



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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

Meeting Minutes

Representative Town Meeting

Moderator Natalie B. Billing, Representatives Joe Baril, Tom Barnhart, Lori Bartinik, Alicia Bauer, Genevieve Cerf, Michael Collins, Syma Ebbin, June Evered, Peter Fairbank, Robert Garcia, Patrice Granatosky, Dolores Harrell, Debra Jenkins, Carole McCarthy, Kevin McMahon, Richard Metayer, David Miner, Deborah Monteiro, James Moulding, Scott Newsome, Nora Patterson, Deborah Peruzzotti, Robert Post, Kevin Power, Don Pratt, Mary-Ellen Schefers, Eleanor Scussel, Jack Sebastian, Jennifer Smuts, Eleanor Steere, Fritz Stein, Joan Steinfeld, Irma Streeter, Mark Svencer, Patti Thunberg, Cheryl Tilney, Kevin Trejo, Tom Vivirito, and John Wheeler.

Wednesday, June 13, 2007

7:30 PM

Senior Center

Regular Meeting

A. ROLL CALL

Moderator Natalie Billing called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

23 members were present, and a quorum was declared. (Rep. Power arrived later.)

The Moderator reported that Reps. Cerf, McCarthy, Metayer, Monteiro, Patterson, Peruzzotti, Pratt, Steere, Stein, and Svencer called to say they are unable to attend this meeting.

The Moderator read a letter of resignation from Rep. Walker of District 3. She expressed appreciation to Mr. Walker on behalf of the RTM for his many years of service.

Members Present: Moderator Billing, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Evered, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. Miner, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Power, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.

Members Absent: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Garcia, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. McMahon, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Post, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Schefers, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Svencer and Rep. Tilney

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Town Treasurer Cindy Landry, Superintendent of Buildings for Education and Grounds Wes Greenleaf, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, 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. Collins.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion that the minutes of the Annual Budget Meeting and the minutes of the May 9, 2007 regular meeting be adopted was made by Rep. Fairbank, seconded by Rep. Smuts.

Reps. Ebbin, Sebastian and Trejo each requested a correction to the minutes of the Annual Budget Meeting. The Town Clerk indicated that staff would make the appropriate corrections.

The vote to accept the minutes as amended carried unanimously.

(Rep. Power arrived at this time.)

D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

None.

E. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

Moderator Billing reported that all members received the Introduction of an Ordinance Appropriating \$1,385,000 for a replacement Animal Shelter for informational purposes only. She announced that the Town Council's public hearing on this item is scheduled for Tuesday, June 19, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex.

The Moderator received two e-mails, one concerning the phase-in of the revaluation and another

concerning the Tim Horton's Summer Camp Sponsorship Program.

F. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER:

1. Financial report

Mr. Vincent reported that the Unreserved & Undesignated Fund balance as of July 1, 2006 is approximately \$9.2 million; the General Contingency balance will be \$248,400 if the RTM approves the transfer of \$76,600 that is on the agenda at this meeting ; the Capital Reserve balance is \$2,996,677 and does not reflect the re-appropriation of \$48,400 that is on the agenda for this meeting.

Mr. Vincent invited the members to volunteer and assist the Parks and Recreation Department with the Annual Fourth of July parade.

Mr. Vincent thanked Tim Horton's for sponsoring at least 12 Groton children to the summer camp program in Kentucky. Applications are still being accepted and processed.

2. Monthly briefing

Mr. Oefinger announced that the Flanders Road Utility Extension Committee will have its first meeting on June 25, 2007 and that the School Design Committee Phase II will start meeting on June 14, 2007.

He announced that the Town Council will hold a public hearing concerning the animal shelter on June 19, 2007 and that the Council has established a mill rate based on the 3 year phase-in of the revaluation.

The Town Manager encouraged the members to read the memo from Public Works Director Gary Schneider attached to the Town Manager's News concerning the Kolnaski School window funding. He explained that a plan is being established to complete the school as soon as possible with a projected completion date of December 31, 2007. He stated that the Town is investigating and will recoup as much as possible through litigation for the expenses incurred due to the window specification problem.

In response to Rep. Ebbin, the Manager noted that the architectural firm has acknowledged the problem and the firm stated that the taxpayers will not bear the entire cost of this problem. He explained that the contracts for each school project are separate and that money cannot be shifted between the contracts. He commented that all parties involved are working collectively to review a list of what items can be delayed, postponed or eliminated to save money and that they will consider how to obtain the necessary additional funding due to the new windows.

In response to Rep. Smuts, the Manager stated that Northeast Academy was scaled down by four classrooms after the referendum, and that if the window specification problem had been identified prior to actual construction, design changes would have addressed the entire issue.

In response to Rep. Collins, the Town Manager explained the process of the revaluation phase-in over three years and the effect on the mill rate. He stated that new construction would be handled in the same manner as always and that the Assessor could meet with Rep. Collins if more information is needed.

In response to Rep. Steinfeld, the Manager stated that an explanation of the phase-in can not be mailed with the tax bills, but that information has been posted on Channel 2 and an article may appear in the next Discover magazine published by Parks and Recreation.

