Scott stated that funding for police service should have been included in the Town Police account, resulting in significant savings to Groton Long Point residents and providing the same police protection that all other residents of the Town receive.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$200,500 was made by Rep. Ambrose, seconded by Rep. Pratt. This reduction reflects the cost of uniforms for the Groton Long Point police force.

The vote on the amendment of \$200,500 carried 20 in favor, 15 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Bauer, Cooper, Gilly, Harrell, Hubbard, Kotowski, Luck, Morton, Parfitt, Pasqualini, Plungis, Scott, Semeraro, Steinfeld and Warn.)

Account 10911- Groton Long Point Highway Maintenance

A motion for \$152,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

The vote on \$152,500 carried 32 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions. (Opposed: Rep. Power. Abstaining: Reps. Ebbin and Plungis.)

Account 10912 - Groton Long Point Street Lighting

A motion for \$13,649 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$13,429 was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Semeraro. Moderator Power ruled this a frivolous motion due to the amount.

Rep. Plungis stated that this figure is the adjusted FY2011 figure. Moderator Power retracted his ruling.

Members discussed the criteria for ruling a motion frivolous. Moderator Power noted that he uses \$100.00 as the standard.

The vote on the amendment of \$13,429 carried 23 in favor, 12 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Collins, Congdon, Ebbin, Granatosky, Hedrick, Luck, Merritt, Miller, Powers, Sebastian, Scott and Steinfeld.)

Total for Account 1091 - Groton Long Point: \$366,429**Capital Item - Pavement Management Program Implementation - Groton Long Point**

A motion for \$110,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Parfitt.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Ambrose, seconded by Rep. DeMatto. Rep. Ambrose stated that this is the Council's figure and it would be a fair reduction since the Town and City CIP pavement management accounts have been reduced to \$0.

The vote on the amendment of \$0 carried 30 in favor, 5 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Collins, Congdon, Granatosky, Sebastian and Steinfeld.)

Capital Item - Bridge Reconstruction - Groton Long Point

A motion for \$148,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Cooper. Her rationale is that this project can be deferred.

Rep. Steinfeld yielded the floor to Richard Moravsk, 8 Island Circle Groton Long Point. Mr. Moravsk explained that all the bids received were higher than projected and that this additional request will allow the project to be completed in September.

Rep. Collins will not support the amended figure since all bids received exceeded the estimated costs and this bridge provides critical access for emergency vehicles.

The vote on the amendment of \$0 was defeated 2 in favor, 33 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Kotowski and Pasqualini.)

The vote on the figure of \$148,000 carried 33 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Kotowski and Pasqualini.)

Capital Item - Replacement of Defective Roadside Barrier System

A motion for \$45,000 was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. Hedrick noted that the committee did not adopt a figure for this account but that the Council figure is \$0.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Warn, seconded by Rep. Ambrose. Rep. Warn stated he supports the Council's adopted figure.

The vote on the amendment of \$0 carried 30 in favor, 5 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Congdon, Granatosky, Luck, McCarthy and Steinfeld.)

MOTION TO RECESS at 11:00 p.m until Monday, May 9, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Luck.

The vote to recess carried 31 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Ambrose, Kotowski, Parfitt and Plungis.)

The Moderator announced that the Parks & Recreation accounts will be added to a subsequent budget session.

Budget Session - Monday May 9, 2011

Moderator Kevin Power called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

30 members were present at roll call, and a quorum was declared. Rep. Luck arrived later for a total of 31 members present.

The Moderator reported that Reps. Barnhart, Beckwith, Ebbin, and Hedrick called to say they are unable to attend this meeting and that Reps. Luck and Merritt will be arriving late.

Members Present: Moderator Power, Rep. Ambrose, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Collins, Rep. Congdon, Rep. Cooper, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Luck, Rep. Massett, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Miller, Rep. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Parfitt, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. Plungis, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Prochaska, Rep. Scott, Rep. Semeraro, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer and Rep. Warn

Members Absent: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Beckwith, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Hubbard, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Powers and Rep. Swindell

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Library Director Betty Anne Reiter, Library staff, Parks and Recreation Director John Silsby, Manager of Recreation Services Jerry Lokken, Parks & Recreation staff, Planning Director Mike Murphy, Manager of Inspection Services Kevin

Quinn, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Moderator Power clarified the comments regarding frivolous motions and possible limitation on debate that he made at the previous budget session. He noted that he is intent on completing the RTM budget deliberations by midnight on May 25, 2011, but he will not usurp any member's right to speak during discussion.

Notice of Intent to Rescind - Account 10910 - Groton Long Point Police

Moderator Power announced Rep. Scott's intent to make a motion to rescind the vote on the Groton Long Point Police account at the next budget session.

RECREATION COMMITTEE

Chairman Warn read the minutes of the meeting held on April 14, 2011. (Minutes are on file.) Motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Warn, seconded by Rep. Harrell.

Members discussed the Copp Property Improvement CIP figure approved at the committee meeting.

Chairman Warn explained that the amount approved by committee was the estimated FYE2013 figure and that this was an error.

The vote to accept the minutes carried 29 in favor, 1 abstention. (Abstaining: Rep. Ambrose.)

Account 1064 - Parks & Recreation

A motion for \$1,838,389 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Warn, seconded by Rep. Granatosky.

The Town Manager explained the creation of the new Recreation & Senior Activities Fund that results in a 13.9% decrease in this account.

Members discussed the items that are being allocated to the new account and the impact to this account.

Rep. Luck arrived at 7:25 p.m. during the discussion.

In response to Rep. Ambrose, the Town Manager noted that no action has been initiated on the referral to review the allocation of the Parks & Recreation Director's salary.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,828,053 was made by Rep. Semeraro, seconded by Rep. Ambrose. Rep. Semeraro stated that she is moving the estimated FYE2011 figure, removing the amount that is being transferred to the Recreation & Senior Activities Fund, and reducing this account by 1%.

The vote on the amendment of \$1,828,053 was defeated 13 in favor, 18 opposed. (In favor: Reps. Collins, Cooper, Gilly, Luck, Kotowski, Morton, Newsome, Parfitt, Plungis, Semeraro, Streeter, Warn and Power.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,820,006 was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Morton. Rep. Kotowski's rationale is that modest reductions to accounts are necessary in response to constituents' request for no tax increase.

The vote on the amendment of \$1,820,006 was defeated 7 in favor, 24 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Cooper, Gilly, Kotowski, Morton, Parfitt, Plungis and Prochaska.)

The Town Manager clarified the conditions on the retirement of Director John Silsby. He noted that reductions in other areas of the budget that may affect another family member could reverse his decision to retire, eliminating any salary savings.

The vote on \$1,838,389 carried 25 in favor, 6 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Cooper, Kotowski, Morton, Newsome, Parfitt and Plungis.)

Account 3240 - Recreation & Senior Activities

A motion for \$917,959 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Warn, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

Director John Silsby clarified the concept and operation of this new revenue fund.

The vote on \$917,959 carried 30 in favor, 1 abstention. (Abstaining: Rep. Ambroise.)

Account 2010 - Shennecossett Golf Course

A motion for \$1,163,399 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Warn, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

Members discussed fees and the impact on revenue of the extreme winter weather.

