



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Town Council

Mayor Bruce Flax, Councilors Dean G. Antipas, Diane Barber, Joe de la Cruz, Greg Grim, Karen F. Morton, Bonnie Nault, Deb Peruzzotti, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, February 2, 2016

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m. by Mayor Flax.

I. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Flax, Councilor Antipas, Councilor de la Cruz, Councilor Grim, Councilor Morton, Councilor Nault, Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson
Members Absent: Councilor Barber

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger and Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Salute to the Flag was led by Mayor Flax and the Town Councilors.

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

None.

IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

None.

V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

None.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approval of Minutes

2016-0035 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meetings of January 5, 2016 and January 19, 2016 are hereby accepted and approved.

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

b. Administrative Items

2016-0030 Special Trust Fund Contributions

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts contributions to the Town as follows:

Marsha Cedrone - \$50.00 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

Edwin & Marilyn Chase - \$ 20.00 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

Anne-Marie Quagliaroli - \$20.00 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

Groton Utilities Matching Funds - \$23.72 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

Anonymous - \$5.00 - Library Renovations

John & Lauren Watson - \$100.00 - Library Renovations

Mystic Books - \$7.25 - Library Miscellaneous

Anonymous - \$5.00 - Library Miscellaneous

Neil & Pat Kluepfel - \$1,000.00 - Spicer Fund

Anonymous - \$100.00 - Library Miscellaneous

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

c. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List

2014-0289 OpenGov Software

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2014-0293 Town Council Rules Revision

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0001 Unaffiliated and Other Appointments (2015 Standing Referral)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0002 Republican Town Committee Appointments (2015 Standing Referral)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0003 Democratic Town Committee Appointments (2015 Standing Referral)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0004 Revised Position Descriptions (2015 Standing Referral)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0005 Pending Litigation (2015 Standing Referral)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0006 Labor Negotiations (2015 Standing Referral)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0007 Property Acquisition/Sale (2015 Standing Referral)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0008 Joint Meeting with City of Groton (2015 Standing Referral)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0009 Joint Meeting with Board of Education (2015 Standing Referral)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0010 Joint Meeting with Groton Long Point Board of Directors (2015 Standing Referral)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0011 Meeting with State Legislators (2015 Standing Referral)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.

2015-0272 Groton Housing Authority Redevelopment Plan

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2016-0012 Road Reconstruction Bond - Year 4 Projects

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2016-0014 Agreement to Convert HPS Streetlights to LED

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2016-0015 FYE 2015 CAFR

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2016-0017 Rural Communities Energy Assurance Program

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2016-0028 Repurposing of 2015 Justice Assistance Grant (JAG)

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

- 2016-0031 Connecticut Sub Trail Proposal**
 This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0034 Acceptance of Open Space in the North Woods Subdivision**
 This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.
- 2016-0037 Extension of the Appropriation for Thames Street Rehabilitation Project**
 This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

Passed The Consent Calendar

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Antipas, to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried unanimously

VII. COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)

a. Town Councilors

Councilor Antipas reported that he attended the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority Advisory Board meeting on January 21, 2016 and the Celebrate the Arts program at Northeast Academy on January 22, 2016.

Councilor Morton reported that she attended the Board of Education Public Hearing for the proposed FYE 2017 Education budget and the swearing-in ceremony for Sergeant LaFleur on February 2, 2016.

Councilor de la Cruz announced that the Town, City and Groton Long Point Police Departments are now participating with the PAARI program, Police Assisted Addition and Recovery Initiative. He announced statistical information relating to illegal drug use and deaths in New London County and the Town of Groton. He announced a vigil to be held in New London on February 4, 2016 for the purpose of drug addiction awareness. He requested a referral to the Town Attorney to review a proposal that would require pharmacies in the Town of Groton to distribute information related to the dangers of opiate prescription drug abuse.

Councilor Nault attended new business openings for Absolute Safety and Shoreline Office Suites. She stated that she attended the Golf Advisory Board meeting on February 1, 2106 where greens fee increases were proposed. She noted several upcoming meetings that she plans to attend.

