



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
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Meeting Minutes

Town Council

Mayor James L. Streeter, Councilors Bruce S. Flax, Bill Johnson, Catherine Kolnaski, Deborah B. Monteiro, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Deborah L. Peruzzotti, Paulann H. Sheets, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, June 1, 2010

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Mayor Streeter.

Members Present: Mayor Streeter, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Sheets and Councilor Watson

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 Former State Representative Betsy Gibson.

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

None.

IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Nick Sahin, 645 Groton Long Point Road, proposed forming a "Sister City" partnership between Groton and the city Mr. Sahin immigrated from, Dinar in Afyon, Turkey. He believes that both communities could benefit from the cultural and educational relationship that this partnership could provide.

Kevin Power, 54 Oxford Court, Mystic, RTM Moderator, stated that he took exception to a statement made by Councilor Johnson on May 18, 2010, that actions taken at the recent RTM budget proceedings were "erratic" and "irresponsible". Mr. Power noted that RTM meetings are conducted in accordance with the Town Charter and RTM Rules. He added that, by Charter, the RTM does not need to consult the Council when making financial decisions for the Town. He reminded Councilors that they are ex-officio members of the RTM, and while Councilors cannot vote at an RTM meeting, he would be happy to recognize them to speak during debate.

Paul Bates, 47 Church Street, Noank, believes that agendas, minutes, and contact information for members of the Noank School Reuse Committee should be put on the Town website. Mr. Bates suggested that Wes Greenleaf, a Noank resident and the Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds for the Board of Education, could conduct a "walk-through" with a videographer and interested citizens to document the condition of the building.

Betsy Gibson, 91 Jupiter Point Road, remarked that if there is \$5,000 available in the budget she would rather see the money used for promotion of the SubBase than a pledge to the Thames America's Cup Committee. She feels that the Economic Development Commission should be consulted before such a pledge; otherwise the resolution should be defeated.

Frank McLaughlin, 14 Pearl Street, Mystic, noted that an event like the America's Cup Challenge is good publicity for the Town. Even if some of the preliminary races were held here, it would promote the area as a sailing community.

V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Councilor Johnson apologized if he offended anyone and clarified that it seemed irrational to him to cut three percent of the entire Planning Department budget instead of the salary for the position being eliminated.

Councilor Johnson, Councilor O'Beirne, and Councilor Sheets noted that Groton Long Point did not have time to plan for such a large reduction to its police budget. These types of cuts require advance planning and discussion regarding impacts to both the Town and the Police Department.

Councilor O'Beirne was disturbed by the additional reductions to the Mystic & Noank Library budget because libraries are utilized more during tough economic times.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approval of Minutes

2010-0129 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of May 18, 2010 are hereby accepted and approved.

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

b. Administrative Items

2010-0120 Special Trust Fund Contributions

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts contributions to the Town as follows:
Suisman Shapiro Attorneys at Law - \$250.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Ledge Light Health District - \$1,875.00 - Maritime Academy Miscellaneous

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

c. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List

2010-0105 Change in Previously Authorized Board of Education CIP Project

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

2010-0113 Joint Meeting with Noank Executive Board

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

2010-0118 Thames America's Cup Committee

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

2010-0121 FYE 2010 Suspense List

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

2010-0123 End Hunger CT!'s Operation Participation Grant

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 Kolnaski, to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.
The motion carried unanimously

VII. COMMUNICATION REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)

a. Town Councilors

Councilors received emails and personal comments from citizens regarding an appropriation for Groton Long Point and the America's Cup Challenge.

Councilor Monteiro and Councilor Kolnaski attended a School Mentors' Recognition Event at Fitch Senior High School.

Councilor Kolnaski attended an Adult Computer Learning Center Coordinating Council meeting and a veterans' luncheon.

Councilor Flax visited the Museum of Science with a 5th grade class from S. B. Butler Elementary School.

Councilor O'Beirne attended an informational session regarding the bridge on Route 184. A larger and wider bridge is being designed, and the bridge will not be completed until at least October 2010.