Mr. Silsby addressed the concerns raised by members regarding the golf course not being self-sustaining and noted that revenues do indeed support the expenses associated with this fund.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,138,719 was made by Rep. Semeraro, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. Semeraro is requesting a modest reduction.

Mr. Silsby explained the function and operation of this fund.

The vote on the amendment of \$1,138,719 was defeated 3 in favor, 28 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Kotowski, Plungis and Semeraro.)

The vote on \$1,163,399 carried 30 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Plungis.)

Suspension of the Rules

A motion to suspend the rules to act on a figure that was not considered by the Recreation Committee for CIP Copp Property Improvement Project was made by Moderator Power, seconded by Rep. Ambroise and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Copp Property Improvement Project

A motion for \$192,000 was made by Moderator Power, seconded by Rep. Ambroise.

Members discussed the the improvements, usage, benefits to residents, future maintenance costs, and impact on the operational budget.

The vote on \$192,000 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Golf Course FCC Compliance

A motion for \$25,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Warn, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

MOTION TO AMEND TO \$0 was made by Rep. Pasqualini, seconded by Rep. Kotowski. Rep. Pasqualini feels that if the golf course is self-sustaining, this CIP item should be allocated to that fund.

The Town Manager addressed the FCC unfunded mandate to update frequencies used by municipalities, the consequences of not complying, and the impact on equipment operated by remote control.

Chairman Warn noted that the compliance date is December 2012.

The vote on the amendment of \$0 was defeated 7 in favor, 24 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ambroise, Gilly, Kotowski, Luck, Pasqualini, Plungis and Power.)

The vote on \$25,000 carried 25 in favor, 6 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Gilly, Kotowski, Luck, Pasqualini, Plungis and Power.)

Motion to Reconsider Account 1024 - Public Safety

A motion to reconsider account 1024 - Public Safety was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded by Rep. Baril.

Rep. Sebastian reported that he obtained new information pertaining to community policing. He noted that the lack of funding will affect the community policing in Mystic and Navy Housing as well as in Poquonnock Bridge.

The Moderator clarified the procedure for reconsideration of an account.

The vote to reconsider was defeated 12 in favor, 17 opposed, 2 abstentions. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Collins, Congdon, Cooper, Granatosky, McCarthy, Newsome, Pratt, Prochaska, Sebastian, Steinfeld and Streeter. Abstaining: Reps. Bauer and Svencer.)

A motion for a short recess during video coverage of the City of Groton swearing-in ceremony was made by Rep. Luck, seconded by Rep. Baril and so voted unanimously at 8:14 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:24 p.m.

Rep. Warn left during the recess.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SERVICES COMMITTEE

Chairman Pratt read the minutes of the meeting held on April 18, 2011. (Minutes are on file.) Motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Luck and so voted unanimously.

Account 1046 - Planning & Development Services

A motion for \$1,176,579 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

Members discussed eliminated, partially-funded and vacant positions and the reduction in operating expenses.

Mr. Murphy clarified the status and disposition of the various positions in the Planning Department.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,126,579 was made by Rep. Fairbank, seconded by Rep. Ambroise.

Rep. Fairbank stated his intent is to reduce this account by the salary for the vacant Planner II position. He suggested that if Mr. Murphy feels it is necessary to retain the Planner II position, one of the four Office Assistant positions can be eliminated and training costs reduced.

Mr. Murphy explained that it is a Building Official position that is being reclassified to assist in code enforcement to better serve all four divisions. Rep. Fairbank responded that he stands by his rationale for reducing this account.

Members discussed the number of non-union management positions. Other items discussed were the salary and status of the reclassified position and the duties of the various non-union department managers.

In response to Rep. Plungis, Mr. Murphy elaborated on the various activities supported by the Planning Department. He mentioned the new incubator businesses at both the Groton and Mystic

Business Parks, as well as the new blight code that is being developed. He emphasized that any further personnel reductions to the Inspection Division may affect the ability to complete timely inspections.

Manager of Inspection Services Kevin Quinn mentioned that Groton is still averaging two to three new homes a month, in addition to numerous inquiries for new businesses to relocate in vacant buildings. He explained that this division spends a substantial amount of time dealing with code enforcement which is becoming more complicated as new provisions are mandated.

The vote on the amendment of \$1,126,579 carried 16 in favor, 14 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Ambroise, Baril, Bauer, Collins, DeMatto, Gilly, Harrell, Massett, Morton, Plungis, Pratt, Steinfeld, Streeter and Power.)

Capital Item - Open Space Acquisition & Development

A motion for \$0 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Account 1051 - Human Services

A motion for \$564,255 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Fairbank

Members discussed the reduction in part-time staff.

The vote on \$564,255 carried unanimously.

Account 7320 - Human Services Assistance Fund

A motion for \$40,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Ambroise.

Members discussed the fund balance and usage of this account.

The vote on \$40,000 carried unanimously.

Account 1063 - Groton Public Library

A motion for \$1,697,259 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Account 3310 - Connecticut Special Revenue Fund

A motion for \$49,866 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Sebastian and so voted unanimously.

At 9:14 p.m., the Moderator recessed the meeting until May 11, 2011 immediately following the regularly scheduled RTM meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Budget Session - Wednesday May 11, 2011

Moderator Kevin Power called the meeting to order at 8:40 p.m.

38 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

The Moderator reported that Reps. Beckwith and Pratt called to say they are unable to attend this meeting. Rep. Svencer will be late.

Members Present: Moderator Power, Rep. Ambroise, Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Collins, Rep. Congdon, Rep. Cooper, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Hubbard, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Luck, Rep. Massett, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Miller, Rep. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Parfitt, Rep. Pasqualini, Rep. Plungis, Rep. Powers, Rep. Prochaska, Rep. Scott, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Semeraro, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Swindell, Rep. Warn and Rep. Watrous

Members Absent: Rep. Beckwith, Rep. Pratt and Rep. Svencer.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Public Works Director Gary Schneider, Assistant Public Works Directors Carl Almquist and John Carrington, School Superintendent Paul Kadri, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds Wes Greenleaf, Board of Education Business Manager Carolyn Dickey, Board of Education members, Mayor James Streeter, Town Councilors Deb Peruzzotti and Bill Johnson, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Motion to Rescind - Account 10910 - Groton Long Point Police

A motion to rescind the vote on Account 10910 Groton Long Point (GLP) Police was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Massett.

Moderator Power explained the procedure for a motion to rescind. He noted that if the motion carries, discussion on the account will open with the main motion and the first amended figure on the floor.

Rep. Scott's rationale is the lateness of the hour at which the vote was taken, and the fact that the GLP police department survived on \$80,000 last year. He stated that the RTM should consider consolidation.

POINT OF ORDER was raised by Rep. Sebastian concerning the mention of consolidation. Moderator Power stated that discussion on consolidation is inappropriate.

Rep. Scott stated that police coverage is not fair and equitable for all residents and he cannot understand supporting the \$200,500 figure when GLP residents funded the police service last year at a cost of \$80,000.

POINT OF ORDER was raised by Rep. Sebastian. He noted that this is not a GLP budget meeting and he takes issue with Rep. Scott's characterization of GLP police as a redundant service.

Members discussed the impact of rescinding an account, the responsibility for providing funding for GLP public safety, and the cost for the Town to provide police service to the City and GLP. Also mentioned were the fact that police service should be equitable and fair to all residents, and the lack of information from the study of the three police departments.

