



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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Meeting Minutes Town Council

Mayor Rita M. Schmidt, Councilors Genevieve Cerf, Joe de la Cruz, Bruce S. Flax, Bob Frink, Rich Moravsik, Deborah L. Peruzzotti, Heather Bond Somers and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:39 p.m. by Mayor Schmidt.

Members Present: Mayor Schmidt, Councilor Cerf, Councilor de la Cruz, Councilor Flax, Councilor Frink, Councilor Moravsik and Councilor Watson

Members Absent: Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Somers

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Office Assistant Lori Watrous.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Salute to the Flag was led by Lee Vincent.

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

2014-0097 Proclamation Recognizing Carl Thomas Hogsten III

Read

The proclamation was read by Councilor Moravsik.

IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Lee Vincent, 1 New London Road, noted that some Councilors are considering the use of private contractors for snow plowing and maintenance. He stated that the same Town employees perform both of these jobs utilizing the same equipment for both services. Mr. Vincent remarked that there are complex ramifications to be discussed before considering any changes.

Ron Yuhas, 91 South Road, appreciated the fact that the location of the recent Retirement Board meeting was moved to the Annex so that the public could attend. He stated that it would be good to delay hiring a police chief until consolidation options are discussed. Mr. Yuhas noted that executive sessions are allowed for acquiring property, not for the sale of property. He believes that the public should have access to information regarding the sale of Town owned property.

V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Mr. Oefinger remarked that Retirement Board meetings have always been advertised and open to the public. He noted that with the increased number of people attending, future meetings will be held at the Town Hall Annex.

The Town Manager noted that executive sessions are allowed for the purchase or sale of Town owned property according to Freedom of Information guidelines. There are no motions or votes during executive session. When the Council is ready to vote on purchasing or acquiring a property, it is done publicly.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approval of Minutes

2014-0101 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of March 18, 2014 are hereby accepted and approved.

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

b. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List**2013-0209****Groton Veterans Memorial - Update**

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

2014-0089**Presentation by Goman and York Property Advisors, LLC**

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

2014-0093**Tour of Former Noank School**

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

2014-0102**Referral of Godfrey Street Easement to Planning Commission Under CGS Section 8-24**

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

2014-0103**Noank School - Public Garden Proposal Presentation Extension**

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

2014-0104**Scheduling of Public Hearing on Request for Financial Incentive - LBI, Inc.**

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 Flax, 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**

Councilors received communications in support of the Board of Education budget; in support of the present Police Department administration; in support of the budget in general; and against the proposed budget.

Councilors toured Noank School and the LBI, Inc. facility.

Councilor Cerf and Councilor Moravsik attended a Retirement Board meeting.

Councilor Moravsik and Councilor Frink attended a CCM Ethics Conference.

Councilor Cerf attended State public hearings concerning IT infrastructures and elimination of property tax exemptions for non-profit organizations. She attended a Board of Education meeting and has had discussions with both the Town and Board of Education IT departments about their infrastructures. Councilor Cerf also attended a Fitch High School robotics competition.

Councilor Moravsik attended a Boating Advisory Board meeting and an Eagle Scout Court of Honor.

Councilor Frink attended an RTM Economic Development Corporation Task Force meeting. He also met with the Chairman of the Zoning Commission and the Superintendent of Schools.

Councilor de la Cruz attended the New London girl's basketball game at which it won its first State championship.

Mayor Schmidt announced that Earth Day at UCONN-Avery Point will be held April 23, 2014; the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce will host a breakfast on April 23, 2014; and the next Boomer Event at the Senior Center on honey bees will be held April 8, 2014. The Mayor toured the Old Mystic Fire Department, attended the retirement party for Director of Planning Mike Murphy, and met with the Mystic Ambulance Association.

Mayor Schmidt made the following appointments to Town Council committees:

Finance - Councilor Frink (chair), Councilor Watson, Councilor Somers, and Councilor Cerf

Rules - Councilor Frink (chair), Councilor Watson, Councilor Somers, and Councilor Cerf

Personnel and Appointments - Councilor Flax (chair), Councilor Moravsik, Councilor Peruzzotti, and Councilor de la Cruz

Community Relations - Councilor de la Cruz (chair), Councilor Flax, Councilor Moravsik, and Councilor Peruzzotti

The Personnel and Appointments Committee and the Community Relations Committee will meet the first Tuesday of each month.