Councilor Watson announced that the Town Council Personnel/Appointments Committee will have a special meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2016. He announced that the Town/City Councils/Board of Education/RTM liaison committee will be meeting on February 3, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the School Administration Building in room 11.

Mayor Flax stated that he attended the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments meeting, the 2016 Electric Boat business meeting, and new business openings for Absolute Safety and Shoreline Office Suites. He announced that the Special Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for February 4, 2016 has been canceled. He announced a Souper Bowl Party scheduled for Saturday, February 6, 2016 at the Groton Senior Center, featuring soups offered by local restaurants.

b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher announced that Dutcha Sliker-Hersant was elected to the 6th District of the Representative Town Meeting to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Bonnie Nault. She stated that the next regular meeting will be on February 10th, 2016 at the Groton Senior Center at 7:30 p.m. The RTM will be discussing the Town Council referral item 2015-0232, the sale of William Seely School property.

c. Clerk of the Council

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher announced that she attended the Groton Town Police Department swearing-in ceremony on February 2, 2016 and administered the Oath of Office to Sergeant Anthony LaFleur for his promotion to Patrol Sergeant.

d. Town Manager

Town Manager Mark Oefinger reviewed the Vergennes Court project and reported that the funding for this project will mostly be paid through a Federal grant.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Community Relations

No meeting, no report.

b. Finance

No meeting, no report.

c. Personnel & Appointments

No meeting, no report.

d. Rules

No meeting, no report.

e. Public Safety

No meeting, no report.

f. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Flax

Mayor Flax stated that the Committee of the Whole met and voted on all the items on the agenda for this meeting.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

2015-0272 Groton Housing Authority Redevelopment Plan

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING MODIFICATION OF THE COOPERATION AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF GROTON AND THE TOWN OF GROTON

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the Town of Groton and the Town of Groton entered into two Cooperation Agreements for Housing the Elderly on January 19, 1966 and June 12, 1973, covering Pequot Village and Grasso Gardens, respectively, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton and the Housing Authority wish to modify the agreement so that the Housing Authority pays sewerage system use charges instead of 10% of the shelter rent paid by tenants for each occupied unit, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Section 3, in each of the two Cooperation Agreements between the Housing Authority of the Town of Groton and the Town of Groton be modified to indicate that in lieu of real property taxes and special benefit assessments, the Housing Authority will pay 0% of shelter rent and that the Housing Authority will pay all sewerage system use charges, effective July 1, 2016.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0012 Road Reconstruction Bond - Year 4 Projects

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING YEAR 4 REPORTS FROM THE TOWN, CITY, AND GROTON LONG POINT FOR THE ROAD MAINTENANCE AND REHABILITATION PROGRAM

WHEREAS, in November 2012 Groton voters approved a five-year road maintenance and rehabilitation program for calendar years 2013 through 2017 that provides funding for the Town,

City, and Groton Long Point to maintain and rehabilitate the community's road system, and

WHEREAS, the program requires each entity to file a report with the Town Council by December 30th of each year that identifies the roads completed in the calendar year, compares estimated costs to actual costs, and identifies the roads to be addressed in the upcoming year, and

WHEREAS, it was anticipated that adjustments to the list of roads may be necessary to account for factors such as utility construction, accelerated aging of road surfaces, and planned development over the course of the multi-year project, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has reviewed the reports and proposed adjustments to the list of roads to be maintained/rehabilitated, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council accepts the Year 4 Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Program Reports from the Town, City, and Groton Long Point.

A motion was made by Councilor Peruzzotti, seconded by Councilor Morton, that this matter be Adopted.

Councilor Nault quoted an email from a past Town Councilor and questioned if engineering should be included in road paving projects.

Town Manager Mark Oefinger explained that the Town pays for road maintenance for the entire Town, which includes the City of Groton and Groton Long Point.