Rep. Granatosky requested that a roll call vote be taken at the appropriate time.

Rep. Massett stated that her rationale for supporting this year's request is that the police analysis was not completed.

Rep. DeMatto will not support rescission. She feels that the body was clear about its decision and she supports the action taken. She stated that the approved GLP figure falls within the estimated cost of patrol service if provided by the Town. She mentioned that the cost of additional services performed by the GLP police force is paid by GLP residents.

The Moderator cautioned that discussion of the Town providing police service is inappropriate.

Rep. Cooper will support rescission and the amended figure of \$0.

Rep. Ambrose will not support rescinding or reducing the GLP account to \$0 until a police service analysis is completed.

Rep. Morton supports rescinding and the \$0 figure. She feels that the issue is funding two

departments when the Town Police Chief has indicated his willingness to take on the patrol service in GLP. She thinks that this would be a win-win situation since the Town would hire two additional patrol officers to provide police service to GLP; this would save money for GLP residents and save the Town on overtime.

Rep. Congdon opposes rescinding. She does not agree with the rationale concerning the lateness of the hour when the decision was made, as other accounts were decided after GLP. She noted that the GLP request does not exceed the Town's estimate to provide service and that any extra services are paid for by GLP residents.

The Town Manager reported that the police analysis will be completed in the next year but will not provide the answer to funding the City or GLP police departments. He stated that the decision to maintain a separate police department is a policy decision to be made by the City and GLP residents.

Rep. Granatosky agrees with Reps. Massett and Ambroise. She explained that a vote should be rescinded only if something extraordinary comes to light after the vote. She will not support rescinding.

Rep. Steinfeld opposes rescinding and yielded the floor to Mr. Congdon, president of GLP Association.

Mr. Congdon enumerated the public safety services that were reduced or eliminated due to the reduced funding last year.

The vote on rescinding was defeated 6 in favor, 31 opposed, 1 abstention. (In Favor: Reps. Bauer, Cooper, Harrell, Morton, Scott and Semeraro. Opposed: Reps. Ambroise, Baril, Barnhart, Collins, Congdon, DeMatto, Ebbin, Fairbank, Gilly, Granatosky, Hedrick, Hubbard, Johnson, Luck, Massett, McCarthy, Merritt, Miller, Newsome, Parfitt, Pasqualini, Plungis, Powers, Prochaska, Sebastian, Steinfeld, Streeter, Swindell, Warn, Watrous and Power. Abstaining: Rep. Kotowski.)

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Chairman Swindell read the minutes of the meeting held on April 21, 2011. (Minutes are on file.) Motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Swindell, seconded by Rep. Luck and so voted unanimously.

Account 1080 - Education

A motion for \$74,180,988 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Swindell, seconded by Rep. Ebbin.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$72,645,500 was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. Kotowski's rationale is based on the raises for administrators and staff members when Town employees are receiving no raises. She commented on the conflicting information in the BOE budget concerning pre-school enrollment, the number of full-time employees hired last year, and the difficulty of tracking supply allocations. She noted that taxpayers cannot afford an increase in the BOE budget.

Mr. Kadri commented on salary and benefits costs, full-time employees, supply allocations, and the new budget accounting procedure. He explained that the new accounting program averages BOE salaries and benefits costs in this year's budget. He stated that the intent is to adjust and average the swings of wages and benefits costs due to contractual obligations and retirements. He reported on the use of Federal Title I funds.

Members discussed the use of federal stimulus money for teacher retirement incentives,

pre-kindergarten at Catherine Kolnaski School, full-day kindergarten, the shortage of classroom educational supplies, redistricting, and collective bargaining obligations.

In response to Rep. Ambrose, BOE Business Manager Carolyn Dickey provided the figures for teachers' step raises and cost of living increases for the paraprofessionals, secretaries, and administrators.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$73,068,273 was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Massett. Rep. Scott stated this figure is a middle ground between the main motion and the first amended figure.

Rep. Pasqualini supports a zero increase to the BOE budget. He opposes the use of stimulus funds for teacher retirement incentive payments and the time constraint placed on students for when they may arrive at school. He is upset with the daily arrival time of teachers prior to the start of school and the lack of classroom supplies.

Members discussed how the second amended figure was determined, corrective actions in regard to the District's racial imbalance issue, the Governor's Plan B budget, State Aid funding, middle school consolidation, and the lack of an alternative plan given the failure of Phase II.

Rep. Warn supports a zero increase to the BOE budget. He feels that the three year waiver granted for consolidation of the middle schools during Phase II construction could be modified and implemented while an alternative plan is developed.

Mr. Kadri addressed the problems facing the BOE since Phase II failed and the lack of a district-wide long-term plan for renovations and construction of school facilities.

Rep. Ambrose summarized three courses of action that he feels members should consider when deciding which figure to support. He feels that the decision to be made is whether to maintain school services or regress.

Rep. Gilly supports a zero increase. She feels that the Town needs to balance the burden of cuts in the Board of Education and Operations budgets. She stated that the Town Operations budget is bearing the burden of reductions and that it is unfair not to reduce the school budget. She questioned how the Town will survive cuts in aid from the State.

The Town Manager commented on the State Aid reimbursement as proposed in the Governor's budget, the impact on the Town, and the Education minimum budget funding requirement.

Moderator Power cautioned Rep. Ebbin about the direction of her comments regarding statements made by Reps. Ambrose and Gilly.

Rep. Ebbin stated she recognizes the importance and long-term savings of providing pre-K and full-day kindergarten. She opposes a reduction of this magnitude to the Education budget, since it will eliminate many programs and force consolidation of middle schools and Town-wide redistricting. She remarked that she is disappointed by the treatment of the Education budget by this community and her fellow RTM members.

MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded by Rep. Harrell.

The vote on moving the question carried 27 in favor, 11 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Ambrose, Congdon, Ebbin, Johnson, Newsome, Parfitt, Prochaska, Steinfeld, Swindell, Warn and Power.)

The vote on the amendment of \$73,068,273 was defeated 2 in favor, 36 opposed. (In Favor: Reps.

Baril and McCarthy.)

MOTION TO AMEND TO \$73,438,988 was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Massett. Rep. Collins is proposing this number as a compromise to the other figures on the floor.

The vote on the amendment of \$73,438,988 was defeated 7 in favor, 31 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Bauer, Collins, DeMatto, Ebbin, McCarthy and Newsome.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$73,733,988 was made by Rep. Ebbin, seconded by Rep. Johnson. Rep. Ebbin stated that her figure reflects a reduction of \$1.13 million which is equal to the administrators' salary increases.

The vote on the amendment of \$73,733,988 was defeated 12 in favor, 26 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ambroise, Baril, Bauer, Collins, Congdon, DeMatto, Ebbin, Fairbank, Massett, McCarthy, Newsome and Swindell.)

MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Plungis.

POINT OF ORDER was raised by various members. Moderator Power explained he would not consider this motion since ten minutes had not elapsed since the last amendment was made.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$73,000,000 was made by Rep. Ebbin, seconded by Rep. Collins. No rationale was provided.

POINT OF ORDER was raised by Rep. Fairbank that this is frivolous motion since \$73,068,273 was already defeated. Moderator Power noted that he had addressed this issue at the previous budget session and will allow debate on any figure that the body brings forth.

