



Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road
Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Meeting Minutes - **Draft**

Representative Town Meeting

Moderator Jean-Claude Ambroise, Representatives Karin Adams, Scott W. Aument, Sr., Joseph Baril, Nancy E. Barnhart, Alicia Bauer, Genevieve Cerf, Susan Chase-Hildebrand, Michael Collins, Christine Conley, Susan Deane-Shinbrot, Luanne E. DeMatto, Nancy Driscoll, Dave Ferreira, Neal Gardner, Patrice Granatosky, Dolores Harrell, Karen Hatcher, Keith L. Hedrick, Conrad F. Heede, Lynn Crockett Hubbard, Michael Dean Johnson, Rosanne E. Kotowski, Jim Loughlin, Jackie Massett, Bruce A. McDermott, Roscoe Merritt, Scott Newsome, Richard J. Pasqualini, Jr., Betty A. Prochaska, Pam Ryley, Jack Sebastian, Dana S. Semeraro, Richard Semeraro, Joan Steinfeld, Irma Streeter, Mark Svencer, Archie C. Swindell, Lori A. Watrous, Amanda L. Whewell and Ivy R. Williams

Wednesday, August 8, 2012

7:30 PM

Groton Senior Center

REGULAR MEETING

A. ROLL CALL

Moderator Jean-Claude Ambroise called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

29 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

The Moderator reported that Reps. Harrell, Hatcher, Prochaska, Steinfeld and Williams notified the Town Clerk of their absence. Reps. Gardner, Granatosky and Hedrick arrived later in the meeting.

Members Present: Moderator Ambroise, Rep. Adams, Rep. Aument, Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Chase-Hildebrand, Rep. Collins, Rep. Conley, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Driscoll, Rep. Ferreira, Rep. Gardner, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Heede, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Loughlin, Rep. Massett, Rep. McDermott, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. Ryley, Rep. D. Semeraro, Rep. R. Semeraro, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Swindell, Rep. Watrous and Rep. Whewell

Members Absent: Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Deane-Shinbrot, Rep. Hatcher, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hubbard, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Prochaska, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Svencer and Rep. Williams

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Public Works Director Gary Schneider, Mayor Heather Somers, Town Councilors Bill Johnson and Rita Schmidt, 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. DeMatto.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 11, 2012

A motion that the minutes be approved was made by Rep. Driscoll, seconded by Rep. Pasqualini and so voted unanimously.

D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

None.

E. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

None.

F. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

1. Financial report

Mr. Oefinger reported that the Fund Balance as of July 31, 2012 is approximately \$10.1 million; the General Contingency balance is \$450,000; the Capital Reserve balance is \$542,457.

2. Monthly briefing

The Town Manager highlighted various items from the Town Manager's News. Mr. Oefinger stated that the Town Attorney's opinion requested by the RTM in regard to approving the Town Operations portion of the budget as one figure is attached to the Town Manager's News. He noted that members may email questions concerning the decision and that the Town Attorney can attend a meeting to discuss this opinion.

In response to Rep. Merritt, the Manager explained the decision by Lawrence & Memorial Hospital to no longer provide the therapeutic exercise program at the Groton Senior Center.

2012-0245 Recent Increase in Landfill Fees

Recent Increase in Landfill Fees

This matter was Referred to the RTM Public Works Committee.

Rep. Loughlin expressed concern about the recent increase to landfill fees. He is worried about increased roadside dumping.

The Town Manager explained the action taken by the Groton Resource Recovery Authority/Town Council to approve the increase in landfill fees. He noted that the increase in fees will help reduce the contribution from the General Fund for this service.

Members discussed the impact of the additional fees on residents. Other items mentioned were meeting the required waste tonnage for the Preston waste disposal facility and ways to control use of the transfer station.

G. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

None.

H. LIAISON REPORTS

None.

I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. FINANCE - Chairman Granatosky

No meeting, no report.

2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SERVICES - Chairman Ferreira

No meeting, no report.

3. EDUCATION - Chairman Hedrick

No meeting, no report.

4. RECREATION - Chairman Streeter

No meeting, no report.

5. PUBLIC SAFETY - Chairman Pasqualini

No meeting, no report.

6. PUBLIC WORKS - Chairman Collins

Chairman Collins read the minutes of the meeting held on July 30, 2012. (Minutes are attached to the permanent record.)

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

The vote to approved the minutes carried 27 in favor, 1 abstention. (Abstaining: Rep. Gardner).