In response to Mayor Flax and Councilor Nault's questions, Town Manager Mark Oefinger explained that this Resolution is to accept the reports from the Highway Departments of the Town, the City of Groton and Groton Long Point. He stated that in doing so, the Town Council agrees to use unencumbered funds for other approved road work, such as drainage. He stated that drainage issues, such as replacing catch basins, need to be addressed prior to paving. He stated that completion of the initial projects have revealed some savings and that this resolution is seeking to use those funds to repair drainage issues on roads that will be included in future capital improvement projects.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 7 - Mayor Flax, Councilor Antipas, Councilor de la Cruz, Councilor Grim, Councilor Morton, Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson
Opposed: 1 - Councilor Nault

2016-0014 Agreement to Convert HPS Streetlights to LED

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH TANKO STREETLIGHTING, INC. TO CONVERT TOWN-OWNED STREET AND PARKING LOT LIGHTS TO LED

WHEREAS, the Public Works Department has been developing a project to convert the Town-owned street lights and parking lot lights to LED, significantly decreasing the cost of electricity and maintenance for street lighting in the Eversource service area, and

WHEREAS, the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM), as a way to expedite the LED conversion process for member communities, conducted a formal Request for Qualification process and selected three qualified companies, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council authorized the Director of Public Works to enter into discussions with the three companies evaluated and selected by CCM, and

WHEREAS, the Public Works Department sent a Request for Proposal to each of the three companies, reviewed and evaluated those proposals, and selected the proposal by Tanko

Streetlighting as the most responsive, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger is authorized to enter into a contract with Tanko Streetlighting to perform an Investment Grade Audit and convert the Town-owned street and parking lot lights to LED, with an option to opt out of the contract after completion of the audit, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Director of Public Works develop an LED conversion based on the results of the audit and present that plan to the Town Council for approval prior to proceeding with the installation phase of the project.

A motion was made by Councilor Grim, seconded by Councilor Nault, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0017

Rural Communities Energy Assurance Program

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF GROTON TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RURAL COMMUNITIES ENERGY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Connecticut Center for Advance Technologies (CCAT) have identified the Town of Groton as a community that could benefit from the technical assistance provided by the program to ensure reliable power to critical community functions and facilities, and

WHEREAS, the program can assist in facilitating the development of renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements by providing technical review of the projects, and

WHEREAS, the services provided to the community under this program will be provided at no cost to the Town because it is funded by a USDA grant, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger is authorized to sign the USDA Assurance Agreement allowing the Public Works Department to take advantage of the technical assistance provided by the Rural Communities Energy Assurance Program.

A motion was made by Councilor Morton, seconded by Councilor Nault, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0028

Repurposing of 2015 Justice Assistance Grant (JAG)

RESOLUTION APPROVING A MODIFICATION TO THE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT (JAG) FOR BODY-WORN CAMERAS FOR POLICE OFFICERS

WHEREAS, the purpose of the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management's Justice Assistant Grant (JAG) is the prevention of violent crime and the prosecution of violent offenders, and

WHEREAS, on April 21, 2015 the Town Council authorized a JAG application in the amount of \$15,000 for body-worn cameras for police officers, and

WHEREAS, body-worn cameras were found to be cost-prohibitive due to recurring fees for licensing and video storage that are not sustainable in the Police Department budget, and

WHEREAS, an amended grant application was submitted to purchase three DATA911 in-car camera systems for patrol vehicles, expanding the Police Department's ability to record and capture evidence of violent criminal behavior, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger or his designee is authorized to amend the

previously approved State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management's Justice Assistance Grant of \$15,000 for in-car camera systems rather than body-worn cameras.