The vote on the amendment of \$73,000,000 was defeated 10 in favor, 27 opposed, 1 abstention. (In Favor: Reps. Ambroise, Baril, Bauer, Collins, Congdon, DeMatto, Ebbin, Granatosky, McCarthy and Swindell. Abstaining: Rep. Fairbank.)

The vote on the amendment of \$72,645,500 carried 27 in favor, 10 opposed, 1 abstention. (Opposed: Reps. Baril, Bauer, Collins, Congdon, Ebbin, Fairbank, McCarthy, Merritt, Newsome and Swindell. Abstaining: Rep. Johnson.)

There was consensus to continue with the Education CIP accounts.

Capital Item - All Schools -School Security

A motion for \$200,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Swindell, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

Members discussed the number of schools involved, the components of the new security measures and last year's security improvements.

The vote on \$200,000 carried 31 in favor, 7 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Baril, Harrell, Parfit, Pasqualini, Prochaska, Sebastian and Streeter.)

Capital Item - Fitch High School

A motion for \$55,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Swindell, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

Rep. Bauer will not support this figure or any figure that includes artificial turf.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$25,000 was made by Rep. Semeraro, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld.

Rep. Semeraro supports the Town Council figure. She opposes artificial turf and feels that a study can be delayed. The amendment eliminates funding for artificial turf.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Bauer, seconded by Rep. Kotowski. Rep. Bauer stated this item is not necessary and can be eliminated.

Mr. Greenleaf, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, identified and commented on the two components of this account.

Members discussed the development of the design plan, existing roof leaks, and the length of time that the plan is valid. Other items mentioned were time limits on CIP funding, designated use of CIP monies, and the authorization of funds for emergency repairs.

The Town Manager explained the annual process of reviewing CIP accounts that have been completed or are expiring. Balances are closed out and the monies revert to the Capital Reserve Fund Balance.

The vote on the amendment of \$0 was defeated 7 in favor, 31 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Bauer, Harrell, Hubbard, Kotowski, Morton, Pasqualini, and Plungis.)

The vote on the amendment of \$25,000 carried 33 in favor, 5 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Bauer, Harrell, McCarthy, Pasqualini and Scott.)

Capital Item - Basketball Courts

A motion for \$40,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Swindell, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

Mr. Greenleaf provided information on the four locations and spoke about the impact of the proximity of S.B. Butler school to Judson Avenue.

The vote on \$40,000 carried 33 in favor, 5 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Baril, Kotowski, Morton, Pasqualini and Plungis.)

Capital Item - Asbestos Floor Tile Removal

A motion for \$30,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Swindell, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

At 11:00 p.m. Moderator Power recessed the meeting until Monday, May 16, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. The Public Works accounts scheduled for this meeting will be moved to Monday's schedule.

Budget Session - Monday, May 16, 2011

Moderator Kevin Power called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

32 members were present at roll call, and a quorum was declared. Reps. Ambroise, Ebbin and Scott arrived later for a total of 35 members present.

The Moderator reported that Reps. Beckwith, Congdon, Fairbank, Johnson and Warn notified the office that they are unable to attend.

Members Present: Moderator Power, Rep. Ambroise, Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Collins, Rep. Cooper, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Hubbard, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Luck, Rep. Massett, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Miller, Rep. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Parfitt, Rep. Pasqualini, Rep. Plungis, Rep. Powers, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Prochaska, Rep. Scott, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Semeraro, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, and Rep. Watrous

Members Absent: Rep. Beckwith, Rep. Congdon, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Swindell, and

Rep. Warn

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Information Technology Manager Brian Hancock, Emergency Communications Manager Joseph Sastre, Labor Relations Manager Joyce Sauchuk, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Public Works Director Gary Schneider, Assistant Public Works Directors Carl Almquist and John Carrington, Registrars of Voters David Rose and Stephen Massett, Town Councilor Bill Johnson, Groton Ambulance President George Law, Mystic River Ambulance President Christopher Clarkin, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher, Deputy Town Clerk Janet Downs and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Chairman Collins read the minutes of the meetings held on April 19 and April 27, 2011. (Minutes are on file.)

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld.

Chairman Collins clarified that the figures of \$83,000 for fleet refurbishing and \$26,000 for snow removal on-call were the figures discussed in committee.

Reps. Ambrose, Ebbin and Scott arrived at this time.

The vote to approve the minutes carried unanimously.

Account 1035 - Public Works

A motion for \$6,325,795 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Harrell.

Public Works Director Gary Schneider clarified the budget calculation for the snow removal line item.

In response to Rep. Merritt, the Town Manager reported that a review and reorganization analysis of the Public Works and Parks and Recreation departments is currently being conducted. He explained the reasons for retaining the vacant position in the Public Works budget until the analysis is completed.

Rep. Watrous disclosed that she is a Town employee.

Members discussed the reuse of Groton Heights School and Noank School and the costs of maintaining the vacant buildings for which the Town is responsible. Also mentioned were utility costs, transfer station fees, the number of non-union personnel in this department, and reduction in street lighting.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,199,279 was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. Scott stated this is a 2% reduction.

Rep. Steinfeld will not support the amendment due to the multitude of items that are contained in this account that are necessary and cannot be eliminated.

Rep. Sebastian stated he will support the main motion. He noted that this account is reduced from last year.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,275,432 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Ebbin. Rep. Granatosky's rationale is that this represents middle ground between the figures on the floor and strips out the funds for the vacant position.

Members discussed reducing positions, since all paving projects have been eliminated.

The Manager commented on the possible alternatives in regard to the vacant position due to the planned reorganization. He mentioned that deferring the paving projects could mean that several roads will need complete reconstruction.

The vote on the amendment of \$6,275,432 was defeated 16 in favor, 19 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ambroise, Cooper, DeMatto, Ebbin, Granatosky, Hedrick, Kotowski, Luck, McCarthy, Morton, Parfitt, Plungis, Powers, Scott, Semeraro and Power.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,319,469 was made by Rep. Semeraro, seconded by Rep. Newsome. Rep. Semeraro noted this is a one percent reduction and accounts for the transfer of the civil engineer position.

The vote on the amendment of \$6,319,469 was defeated 10 in favor, 24 opposed, 1 abstention. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Collins, DeMatto, Gilly, McCarthy, Newsome, Parfitt, Pratt, Sebastian and Semeraro. Abstaining: Rep. Ambroise.)

The vote on the amendment of \$6,199,279 was defeated 13 in favor, 22 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Cooper, Ebbin, Hedrick, Hubbard, Kotowski, Luck, Morton, Parfitt, Pasqualini, Plungis, Prochaska, Scott and Power.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,262,537 was made by Rep. Luck, seconded by Rep. Semeraro. Rep. Luck stated this is a one percent reduction.

The vote on the amendment of \$6,262,537 carried 21 in favor, 14 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Ambroise, Baril, Barnhart, Bauer, Collins, DeMatto, Harrell, Merritt, Pratt, Sebastian, Steinfeld, Streeter, Svencer and Watrous.)

Account 2020 - Sewer Operating Fund

A motion for \$5,795,276 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

Members discussed the increase to the Sewer Operating Fund balance and the number of non-union positions and questioned why sewer use fees were not increased.

