



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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Town Manager
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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, July 19, 2016

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

In the absence of Mayor Flax, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Councilor Antipas, Councilor Barber, Councilor de la Cruz, Councilor Grim, Councilor Morton, Councilor Nault and Councilor Watson

Members Absent: Mayor Flax and Councilor Peruzzotti

Town Clerk Moukawsher declared that a quorum was present.

Also present was Town Manager Mark Oefinger.

Town Clerk Moukawsher asked for nominations to elect a Chairman pro tem. Councilor Barber made a motion to nominate Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Nault. Hearing no other nominations, Town Clerk Moukawsher called for the vote. Councilor Watson was nominated unanimously to serve as Chairman pro tem.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Salute to the Flag was led by Machinist Mate First Class Patrick Kohr.

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

2016-0173 Proclamation Recognizing Connecticut's Submarine Century

Read

The Proclamation was read by Councilor Nault.

- Groton 4th of July Parade Awards

Chairman pro tem Watson invited Manager of Recreation Services Jerry Lokken to present the July 4th Parade awards to the recipients. Mr. P.W. Louthain received the award for Most Patriotic on behalf of the U.S. Sub Base. The Best Costume award was given to the Yalesville Fife and Drum Corps. The Best Music award was given to the Deep River Senior Drum Corps. The Best Youth Participation Award was given to Kindermusik with Miss Molly. Ms. Zeigler accepted this award on behalf of Kindermusik. The Judges' Choice award was awarded to the Connecticut Sub Trail, with special recognition to Padgett and Sons for transporting the mini submarines in the parade. Ms. Joy Supples, the originator, accepted this award on behalf of the artists that participated in this event.

IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Kevin Trejo, 536 Shennecossett Road, introduced himself as the Chairman of Children First Groton committee and Groton's School Readiness Program. He gave the Town Council an overview of the programs and services that are utilized through Children First, the Readiness Program, and Child and Family Services. He reported that a State Grant for \$509,380 was awarded to support the Pre-Kindergarten program. He offered to address the Committee of the Whole with a more detailed report on a regular basis. He stated that the Town Council may appoint a representative to the Children First Groton committee. Mr. Trejo's statement is on file in

the Town Clerk's Office.

Ron Yuhas, 91 South Road, introduced himself as the Vice-President of the Poquonnock Bridge Fire District. He stated that the past Town Council had established a Safety Committee. He stated that through this committee, the issues with the Groton Ambulance Company were pinpointed and resolved. He urged the Town Council to re-establish the Safety Committee. Mr. Yuhas gave a brief report on the welfare of the Poquonnock Bridge Fire District as being in good shape. In other matters, Mr. Yuhas discussed the issue of snow removal for the Poquonnock Bridge Fire District. He cited a news article quoting Public Works Director Gary Schneider as stating that the Town cut \$8000 from the FYE2017 proposed budget that would have been used for snow plowing. He stated that he does not accept this decision and would like to pursue a resolution. Mr. Yuhas expressed his displeasure with the practice of Town Departments rushing to spend unencumbered funds at the end of the fiscal year, and the practice of giving non-union employees vacation pay for unused vacation days. Lastly, he stated that approximately 70% of all Town-owned buildings are within the Poquonnock Bridge Fire District and that the residents with the lowest income pay for the fire protection to these buildings. He made a request to meet with the Safety Committee to further explore other options, including consolidation of services with other districts.

V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

In response to Councilor Nault, Mr. Trejo stated that Children First meets from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on the first Tuesday of every month at the Groton Public Library in classroom 2.

Councilor de la Cruz thanked Mr. Yuhas for presenting his comments to the Town Council.

In response to Councilor Nault, Town Manager Oefinger stated that letters of invitation have been sent to the Fire Districts in conjunction with budget preparation. He stated that the Town Council could use these meetings to discuss any items of business that they desire.

In response to Councilor Nault, Mr. Yuhas stated that he was under the impression that the Groton Ambulance Company was financially healthy now and that the response time for ambulance calls has been satisfactory.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approval of Minutes

2016-0186 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of June 21, 2016 are hereby accepted and approved.

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

b. Administrative Items

2016-0182 Special Trust Fund Contributions

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

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

Mystic Lions Club - \$1,000.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Lee Vincent - \$50.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Captain Fred Yeo and Gail Yeo - \$350.00 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

Groton Utilities Matching Funds - \$20.00 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

c. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List

2016-0183 Mystic Education Center Brownfield 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 de la Cruz, seconded by Councilor Morton, to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.