A motion was made by Councilor Nault, seconded by Councilor de la Cruz, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0031 Connecticut Sub Trail Proposal

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SPONSORSHIP OF THE CT SUB TRAIL

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton, as the Submarine Capital of the World, is participating in Connecticut's Submarine Century, and

WHEREAS, CT Sub Trail is a public art project that will further tie the community together to celebrate 100 years of the submarine industry, and

WHEREAS, the CT Sub Trail will comprise a "fleet" of 20 sub sculptures sponsored by local organizations to be painted by local artists, and

WHEREAS, net proceeds from the sub sponsorship will benefit the USS Groton Sail Foundation, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council authorizes the sponsorship of a CT Sub Trail sub sculpture at a cost of \$5,000 to be charged to Function 1010 Executive Management.

A motion was made by Councilor Antipas, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0034 Acceptance of Open Space in the North Woods Subdivision

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING OPEN SPACE IN THE NORTH WOODS SUBDIVISION

WHEREAS, the North Woods Subdivision off North Road (Route 117) was approved by the Planning Commission on August 12, 2008, and

WHEREAS, on January 12, 2016 the Planning Commission recommended acceptance of the .89 acre open space parcel in the subdivision, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts the open space parcel in the North Woods Subdivision.

A motion was made by Councilor de la Cruz, seconded by Councilor Grim, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0015 FYE 2015 CAFR

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE FYE 2015 AUDIT REPORT

WHEREAS, the Town Council has considered the annual audit of the Town of Groton's finances, covering the fiscal year from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015, and

WHEREAS, the Council has discussed the audit findings with the manager of the audit team from the firm of Blum Shapiro, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town of Groton accepts and files the FYE 2015 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), the Auditor's Reports and Management Letter.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Morton, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0037 Extension of the Appropriation for Thames Street Rehabilitation Project**RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE THAMES STREET REHABILITATION PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton (the "Town") approved Ordinance No. 275 at referendum on May 2, 2011, which appropriated \$6,375,505 and authorized borrowing in the same amount for the Thames Street Rehabilitation project; and

WHEREAS, the Debt Policy and Management/Fiscal Practices of the Town provide that any appropriation for construction or other permanent improvement which has not been completely expended at the end of five years from the date thereof shall thereupon lapse; and

WHEREAS, the Town Manager has reported that certain additional expenditures remain to be made or financed for the project that cannot be expended or financed by the end of five years from the effective date of the last appropriating ordinance and has recommended that said appropriation be extended by reappropriating that portion of the \$6,375,505 which has not been expended or financed on the effective date of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Director of Finance has certified that whatever portion of said appropriation is extended may be financed by grants and Town general obligation bonds previously approved; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the Town to complete the financing of the Thames Street Rehabilitation project; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that any portion of said \$6,375,505 appropriation which has not been expended or financed on the effective date of this resolution shall be extended and reappropriated, provided that the total amount expended or financed as of the effective date of this resolution, pursuant to said appropriation under Ordinance No. 275, plus the portion which is reappropriated, shall not exceed \$6,375,505.

Refer to RTM.

A motion was made by Councilor Peruzzotti, seconded by Councilor Watson, that this matter be Adopted and Referred to the Representative Town Meeting.

The motion carried unanimously

X. OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Watson made a motion to suspend the Rules of the Town Council in order to discuss appointing Bob Frink and Rusty Sergeant to the Housing Authority without reviewing the matter in committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor de la Cruz and voted by consensus to suspend the Rules of the Town Council.

Councilor Nault made a motion to approve appointing Bob Frink and Rusty Sergeant to the Housing Authority, seconded by Councilor de la Cruz.

Councilor Watson questioned whether this matter warranted the urgency to by-pass the Personnel/Appointments Committee. He stated that the Personnel/Appointments Committee will be meeting on February 9, 2016.

Councilor Nault and Councilor de la Cruz withdrew their motion. By consensus, the Town Council agreed to have the Personnel/Appointments Committee review these appointments.

Councilor Antipas requested a referral to the Committee of the Whole in order to discuss possible uses of the SCARRRA building located at the Town landfill. He would like to explore allowing Groton's Fire Districts access to this building for the purpose of fire safety training.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilor Watson and seconded by Councilor Nault. Mayor Flax adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk
Clerk of the Council*