Director of Public Works Gary Schneider identified the number of non-union employees in this department.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$5,555,301 was made by Rep. Pasqualini, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. Pasqualini objects to the release of small plastic pieces during overflows at the sewer facility. He does not favor taxpayers paying the penalties for exceeding mandated nitrate levels at the sewer facility and believes that there is a supply clerk position that is not necessary.

Mr. Schneider explained that this account is funded by sewer use fees. He stated that some Sewer Fund balance is applied each year to hold down the sewer use fees and noted that the Town maintains an adequate fund balance in this account. He reported on an efficiency and personnel study that was recently completed.

Rep. Sebastian will not support the amended figure. He noted the numerous sewer pump stations located throughout the Town and he does not feel this is an area to cut.

The vote on the amendment of \$5,555,301 was defeated 6 in favor, 29 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Cooper, Kotowski, Luck, Pasqualini, Plungis and Semeraro.)

The vote on \$5,795,276 carried 31 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Kotowski, Luck, Pasqualini and Plungis.)

Account 2030 - Solid Waste Fund

A motion for \$2,625,684 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

Members discussed the desirability of continuing waste collection to meet the requirements for the Preston incinerator contract.

The Town Manager reported that the Council has reviewed the merits of the solid waste collection program and decided to continue and has renewed the contracts for service.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,025,022 was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. Kotowski feels now is not the time to be raising taxes in order to build fund balances.

Rep. Kotowski withdrew her motion after identifying that she was looking at the incorrect account.

The vote on \$2,625,684 carried unanimously.

2011-0118**Landfill Fees****POSSIBLE INCREASE IN LANDFILL PERMIT FEES**

This matter was Referred to the Town Council, due back on July 13, 2011.

Rep. Ebbin requested a referral to the Town Council to explore increasing the permit fees for the transfer station in order to reduce taxpayer subsidies to the Solid Waste Fund.

Account 6040 - Fleet Reserve Fund

A motion for \$1,097,079 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Hedrick.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,025,022 was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. Kotowski stated this is last year's figure.

The Manager provided an explanation of the function and operation of this fund.

The vote on the amendment of \$1,025,022 was defeated 4 in favor, 31 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ebbin, Kotowski, Plungis and Power.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,062,079 was made by Rep. Ebbin, seconded by Rep. Kotowski. Rep. Ebbin stated this is a reduction of the \$35,000 that is slated for the replacement of a truck.

Mr. Schneider explained the process that determines what and when vehicles are replaced.

The vote on the amendment of \$1,062,079 was defeated 5 in favor, 30 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ebbin, Granatosky, Kotowski, Plungis and Power.)

The vote on \$1,097,079 carried 31 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Ebbin, Kotowski, Plungis and Power.)

Capital Item - Pavement Management Program Implementation - Town

A motion for \$0 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Kotowski.

The vote on \$0 carried 31 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Baril, Newsome, Pratt and Steinfeld.)

Capital Item - Traffic Signal Replacement and Upgrade

A motion for \$300,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep.

Harrell.

The vote on \$300,000 carried 33 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Kotowski and Pasqualini.)

Capital Item - Bridge Reconstruction

A motion for \$140,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Parfitt.

Rep. Sebastian supports this figure. He noted that an engineering plan and corrective action is needed in order to restore the proper wave action and to maintain access to Palmers Cove.

The vote on \$140,000 carried 33 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Kotowski and Morton.)

Capital Item - Reconstruction of Crystal Lake Road/Military Highway Intersection

A motion for \$340,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

The vote carried 34 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Kotowski.)

Capital Item - Judson Avenue Drainage

A motion for \$0 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Ambroise.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$165,000 was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Ambroise. Rep. Collins' rationale is that this will initiate the permitting and preliminary design to improve the capacity of the storm drainage system which is currently inadequate for the Judson Avenue area. He mentioned that the problem affects 52 homes. He noted that the original system has been overburdened by two subsequent subdivisions being tied into the existing storm drains.

The Moderator informed the members that approval of this figure would need a two-thirds vote of those present.

Members discussed the responsibility of subdivision developers for the current problems with the drainage system, the types of actions that will enable the Town to correct the street flooding, the level of ground water in this area, the frequency of street flooding, the Town's liability, and corrective actions to taken by homeowners. Additionally, the question of the feasibility of installing a storm water pumping station was discussed.

The Town Manager noted that the drainage system was constructed correctly according to code at the time and that the code has changed. He acknowledged that flooding at Cutler Middle School and flooding of Judson Avenue basements will not be remedied by this project.

Rep. Barnhart will support the \$165,000 figure.

The vote on the amendment of \$165,000 carried 28 in favor, 6 opposed, 1 abstention. (Opposed: Reps. Ambroise, Ebbin, Parfitt, Plungis, Steinfeld and Streeter. Abstaining: Rep. Kotowski.)

Capital Item - Replacement Sidewalk Construction

A motion for \$0 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Ambroise and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - New Sidewalk Construction - Route 1 Mystic

A motion for \$60,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Luck.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Ebbin, seconded by Rep. Kotowski. Rep. Ebbin feels that this is not essential and should be delayed due to difficult economic times.

Members clarified the location of this new sidewalk and discussed public safety issues, continuing access to downtown Mystic, and adhering to the policies established by the Town's Master Trails Plan.

The vote on the amendment of \$0 carried 21 in favor, 14 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Barnhart, Bauer, Collins, Cooper, Harrell, McCarthy, Merritt, Newsome, Powers, Pratt, Sebastian, Steinford, Svencer and Power.)

A short recess was declared at 9:10 p.m. by the Moderator. The meeting reconvened at 9:25 p.m.

Capital Item - Human Services Building

A motion for \$30,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Ebbin.

Members discussed the ventilation system necessary to address the radon levels in this building.

The vote on \$30,000 carried 31 in favor, 3 opposed, 1 abstention. (Opposed: Reps. DeMatto, Parfitt and Pasqualini. Abstaining: Rep. Ambroise.)

Capital Item - Jabez Smith House

A motion for \$30,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Hedrick.

Rep. Newsome will support this figure. He feels the house is historically significant to our community and that it is important to preserve it.

Members discussed the proposed repairs, grants, volunteer labor, fund-raising and programming.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,000 was made Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Streeter. Rep. Kotowski stated this is the Town Council figure.

Rep. Granatosky cited the legal obligation to maintain this structure that was a provision when it was granted to the Town. She urged support for the main motion, citing the educational opportunities that it affords the community.

Rep. Collins noted that the Town Council figure was approved prior to receiving the plumbing estimates to fix the only bathroom at this facility.

The vote on the amendment of \$0 was defeated 2 in favor, 33 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Kotowski and Streeter.)

The vote on \$30,000 carried 33 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Kotowski and Streeter.)

Capital Item - Construction of Permanent Vehicle Wash Facility

A motion for \$0 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Ambroise and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - WPCF Sewer Line Infrastructure Repairs

A motion for \$685,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Luck.

The vote on \$685,000 carried 34 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Pasqualini.)

Capital Item - Pump Station Rehabilitation

The committee did not vote since this item will be bonded.

FINANCE COMMITTEE**Account 10260 - Groton Ambulance Service**

A motion for \$81,955 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Parfitt and so voted unanimously.

Account 10261 - Mystic River Ambulance Service

A motion for \$33,750 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto and so voted unanimously.

Total for Account 1026 - Ambulance Services: \$115,705**Account 1003 - Voter Registration**

A motion for \$115,736 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

Rep. Massett disclosed that she is married to the Republican Registrar.