2012-0213 Adoption of Ordinance for Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation

ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING \$11,200,000 FOR THE CALENDAR YEARS 2013 THROUGH 2017 ROAD MAINTENANCE AND REHABILITATION PROGRAM AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUE OF BONDS AND NOTES IN THE SAME

AMOUNT TO FINANCE SAID APPROPRIATION

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF GROTON:

Section 1. That the sum of ELEVEN MILLION TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$11,200,000) is appropriated for costs related to maintenance and rehabilitation of the Town's accepted network of roads anticipated to be accomplished during calendar years ending December 31, 2013 through December 31, 2017, and costs related to the financing thereof. The estimated costs of the project are: (a) \$3,542,011 for maintenance and rehabilitation of roads located within the boundaries of the City of Groton, (b) \$986,703 for maintenance and rehabilitation of roads located within the boundaries of the Groton Long Point Association, (c) \$6,364,800 for maintenance and rehabilitation of roads within the Town and outside of boundaries of the City of Groton and Groton Long Point Association, and (d) \$306,486 for financing costs. The project is contemplated to include the roads described in the document entitled "Town of Groton, CT, Calendar Years 2013 through 2017 Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Program," as presented to the Town Council on June 26, 2012, a copy of which has been placed on file in the office of the Town Clerk, and improvements to such other roads as may be determined from time-to-time by the Town Council following consultation as applicable with the Mayor of the City of Groton and the President of the Groton Long Point Association. The road maintenance and rehabilitation is contemplated to include a combination of milling, crack sealing, overlay and/or full depth reclamation, replacement of deteriorated curbing, resetting or installation of new catch basin tops, traffic markings including line striping, stop bars and arrows, installation of signal loops for traffic signals, loaming and seeding of the disturbed areas, and related work and improvements. The appropriation may be spent for design, acquisition, installation and construction costs, equipment, materials, construction management, site improvements, environmental remediation including disposal of waste materials, easement acquisition, engineering fees, design and bidding services, testing and inspection costs, traffic control, legal fees, net interest on borrowings and other financing costs, and other expenses related to the project or its financing. Following consultation as applicable with the Mayor of the City of Groton and the President of the Groton Long Point Association, the Town Council shall determine the scope and particulars of the project and may reduce or modify the scope of the project, and the entire appropriation may be expended on the project as so modified or reduced.

Section 2. That the Town issue bonds or notes, in an amount not to exceed ELEVEN MILLION TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$11,200,000) to finance the appropriation for the project.

Section 3. That the Town issue and renew temporary notes from time to time in anticipation of the receipt of the proceeds from the sale of the bonds or notes for the project. The amount of the notes outstanding at any time shall not exceed ELEVEN MILLION TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$11,200,000).

Section 4. That the Town Council shall determine the amount of bonds or notes authorized by Section 2 to be sold. The Town Manager and the Director of Finance shall determine the amount of any temporary notes authorized by Section 3 to be sold. The Town Manager and the Director of Finance of the Town shall sign any bonds or notes by their manual or facsimile signatures. The law firm of Day Pitney LLP is designated as bond counsel to approve the legality of the bonds or notes. The Town Manager and the Director of Finance are authorized to determine the dates, interest rates, maturities, redemption provisions, form and other details of the bonds or notes; to provide for the keeping of a record of the bonds or notes; to designate one or more banks or trust companies to be certifying bank, registrar, transfer agent and paying agent for the bonds or notes; to designate a financial advisor to the Town in connection with the sale of the bonds or notes; to sell the bonds or notes at public or private sale; to deliver the bonds or notes; and to perform all other acts which are necessary or appropriate to issue the bonds or notes.

Section 5. That the Town hereby declares its official intent under Federal Income Tax Regulation Section 1.150-2 that (except to the extent reimbursed from grant moneys) project costs may be paid from temporary advances of available funds and that the Town reasonably expects to reimburse any such advances from the proceeds of borrowings, including qualified tax credit bonds, in an aggregate principal amount not in excess of the amount of borrowing authorized

above for the project. The Town Manager and the Director of Finance are authorized to amend such declaration of official intent as they deem necessary or advisable and to bind the Town pursuant to such representations and covenants as they deem necessary or advisable in order to maintain the continued exemption from federal income taxation of interest on the bonds or notes authorized by this ordinance if issued on a tax-exempt basis, including covenants to pay rebates of investment earnings to the United States in future years.

Section 6. That the Town Manager and the Director of Finance are authorized to make representations and enter into written agreements for the benefit of holders of the bonds or notes to provide secondary market disclosure information, which agreements may include such terms as they deem advisable or appropriate in order to comply with applicable laws or rules pertaining to the sale or purchase of such bonds or notes.