Mayor Streeter received emails on the disposition of the Noank Elementary School. He attended a CCM seminar on historic preservation, gave a presentation on Morton Plant, and delivered a presentation on local government to a Civics class at Fitch Senior High School.

b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher stated that the Twenty-Seventh RTM has concluded its budget deliberations.

c. Clerk of the Council

The Town Clerk reminded Councilors to inform her if they intended to participate in the 4th of July Parade.

d. Town Manager

The Town Manager noted that the 50th Anniversary of the Groton Public Library will be celebrated on June 21, 2010. He stated that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has reversed its decision and approved the disaster declaration for Southeastern Connecticut. There will be two local Disaster Recovery Centers, one in Norwich and the other in Groton. The Town Manager received a notice from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding changes to boating regulations to establish a slow, no-wake area in the Mystic River; there will be a Public Hearing on June 29, 2010.

e. Town Attorney

No report.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Community & Cultural Development - Chairman Peruzzotti

No meeting, no report.

b. Economic Development - Chairman Johnson

Councilor Johnson reported on the meeting held on May 25, 2010.

c. Education/Health & Social Services - Chairman Kolnaski

No meeting, no report.

d. Environment/Energy - Chairman Sheets

No meeting, no report.

e. Finance - Chairman O'Beirne

Councilor O'Beirne read the minutes of the meeting held on May 25, 2010, which are on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

f. Personnel/Appointments/Rules - Chairman Flax

No meeting, no report.

g. Public Safety - Chairman Monteiro

No meeting, no report.

h. Public Works/Recreation - Chairman Watson

No meeting, no report.

i. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Streeter

Mayor Streeter stated that the resolutions on tonight's agenda are a result of the last Committee of the Whole meeting.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Councilor Watson noted that a referral for an outside consultant to look at all the police departments within the Town was not on the list of referrals, and was assured by Mayor Streeter that it will be placed on that list.

X. NEW BUSINESS

2010-0125 Establishment of Tax Rate for General Fund (FYE 11)

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING TAX RATE FOR GENERAL FUND TAXES DUE ON JULY 1, 2010

WHEREAS, the Representative Town Meeting has approved a General Fund Budget for fiscal year ending June 30, 2011 providing for expenditure appropriations totaling \$117,795,148, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council estimates cash revenue exclusive of FYE 2011 property taxes will total \$42,700,964 therefore be it

RESOLVED, that \$932,201 is hereby appropriated as fund balance available as of July 1, 2010 to partially meet expenditure appropriations contained in the FYE 2011 General Fund Budget, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the tax rate for taxes due July 1, 2010 is hereby established at 18.42 mills per thousand dollar of assessed valuation to raise \$74,161,983 ($\$74,161,983 \div \$4,103,932,891 \div 98.1\% \times 1,000 = 18.42$ mills).

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

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0126 Establishment of Tax Rate for Mumford Cove District Fund (FYE 11)

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING TAX RATE FOR MUMFORD COVE DISTRICT FUND DUE JULY 1, 2010

WHEREAS, the Representative Town Meeting has approved a Mumford Cove District Fund Budget for fiscal year ending June 30, 2011 providing for expenditure appropriations totaling \$20,787, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council estimated cash revenue exclusive of FYE 2011 property taxes will total \$30, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the tax rate for taxes due for the Mumford Cove District Fund on July 1, 2010 is hereby established at 0.279 mills per thousand dollar of assessed valuation to raise \$20,757 ($\$20,757 \div \$74,562,644 \div 99.7\% \times 1,000 = 0.279$ mills).

A motion was made by Councilor Sheets, seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, that this matter be Adopted.

Councilor Sheets disclosed that she is a Mumford Cove resident.

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0127 Establishment of Tax Rate for Groton Sewer District Fund (FYE 11)

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING TAX RATE FOR GROTON SEWER DISTRICT FUND
DUE JULY 1, 2010

WHEREAS, the Representative Town Meeting has approved a Groton Sewer District Fund Budget for fiscal year ending June 30, 2011 providing for expenditure appropriations totaling \$1,502,786 and

WHEREAS, the Town Council estimated cash revenue exclusive of FYE 2011 property taxes will total \$38,124, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that \$705,765 is hereby appropriated as fund balance available as of July 1, 2010, to partially meet expenditure appropriations contained in the FYE 2011 Sewer District Fund budget, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the tax rate for taxes due for the Groton Sewer District Fund on July 1, 2010 is hereby established at 0.29 mills per thousand dollar of assessed valuation to raise \$758,897 ($\$758,897 \div \$2,641,096,692$ (excluding motor vehicles) $\div 98.9\% \times 1,000 = 0.29$ mills).