The vote on \$115,736 carried 34 in favor, 1 abstention. (Abstaining: Rep. Massett.)

Account 1005 - Town Clerk

A motion for \$369,650 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

Rep. Watrous disclosed that she is an employee of this department.

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher explained the current legislation pertaining to the real estate conveyance tax and the impact on revenue to the Town.

The vote on \$369,650 carried unanimously.

Account 1013 - Finance Administration

A motion for \$1,345,609 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,332,153 was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Plungis. Rep. Kotowski stated that she feels the salaries in this account are generous. This figure is a 1% decrease.

Mr. Pandolfo noted that the \$10,000 for salary increases is contractual.

The vote on the amendment of \$1,332,153 was defeated 10 in favor, 25 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ambroise, Cooper, Ebbin, Gilly, Harrell, Hubbard, Kotowski, Parfitt, Plungis and Prochaska.)

The vote on \$1,345,609 carried 32 in favor, 3 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Harrell, Kotowski and Plungis.)

Account 2120 - Revaluation Fund

A motion for \$140,310 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto and so voted unanimously.

Account 1014 - Administrative Services

A motion for \$2,790,202 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$2,762,300 was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Plungis. Rep. Kotowski stated that the salaries in this account exceed the median household income for Groton residents.

Mr. Ackerman commented on the contractual obligations for the non-union and union positions in this account.

Members discussed the qualifications, specialized training and salaries for a number of positions, and the overtime attributed to dispatch operations.

The vote on the amendment of \$2,762,300 was defeated 9 in favor, 26 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ambroise, Cooper, Gilly, Kotowski, Morton, Parfitt, Pasqualini, Plungis and Prochaska.)

The vote on \$2,790,202 carried 31 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Cooper, Kotowski, Pasqualini and Plungis.)

Account 6050 - Computer Replacement Fund

A motion for \$60,980 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Kotowski, seconded by Rep. Semeraro. Rep. Kotowski stated that due to the economic difficulties facing taxpayers, this is not the time to increase fund balances.

In response to Rep. Gilly, the Town Manager agreed that this account is similar to the Fleet Fund. In order to impact the bottom line of the budget, each departmental account would have to eliminate its contribution to this fund.

Rep. Bauer stated she will support the main motion.

Members discussed the function of this account and the process necessary to make reductions. Rep. Hedrick noted that money is added to this account each year in anticipation of equipment replacement.

The vote on the amendment of \$0 was defeated 2 in favor, 33 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Kotowski and Semeraro.)

The vote on \$60,980 carried 34 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Kotowski.)

There was consensus from the body to continue with the remaining accounts on the schedule for this session.

Capital Item - Network Infrastructure Upgrade

A motion for \$25,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

Mr. Ackerman provided a definition of a CIP account and noted that this component completes the upgrade.

The vote on \$25,000 carried 34 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Kotowski.)

Capital Item - Town Fire/EMS Radio System

A motion for \$165,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Parfitt and so voted unanimously.

Account 1070 - Insurance & Claims

A motion for \$574,250 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto and so voted unanimously.

Account 1071- Self-Funded Plans

A motion for \$8,157,901 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. DeMatto.

Members discussed employee health care costs, the percentage that employees pay for premiums, co-pays, Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB), and the impact of federal health care reform.

Rep. Barnhart strongly urges the Town to change the contractual obligations so that employee contributions are more comparable to those in the private sector.

Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman explained OPEB and noted that the Town is gradually increasing employee contributions with each new contract..

Rep. Ebbin opposes the increase to this account since Education is being flat-funded.

Mr. Oefinger explained that there is no increase to this account.

MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Harrell, seconded by Rep. Sebastian.

The vote on moving the question carried 28 in favor, 7 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Ambroise, Ebbin, Kotowski, Luck, Scott, Semeraro and Power.)

The vote on \$8,157,901 carried 29 in favor, 5 opposed, 1 abstention. (Opposed: Reps. Cooper, Ebbin, Luck, Scott and Semeraro. Abstaining: Rep. Kotowski.)

2011-0119

Health Care Benefits Reform

EXPLORATION OF REFORM OF TOWN HEALTH CARE BENEFITS

This matter was Referred to the Town Council, due back on July 13, 2011.

Rep. Scott requested a referral to the Town Council to investigate the impact on the Town if it did not provide health care benefits to employees.

Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman stated that there are issues to consider if the Town were to opt out of providing health care insurance to its employees. He noted that the Town is monitoring the federal health care reform that is expected to take effect in 2014.

The Moderator recessed the meeting at 10:40 p.m. until Wednesday, May 16, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

Budget Session - Wednesday May 18, 2011

Moderator Kevin Power called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

38 members were present at roll call, and a quorum was declared. Reps. Prochaska and Warn arrived later for a total of 40 members present.

The Moderator reported that Rep. Prochaska had notified the office that she will be arriving late.

Members Present: Moderator Power, Rep. Ambroise, Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Beckwith, Rep. Collins, Rep. Congdon, Rep. Cooper, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Luck, Rep. Massett, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Miller, Rep. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Parfitt, Rep. Pasqualini, Rep. Plungis, Rep. Powers, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Prochaska, Rep. Scott, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Semeraro, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Swindell, Rep. Warn and Rep. Watrous

Members Absent: Rep. Hubbard

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Mystic & Noank Library Director Lois Hiller and

Library Trustees, Bill Memorial Library Director Hali Keeler and Library Trustees, Ledge Light Health District Deputy Director Stephen Mansfield, Visiting Nurse Association Chief Financial Officer Ralph Heath and School Health Supervisor Leah Hendriks, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

The Town Manager updated the body regarding the impact on the mill rate of changes made to the budget by the RTM and estimated revenues from the State. Mr. Oefinger noted that it is the Town's policy to estimate conservatively on the projected State revenue. He noted that changes made by the Board of Assessment Appeals are affecting the Grand List, as is the reduction in the Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment exemption. He stated that Town revenues have grown due to increased collection of past due taxes and additional federal impact aid.

Rep. Warn arrived at this time.

RULES & PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

Account 10070 - SE CT Council of Governments (SCCOG)

A motion for \$15,319 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

Members discussed the merits of membership in SCCOG and the formula used to determine membership fees.

The vote on \$15,319 carried unanimously.

Account 10071 - SE CT Enterprise Region (SECTER)

A motion for \$14,474 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Parfitt and so voted unanimously.

Account 10072 - SE Area Transit (SEAT)

A motion for \$84,009 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Parfitt.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$80,778 was made by Rep. Pasqualini, seconded by Rep. Plungis. Rep. Pasqualini stated this is last year's figure.

Rep. Gilly disclosed that she serves on the board as a Groton representative. She noted the effects that a reduction would have on Groton residents.

Rep. Ebbin will not support the amendment. She cited the increase in the cost of gas, the growing use of mass transit, and the fact that some residents are totally dependent on the SEAT buses for transportation. She feels that mass transit is important to all communities for ecological reasons.

Rep. Semeraro agreed with Rep. Ebbin.

Rep. Merritt disclosed that he also serves on the SEAT board as a Groton representative and will not support the amended figure.

The vote on the amendment of \$80,778 was defeated 5 in favor, 34 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Kotowski, Luck, Pasqualini, Pratt and Warn.)