G. LIAISON REPORTS

1. Town Council - Rep. Monteiro

No meeting, no report.

2. Economic Development Commission - Rep. Cerf

No meeting, no report.

3. Town Council/Board of Education/RTM Liaison Committee - Rep. Patterson

No meeting, no report.

4. Permanent School Building Committee - Rep. Miner

No meeting, no report.

5. School Design Committee Phase II - Reps. Smuts & Harrell

No meeting, no report.

6. Shellfish Task Force - Rep. Ebbin

Rep. Ebbin reported on the meeting held May 21, 2007. Items discussed were the Fort Hill Homes sewer project, chlorine water treatment, and other routine projects that are monitored by the Shellfish Commission.

7. Flanders Road Utility Extension Committee - Reps. Bauer & Wheeler

No meeting, no report.

H. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. FINANCE

a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Granatosky

Chairman Granatosky read the minutes of the meeting of June 13, 2007. (Minutes are attached). A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

2007-0097 FYE 2007 Fourth Quarter Transfers

RESOLUTION FOR FYE 2007 FOURTH QUARTER TRANSFERS

WHEREAS, the Town Charter provides for supplemental appropriations to adopted budgets and transfers from the Contingency function during the year and

WHEREAS, the Town Charter also provides for the transfer of funds from one departmental function to another departmental function during the last three months of the fiscal year, and

WHEREAS, these transfers are necessary and represent unforeseen or unexpected expenditures at the time the FYE 2007 budget was adopted, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that \$76,600 be transferred from the General Fund Contingency function (#1074) to the following General Fund department or function and referred to the RTM for approval of those transfers over \$2,000:

Voter Registration (#1003) @ \$1,700;
for funding the August 2006 Democratic Primary recount and canvassing.

Public Safety (#1024) @ \$64,000;
for accrued holiday, sick leave, and vacation payouts for retirees.

Human Services (#1051) @ \$10,900;
for costs associated with evictions.

A motion was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld, that this matter be Adopted.

Rep. Sebastian stated that he dislikes having the three account transfers as one action item. He opposes the additional money to the Public Safety account. He stated that he represents fixed income residents and that the budget should be adhered to as it is approved. He feels that it is too easy for Town departments to request and receive more money and he will oppose this item and the next.

In response to Rep. Trejo, the Town Manager explained that the Public Safety account transfer is for the payout of 4 long-time officers who are retiring with time on the books. He noted that the money for anticipated retirements is no longer included in the annual budget. He noted that the Public Safety account differs from other departments when vacancies occur, since the positions have to be covered, and overtime costs are incurred until the vacancy is filled. He mentioned that

some departments will be returning money to the General Fund and these funds will exceed this contingency transfer. He added that management must follow the procedure outlined in the Charter for requesting additional funds from contingency and receive the approval of the Council and the RTM.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 22 - Moderator Billing, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Evered, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. Miner, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Power, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.
Opposed: 1 - Rep. Sebastian

2007-0115 CIP Project Reauthorization - High School Auditorium

RESOLUTION REAPPROPRIATING BOARD OF EDUCATION CIP FUNDS

WHEREAS, the Town Council and RTM approve Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) through the budgetary process and occasionally during the year, and

WHEREAS, a CIP appropriation is valid for five years including the year of appropriation, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council and RTM may reappropriate unexpended CIP funds for their initial intended purpose, and

WHEREAS, there are funds remaining in a FYE 2003 CIP that will no longer be available unless reappropriated, and

WHEREAS, this situation has occurred with a CIP associated with the Board of Education, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the remaining balance of \$48,400 for FYE 2003 CIP#5C (Air Conditioning Replacement-Hagerty Auditorium) be reappropriated and referred to the RTM for approval via RTM Rule 6.5.3.

A motion was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 22 - Moderator Billing, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Evered, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. Miner, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Power, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.
Opposed: 1 - Rep. Sebastian

2. COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Vivirito

No meeting, no report.

3. EDUCATION

a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Patterson

No meeting, no report.

4. HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Wheeler

No meeting, no report.

5. RECREATION

a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town- Chairman Power

No meeting, no report.

6. PUBLIC SAFETY**a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Pratt**

No meeting, no report.

7. PUBLIC WORKS**a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Collins**

No meeting, no report.

8. RULES & PROCEDURES**a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Stein**

No meeting, no report.

I. OTHER BUSINESS

The Moderator announced that neither she nor Rep. Vivirito will be able to attend the July RTM meeting. She stated that if the RTM has business to conduct, then the members will need to elect a Moderator Pro-Tem. If there is no business, the meeting will be cancelled.

Rep. Sebastian referenced a New London Day article that talked about school test scores and a corrective plan for school districts to identify specific measurable goals for improvement as requested by the State. He feels that the Groton Board of Education does not include even one measurable goal in their budget. He wants the Board of Education and Dr. Mitchell to address the RTM and identify specific measurable goals as suggested by the Moderator during the recent budget deliberations.

J. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. was made by Rep. Steinfeld, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Attest:

*Barbara Tarbox, Town Clerk
Clerk of the RTM*

Sally A. Whitney, Assistant Town Clerk