Section 7. That the Town Manager, the Director of Finance, and other proper officers of the Town are authorized to take all other action which is necessary or desirable to complete the project and to issue bonds or notes to finance the aforesaid appropriation.

Section 8. This ordinance shall become effective only if it has been adopted by vote of not less than five (5) members of the Town Council and by the Representative Town Meeting, and only if the appropriation set forth in Section 1 and the issuance of bonds and notes to finance said appropriation have been approved by the voters at referendum in accordance with Sections 5.5.5.1 and 9.13 of the Town Charter, and notice of passage has been published in accordance with the provisions of the Town Charter.

Refer to RTM.

A motion was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. DeMatto, that this matter be Adopted for August 8, 2012.

Members discussed the advantages and disadvantages of long term bonding for road maintenance. Some members were opposed to the amount of interest that would be expended over the course of the bond.

Additional discussion took place on annual CIP budgeting for roads and the past practice of reductions by either the Town Council or RTM to the Town Manager's annual request.

The Town Manager provided extensive information on the status of road infrastructure, new construction methods and paving materials. He stated that road maintenance for the City of Groton and Groton Long Point is included in the bond ordinance. He explained that the two subdivisions have different methods for the actual performance of road work.

Discussion continued on the escalating costs of road repairs due to delaying proper maintenance; the estimated interest cost of \$2.5 million; the increase in debt service due to bonding every five years; the need for annual road maintenance; reductions in the annual Town Operations budget to offset increases to CIP for road maintenance.

The Moderator clarified that the RTM is deciding whether to approve the bonding ordinance which will then be voted on by the taxpayers at referendum.

Some members believe that the taxpayers have the right to vote on this item.

Mayor Somers explained the Town Council's discussion on this issue and clarified the philosophy of the Council concerning long term road maintenance and infrastructure repairs. She noted that approving a comprehensive ordinance for road repairs has many advantages over approving smaller yearly amounts under the Capital Improvement Program.

The Manager stated that the Town's debt ratio is not only below State limits but is also below the annualized debt service level per capita. He noted that this information is contained in the annual budget book.

Members discussed approving the ordinance because the RTM supports the merits of the project versus approving it in order to have the taxpayers decide.

Rep. Granatosky arrived during discussion of this item.

MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Loughlin, seconded by Rep. Baril. The vote carried 23 in favor, 6 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. DeMatto, Gardner, Granatosky, Kotowski, Swindell and Ambroise).

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 21 - Rep. Adams, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Chase-Hildebrand, Rep. Collins, Rep. Conley, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Driscoll, Rep. Ferreira, Rep. Gardner, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Heede, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Loughlin, Rep. Massett, Rep. McDermott, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Ryley, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Swindell and Rep. Whewell
Opposed: 8 - Rep. Aument, Moderator Ambroise, Rep. Baril, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. D. Semeraro, Rep. R. Semeraro and Rep. Watrous

7. RULES & PROCEDURES - Chairman Massett

Chairman Massett read the minutes of the meeting held on July 30, 2012. (Minutes are attached to the permanent record.)

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

2012-0198 Review of RTM Rules

REVIEW OF RTM RULES (Sec. 3.8, Sec. 6 and Rules as a whole)

This matter was Discussed.

Chairman Massett noted that the proposed changes to the RTM Rules recommended by committee will be provided in the next monthly meeting packet and acted on at that meeting. She suggested that if there are any questions or concerns, members may contact her at any time. Chairman Massett noted that she has one more possible rule change that will be forwarded by the Town Clerk to all members.

8. CONSOLIDATION - Chairman Pasqualini

No meeting, no report.

J. OTHER BUSINESS

Rep. Pasqualini congratulated Rep. Swindell for receiving the Groton Utilities 2012 Jacqueline B. Nixon Community Service Award.

In response to Rep. McDermott, Moderator Ambroise stated that he will send a letter to the Board of Education encouraging representation and attendance at the RTM monthly meetings. This will allow for timely updates from the BOE.

In response to Rep. Kotowski, the Town Manager noted that he will report next month on the specific work currently being done to prepare for the start of the Thames Street road project. He stated that actual construction will start next spring.

2012-0244 Police Department Overtime

Request for an Accounting of Overtime Expenditures for Town Police Department

Referred

Rep. McDermott requested a referral to discuss overtime expenditures with the Town Police Chief. He would like an accounting of overtime assignments, total expenditures, the number of overtime hours and the employees' job titles and wages.

K. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 9:34 p.m. was made by Rep. Barnhart, seconded by Rep. Massett and so voted unanimously.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk
Clerk of the RTM*

Sally A. Whitney, Assistant Town Clerk