The vote on \$84,009 carried 34 in favor, 5 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Kotowski, Luck, Pasqualini, Pratt and Warn.)

Account 10073 - SE CT Probate Court

A motion for \$13,433 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Parfitt, and so voted unanimously.

The Manager clarified that there are no additional costs attributed to this account due to the fact that there is a temporary probate judge.

The vote on \$13,433 carried unanimously.

Total for Account 1007 - Regional Agencies: \$127,235

Account 10540 - Ledge Light Health District

A motion for \$270,925 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott seconded by Rep. Massett.

Rep. Massett disclosed that she serves on the Board of Directors. She noted that the Health District incurred a loss of funding from the State last year and that the Board chose to absorb this loss and not pass it on to the member communities.

Deputy Director Stephen Mansfield reported on the protocol used for inspections of school cafeterias.

Rep. Swindell recused himself from this vote, as he performs contractual work for the Ledge Light Health District.

Rep. Prochaska arrived at this time.

The vote on \$270,925 carried 38 in favor, 2 abstentions. (Abstaining: Reps. Prochaska and Swindell.)

Account 10541 - Visiting Nurse Association (School Health)

A motion for \$1,135,638 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Parfitt.

Members discussed the allocation of this account to the Town's operating budget instead of the Education budget and the Town Council's deliberations on the account.

The Manager explained that this account had been split between Education and Town Operations, but by mutual agreement, it was consolidated into Town Operations.

Visiting Nurse Association Chief Financial Officer Ralph Heath and School Health Supervisor Leah Hendriks provided an explanation of cost savings due to standardization of the schedule for school nurses.

The vote on \$1,135,638 carried unanimously.

Rep. Plungis requested a referral to review whether this funding can be allocated to the Education budget.

The Moderator suggested that the Town Manager discuss this with the Town Council and provide a report to the RTM.

Account 10542 - Visiting Nurse Association (Promo)

A motion for \$76,785 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott seconded by Rep. Johnson and so voted unanimously.

Account 10544 - Housing Authority

A motion for \$57,976 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

Rep. Pasqualini objects to the payment of sewer fees by the Town for the Housing Authority.

The Town Manager explained that this arrangement is governed by ordinance and that any change to an ordinance must be initiated by the Town Council. He stated that the Housing Authority is a Town agency.

Moderator Power requested that the Town Manager provide a report to the RTM on a possible change to the ordinance.

The vote on \$57,976 carried unanimously.

Account 10545 - Services Agencies

A motion for \$52,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Johnson.

Members discussed the levels of contributions to these agencies.

The vote on \$52,500 carried unanimously.

Account 10546 - Cultural Agencies

A motion for \$1,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Massett and so voted unanimously.

Account 10547 - Marine Sewage Disposal

A motion for \$19,980 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Johnson.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. Granatosky's rationale is that taxpayers are funding a service that should be the responsibility of individual boat owners. She understands the importance of the service but opposes the use of taxpayer monies.

Rep. Pasqualini will not support the amendment and feels that fees collected for boat registration should be applied to funding this service.

The Manager explained the shared funding with the Town of Stonington and the matching State funds received by the non-profit agency providing this service. The Manager agreed to provide a detailed report of the revenue received and the number of Groton boat owners using this service. He clarified services provided to Mouse Island.

Rep. Ambrose will not support the amendment. He feels it is the Town's obligation to protect coastal waters.

Rep. Bauer agreed with previous speakers and will not support the amendment. She feels that clean-up costs would increase dramatically.

Rep. Ebbin feels there is an adequate number of pump-out facilities available to boat owners and that better enforcement is needed for improper discharge of effluent.

The vote on the amendment of \$0 was defeated 4 in favor, 36 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Ebbin, Granatosky, Kotowski and Luck.)

The vote on \$19,980 carried 36 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Ebbin, Granatosky, Kotowski and Luck.)

Total for Account 1054 - Health/Service/Cultural Agencies: \$1,614,804

Account 10650 - Mystic & Noank Library

A motion for \$160,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$186,000 was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded by Rep. Ambroise. Rep. Sebastian stated that this is the Manager's figure. He feels that the library is an educational facility that deserves community support. He noted that Mystic & Noank is used by Groton and Mystic residents.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$146,552 was made by Rep. Massett, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld. This is last year's figure and represents Groton's fair share based on the formula discussed in committee. She noted that Stonington is not fulfilling its responsibility for funding the library.

Mystic & Noank Director Lois Hiller addressed the problem of the yearly decrease in Stonington's funding despite repeated appeals to the Board of Finance. She noted that there are Stonington residents who support increasing the library funding.

Rep. Semeraro will not support the amendment. She feels the library serves the entire community and that funding should not be reduced based on the misconception that Groton is subsidizing Stonington's share of the expense.

Moderator Power requested that Rep. Ambroise assume control as Moderator Pro-Tempore to allow him to participate in the debate on this account.

Rep. Morton will support last year's figure. She noted that the library is a worthwhile organization but she is disappointed in the disproportionate funding by Stonington. She noted that Stonington is contributing \$86,000 to the Westerly Public Library and feels that it should provide equitable funding to Mystic & Noank.

Rep. Fairbank will not support the figure on the floor. He stated that this account was significantly reduced last year to convey a message to the Town of Stonington, but there was no increase in funding. He feels it is unfair to punish the library for something that is beyond its control.

Rep. Cooper will not support the amendment.

Ms. Hiller identified the funding necessary to restore Thursday hours.

Rep. Power explained his change of heart in fully supporting the figure requested by the library. He reported that he was present at a joint meeting of Groton and Stonington at which a formula was established for funding from each community and Groton's portion was fixed at \$186,000. He will support the figure of \$186,000, adding that the library is a wonderful community resource and provides many important programs.

Rep. Bauer stated she cannot not support either amendment due to the reduction in the Education budget.

Rep. Harrell will support the main motion. She noted that it is an emotional issue for her since her first library card was issued by the Mystic & Noank Library.

Rep. Beckwith supports the figure of \$186,000. She opposes reductions in community services such as libraries and the symphony.

Rep. Ebbin mentioned that Groton has more than three libraries if school libraries are considered, and added that new book acquisition for school libraries has been reduced to zero for three years.

Rep. Hedrick agrees with the previous speakers and he will support the \$186,000 figure. He stated that Stonington has not listened and is not likely to provide additional funding.

The vote on the amendment of \$146,552 was defeated 10 in favor, 30 opposed. (In Favor: Reps Ebbin, Granatosky, Kotowski, Massett, Morton, Parfitt, Pasqualini, Prochaska, Steinfeld and Streeter.)

Rep. Power will support the main motion. He noted that a two-thirds vote is needed to restore above the Town Council figure. He feels that \$26,000 is not a significant increase.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$176,000 was made by Rep. DeMatto, seconded by Rep. Johnson. Rep. DeMatto stated that her figure is a compromise and represents the amount cited by Director Hiller as necessary to restore Thursday hours.

Rep. Sebastian will support the figure of \$186,000. He remarked that this library serves the entire community and he feels that frustration with Stonington should not be taken out on the children who use this library.

The vote on the amendment of \$176,000 was defeated 7 in favor, 33 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. DeMatto, Gilly, Plungis, Pratt, Steinfeld, Warn and Watrous.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$166,276 was made by Rep. Barnhart, seconded by Rep. Johnson. Rep. Barnhart gave her rationale for the amendment.