The Finance Committee and the Rules Committee will meet the third Tuesday of each month.

b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting

The next regular RTM meeting will be held April 9, 2014, at the Senior Center. The Town Clerk noted that Rep. Sebastian and Rep. Hatcher, both from District 7, have resigned. The remaining members of District 7 will hold an election April 9, 2014, to vote on a replacement for Rep. Sebastian.

c. Clerk of the Council

Ms. Moukawsher stated that DEEP fishing guides are available at the Town Clerk's Office. She noted that she will be attending the Town Clerk's Spring Conference April 10-11, 2014. The Town Clerk attended a Rotary meeting and noted that a Silent Auction/Wine Tasting will be held on April 7, 2014, to benefit the Rotary scholarship program.

d. Town Manager

The Town Manager remarked that bond rating interviews have taken place. The Town's bond rating with Fitch and Moody's remained the same, but Standard & Poor's has upgraded its rating. He noted that a bond sale will be held April 2, 2014, and he will forward results to the Council. Mr. Oefinger stated that budget sessions will be held on April 3, 2014, and April 5, 2014. The Town Manager announced that Town employees have received an award for participation in the United Way campaign and Kate Bradley (Parks and Recreation Department) was honored as the new coordinator of the year. He also announced that the Groton Public Library will receive the 2014 Public Service Award on April 29, 2014.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Committee of the Whole

The resolutions on tonight's agenda are a result of the Committee of the Whole meeting. Mayor Schmidt noted that the Committee of the Whole also had a presentation from Gorman + York; executive sessions regarding Pettini and the disposition of William Seely School; and a tour of Noank School and LBI, Inc.

b. Personnel and Appointments

No meeting, no report.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

2013-0209 Groton Veterans Memorial - Update

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE INSTALLATION OF VETERAN MEMORIAL TILES AT THE LIBRARY/SENIOR CENTER VETERANS MEMORIAL PLAZA

WHEREAS, Mr. James Streeter has led an effort to add a memorial stone for veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to the Veterans Memorial Plaza located at the Library/Senior Center, and

WHEREAS, in October, 2012 the Town Council expressed its support for the memorial stone and Mr. Streeter's fundraising effort, which includes the sale of 8" x 8" veteran memorial tiles that will be used to create an expanded plaza area, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves the installation of the new veteran memorial tiles along with the memorial stone for veterans of the Persian Gulf wars at the Library/Senior Center Veterans Memorial Plaza as depicted on the handout submitted and subject to the receipt of necessary land use approvals/permits.

A motion was made by Councilor Cerf, seconded by Councilor Frink, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2014-0102 Referral of Godfrey Street Easement to Planning Commission Under CGS Section 8-24

REFERRAL OF GODFREY STREET EASEMENT TO PLANNING COMMISSION UNDER CGS SECTION 8-24

RESOLVED, that the Town Council refers the request for an easement off Godfrey Street in Mystic to the Groton Planning Commission, pursuant to CGS Section 8-24.

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor de la Cruz, that this matter be Adopted and Referred to the Planning Commission.

The motion carried unanimously

2014-0103 Noank School - Public Garden Proposal Presentation Extension

RESOLUTION GRANTING AN EXTENSION TO NOANK RESIDENTS TO DEVELOP A PLAN FOR REUSE OF THE FORMER NOANK SCHOOL PROPERTY

WHEREAS, on October 22, 2013 a group of Noank residents led by Robert Palm presented a proposal to the Town Council for "Noank School Public Gardens" with elements including a community garden, orchard, farmers' market, and reuse of a portion of the Noank School building for classrooms, public events, and storage, and

WHEREAS, on November 4, 2013 the Town Council gave Robert Palm, Timothy McDowell, and Clint Wright six months to develop a more formal and detailed plan for reuse of the Noank School building and property including comprehensive cost estimates and financing plans/alternatives, and

WHEREAS, Mr. Palm and Mr. Wright have indicated that they are now focused on the community garden rather than reuse of the building, and that they would like additional time to prepare their presentation, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council gives Robert Palm, Timothy McDowell, and Clint Wright until May 31, 2014 to present their plan for reuse of the Noank School property including comprehensive cost estimates and financing plans/alternatives.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2014-0104 Scheduling of Public Hearing on Request for Financial Incentive - LBI, Inc.

RESOLUTION SCHEDULING PUBLIC HEARING ON A REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL INCENTIVE BY LBI, INC.

RESOLVED, that the Town Council will hold a public hearing on the request for financial incentive by LBI, Inc. on Tuesday, April 15, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in Town Hall Annex, Community Room 1.

A motion was made by Councilor Moravsik, seconded by Councilor Flax, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

X. OTHER BUSINESS

2014-0113 Request for Number of Town Employees in Each Department by Calendar Quarter

REQUEST FOR NUMBER OF TOWN EMPLOYEES IN EACH DEPARTMENT BY
CALENDAR QUARTER

Councilor Cerf requested a spreadsheet outlining the number of employees in each department by calendar quarter.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 8:21 p.m. was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Moravsik and so voted unanimously.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk
Clerk of the Council*

Lori Watrous, Office Assistant