A motion was made by Councilor Monteiro, seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0105

Change in Previously Authorized Board of Education CIP Project

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATION FOR
EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

WHEREAS, Superintendent of Schools Paul Kadri requested that the Town Council consider a change in a previously authorized Capital Improvement Program project for enhancing educational technologies related to video furnaces, and

WHEREAS, Mr. Kadri feels that a contracted, Web-based software and hosting solution would better meet the current and future needs of the school district, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the FYE 2009 CIP #5F-1 Educational Technologies-Video Furnace for \$73,000 be closed and those funds be transferred to the General Fund, and be it further

RESOLVED, that \$73,000 is appropriated from the General Fund's unreserved, undesignated fund balance to the Board of Education account #10800 - Education Services.

Refer to RTM.

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, that this matter be Adopted and Referred to the Representative Town Meeting, due back on July 21, 2010.

Councilor O'Beirne stated that he will be voting against this resolution as he believes that it is an improper use of CIP funds.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 8 - Mayor Streeter, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Sheets and Councilor Watson
Opposed: 1 - Councilor O'Beirne, Jr.

2010-0118

Thames America's Cup Committee

RESOLUTION PLEDGING A CONTRIBUTION TO THE THAMES AMERICA'S CUP
COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, the Thames America's Cup Committee (TACC) has been meeting to investigate the possibility of attracting all or a portion of the next America's Cup Challenge to the Thames

River/Fishers Island Sound, and

WHEREAS, TACC has estimated that they need to raise \$25,000 in order to hire a consultant to put forth a proposal to those persons involved in selecting the site of the next race, and

WHEREAS, TACC has indicated that the America's Cup Challenge and associated selection series events would have a tremendous positive economic impact on Groton and southeastern Connecticut, and

WHEREAS, TACC has stated that no Town funds will be expended until pledges totalling \$25,000 have been received, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council of the Town of Groton hereby authorizes a pledge of \$5,000 to the Thames America's Cup Committee from encumbered funds previously appropriated under the function Executive Management 1010.

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

Councilors O'Beirne and Monteiro will be voting against this resolution due to the recent budget cuts and layoffs.

Councilor Johnson believes that this would be considered advertising.

Councilor Sheets stated that it is an opportunity for the entire area.

Mayor Streeter feels that it would be a great economic opportunity to get some of the preliminary races to take place locally, even if the larger race takes place elsewhere.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 6 - Mayor Streeter, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Sheets and Councilor Watson
Opposed: 3 - Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro and Councilor O'Beirne, Jr.

2010-0121

FYE 2010 Suspense List

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE FISCAL YEAR 2010 SUSPENSE LIST

WHEREAS, State law requires that once a year a list shall be compiled of taxes that should be suspended, and

WHEREAS, the accounts which have been determined as uncollectible have been contacted at least nine times with no response, and

WHEREAS, placing uncollected items on the Suspense List helps avoid waste of money and staff time, and

WHEREAS, taxpayers remain liable for all amounts that are placed on the Suspense List, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the following amounts be added to the Suspense List as reported to the Town Council:

Town: \$458,012.15
Sewer District: \$2,356.96
Mumford Cove: \$3.09
Total: \$460,372.20

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be

Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0123 End Hunger CT!'s Operation Participation Grant

RESOLUTION TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS TO OPERATE A 2010 SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN IN GROTON

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture provides funding through the Connecticut State Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs, for a Summer Food Service Program for Children, and

WHEREAS, the Summer Food Service Program for Children promotes and provides good nutrition during the summer months when at-risk, low-income children are not receiving the benefits of the Federal School Breakfast/Lunch Program through their schools, and

WHEREAS, units of local government may act as sponsors for the Summer Food Service Program and the Town of Groton Parks and Recreation Department is capable of administering Groton's Summer Food Service Program for Children, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager, Mark R. Oefinger, is authorized to enter into an agreement with the Connecticut State Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs for the purpose of establishing and operating a Groton based Summer Food Service Program for Children, overseen by the Parks and Recreation Department and Administrative Services Department, during the months of June, July and August 2010 and sign claims for reimbursement, and therefore be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the absence or incapacity of the first designated individual (Town Manager Oefinger,) the Town Finance Director, Salvatore M. Pandolfo, is designated to sign claims for reimbursement.

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

The motion carried unanimously

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 8:41 p.m. was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Monteiro and so voted unanimously.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk
Clerk of the Council*

Lori Watrous, Office Assistant