The vote on the amendment of \$166,276 was defeated 8 in favor, 31 opposed, 1 non-voting. (In Favor: Reps. Barnhart, Gilly, Massett, Newsome, Prochaska, Steinfeld, Streeter, and Watrous. Non-Voting: Rep. Collins.)

Moderator Pro-Tem Ambrose noted that a two-thirds vote is needed to restore funding.

The vote on \$186,000 was defeated 23 in favor, 16 opposed, 1 non-voting. (Opposed: Reps. Barnhart, DeMatto, Ebbin, Gilly, Granatosky, Kotowski, Massett, Morton, Newsome, Parfitt, Plungis, Pratt, Prochaska, Steinfeld, Streeter and Watrous. Non-Voting: Rep. Collins.) (Rep. Collins was not in the room for the last two votes.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$184,000 was made by Rep. Bauer, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. Bauer stated that her figure is an attempt to restore as much as possible and asked members to support this figure.

The vote on the amendment of \$184,000 was defeated 24 in favor, 16 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Barnhart, DeMatto, Ebbin, Granatosky, Gilly, Kotowski, Massett, Morton, Newsome, Parfitt, Plungis, Pratt, Prochaska, Steinfeld, Streeter and Watrous.)

MOTION TO AMEND to \$173,000 was made by Rep. Luck, seconded by Rep. Fairbank. Rep. Luck is attempting to reach a compromise figure that will ensure that enough resources are available for students.

Democratic Floor Leader Granatosky requested a caucus at 8:30 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:45 p.m.

The vote on the amendment of \$173,000 carried 28 in favor, 12 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Barnhart, Ebbin, Gilly, Granatosky, Kotowski, Massett, Morton, Newsome, Parfitt, Steinfeld, Streeter and Watrous.)

Moderator Power resumed his position at the podium and thanked Rep. Ambroise for serving as Moderator Pro-Tem.

Account 10651 - Bill Memorial Library

A motion for \$20,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Total for Account 1065 - Other Libraries: \$193,000

Suspension of the Rules

A motion to suspend the rules in order to consider the accounts scheduled for Monday, May 23, 2011, was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Luck.

The vote to suspend the rules carried 28 in favor, 12 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Barnhart, Beckwith, Cooper, Kotowski, Newsome, Parfitt, Pasqualini, Plungis, Pratt, Sebastian, Semeraro and Swindell.)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Account 1092 - Fire Districts PILOT

A motion for \$246,012 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by DeMatto and so voted unanimously.

Account 1077 - Contributions to Other Funds

A motion for \$30,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Account 1076 - Debt Service

A motion for \$5,012,449 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Luck and so voted unanimously.

Account 2060 - Mumford Cove

A motion for \$21,027 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Svencer and so voted unanimously.

Account 4010 - Groton Sewer District

A motion for \$1,168,570 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Luck and so voted unanimously.

Account 1074 - Contingency

A motion for \$350,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Account 5010 - Capital Reserve Fund

A MOTION for \$1,968,540 was made by Moderator Power, seconded by Rep. Johnson.

Finance Director Sal Pandolfo explained the purpose and operation of this fund.

The vote on \$1,968,540 carried 37 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions. (Opposed: Rep. Plungis. Abstaining: Reps. Kotowski and Swindell.)

Account 1075 - Capital Reserve (contribution)

A motion for \$1,500,000 was made by Rep. Hedrick, seconded by Rep. Luck.

The Manager explained the purpose of this fund and the rationale for this figure. He stated that he does not recommend any reduction.

The vote on \$1,500,000 carried 39 in favor, 1 abstention. (Abstaining: Rep. Kotowski.)

OTHER BUSINESS

2011-0120 Review of Non-Union Positions

REVIEW OF NON-UNION POSITIONS

This matter was Referred to the RTM Finance Committee.

Rep. Ambroise would like a comprehensive review of all non-union positions and associated wages, benefits and pensions. He would like a list compiled of these positions. Rep. Ambroise feels that non-union employees must set the example for those covered by collective bargaining by taking wage cuts and paying a greater share of benefit costs.

Motion to Reconsider Account 1046 - Planning & Development Services

Town Manager Mark Oefinger expressed concern about the approved reduction to this account. He believes that the intent of the body was to eliminate only the vacant Inspector II position, but noted that the reduction as approved would also impact the one existing Inspector II. He requested that the body reconsider this account and restore \$13,597 so that the current Inspector II is fully funded for FYE2012.

Moderator Power explained the procedure that is required for the body to reconsider.

POINT OF ORDER was raised by Rep. Sebastian on the appropriateness of the Manager's request for reconsideration.

The Moderator noted that Mr. Oefinger is an ex-officio member of the RTM and as such may suggest actions to be taken by the body.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER Account 1046 - Planning & Development Services was made by Rep. Scott, seconded by Rep. Johnson.

The vote to reconsider carried 28 in favor, 12 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Fairbank, Ebbin, Granatosky, Harrell, Kotowski, Parfitt, Pasqualini, Plungis, Prochaska, Sebastian, Warn and Power.)

The Moderator announced that the main motion on the floor is \$1,176,579 and the first amended figure is \$1,126,579.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,140,176 was made by Rep. DeMatto, seconded by Rep. Luck. Rep. DeMatto stated that this figure adds the amount of \$13,597 specified by the Town Manager.

Members discussed the funding of the existing Inspector II position, the vacant position, funding for the new position in the FYE2013 budget, and the proposed town-wide property maintenance code.

The Town Manager clarified that the purpose of the additional \$13,597 is to fund the existing Inspector II position. The vacant position, which would be reclassified, will be assigned to the enforcement of the property maintenance code if it is approved. This would require approving the Manager's proposed figure for this account.

Members continued discussion on non-union salary reductions and the procedures for rescission and reconsideration.

Rep. Beckwith stated she will support the \$1,140,176 and pointed out that the budget contains no wage increases for non-union employees. She supports funding existing positions.

Rep. Streeter supports the amended figure. She noted that this is the first time that the Manager has requested that an account be reconsidered.

Members discussed the overtime and longevity budgeted in this account, the impact on the Fort Hill Homes property maintenance code enforcement, and inclusion of the vacant position in next year's budget once it has been reclassified.

The Town Manager clarified his request to fully fund the existing Inspector II position. He stated that the RTM's reduction was more than required for elimination of the vacant position.

MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Luck, seconded by Rep. Harrell. The vote on moving the question carried 29 in favor, 11 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Ambroise, Collins, Congdon, DeMatto, Ebbin, Kotowski, Plungis, Scott, Steinfeld, Warn and Power.)

The vote on the amendment of \$1,140,176 carried 32 in favor, 7 opposed, 1 abstention. (Opposed: Reps. Ebbin, Granatosky, Kotowski, Massett, Plungis, Steinfeld and Warn. Abstaining: Rep. Harrell.)

H. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 9:55 p.m. was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded by Rep. Harrell.

The vote carried 23 in favor, 17 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Ambroise, Barnhart, Baril, Congdon, DeMatto, Hedrick, Johnson, Kotowski, Massett, McCarthy, Morton, Newsome, Parfitt, Plungis, Scott, Streeter and Power.)

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk
Clerk of the RTM*

Sally A. Whitney, Assistant Town Clerk