Councilor Antipas commented that Mr. Lee Vincent appears to donate to the Social Services Discretionary Fund almost every month. He thanked all the citizens for their generous donations, month after month.

The motion carried unanimously

VII. COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)

a. Town Councilors

Councilor Morton stated that all of the Councilor attended numerous events associated with the Sub Century celebration and participated in the 4th of July Parade. She stated that she participated in the submarine Flash Mob at Fitch High School on July 5th.

Councilor Antipas reported that he attended the June 30th meeting of the Cable Television Advisory Council of Southeastern Connecticut. He announced that he is the new Chairman. He stated that on July 5th he participated in the softball game where he served as the third-base Coach.

Councilor Grim stated that he participated in the July 4th Parade and the submarine "Flash Mob " at Fitch High School on July 5th.

Councilor Nault reported that she attended the Groton Business Association meeting on June 16th. She stated that the GBA declined funding the port-a-potties needed for the July 9th Fireworks event at Fort Griswold, but that Groton Utilities donated funds to cover that expense. She attended the submarine luncheon at Grasso Tech on June 24th, the Sub Century meeting on June 29th, the presentation of the Plan of Conservation on June 29th, and the 4th of July Parade. She reported that on July 5th she attended the Farmers Market at Washington Park, the Town versus the Sub Base softball game and the submarine Flash Mob at Fitch High School. She also participated in the Story Walk, reading stories to children, at Poquonnock Plains Park on July 7th.

Councilor de la Cruz participated in the 4th of July Parade and the Town versus the Sub Base softball game. He commented that he prefers participating in the shortened parade route. He announced that there will be a Community Speaks Out meeting on July 20th at the Groton Public Library from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. He reported that there has been an overwhelming increase in reported drug addiction issues and requests for assistance. He reported that he has met with politicians and local community leaders to develop strategies on how to deal with the heroin epidemic. He suggested that the name of opiate drugs be renamed to heroin in order to spotlight the danger of addiction.

Chairman pro tem Watson reported that he participated in all of the same events that had been mentioned. He reported that the photo of the submarine Flash Mob at Fitch High School was included in the Mystic Chamber of Commerce newsletter. He offered to help Councilor de la Cruz with his campaign to explore renaming opiate drugs.

b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher reported that the RTM met on July 13, 2016 where the Ordinance for the School Initiative was referred to the Education and Finance Committees. She announced that their next regular meeting will be on August 10, 2016 at the Groton Senior Center.

c. Clerk of the Council

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher reported the RTM and Town Council meetings are now available to view through YouTube on the internet. She stated that town employees can no longer access

GMTV at Town Hall and that they will now have access if they need to view those meetings through YouTube.

d. Town Manager

Town Manager Mark Oefinger reviewed items from the Weekly Status Report. He stated that the Groton Public Library will host a Passport Day on July 23rd from 9:00 am to 4:30 p.m. He stated that Transfer Station permits will be issued starting August 22nd through the Public Works office. He referred to an email that he sent to the Town Council announcing that the group Power of Together have donated funds to the Groton Public Library to restore Sunday hours that had been eliminated due to budget cuts. With this donation and the use of funds now available due to a retirement, most of the Sunday hours will be restored. He stated that this donation is only for this year.

He reviewed items that will be placed on the next agenda for the Committee of the Whole.

Councilor Watson requested that the appointment to Children First be placed on the next Committee of the Whole agenda.

Councilor Nault reported that she received a letter from Kevin Bogel regarding the condition of River Road. She stated that she walked the entire road and reports seeing no significant problems with the condition of the road.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Personnel & Appointments - Chairman Watson

No meeting, no report.

b. Rules -

No meeting, no report.

c. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Flax

Chairman pro tem Watson reported that the Committee of the Whole met and review the item that the Town Council will review this evening.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

2016-0183 Mystic Education Center Brownfield Grant

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR AND RECEIPT OF BROWNFIELDS GRANT FOR THE MYSTIC EDUCATION CENTER

WHEREAS, the State of Connecticut owns the Mystic Education Center, located in the Town of Groton, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton and the State of Connecticut wish to see this property redeveloped into a beneficial use for the Town and placed on the Town tax rolls, and

WHEREAS, the State of Connecticut has available a Brownfields grant program for state-owned property, and

WHEREAS, the purpose of applying for this Brownfields grant is for marketing and assisting the state with the redevelopment of the Mystic Education Center, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby authorizes Director of Planning and Development Services Jonathan J. Reiner's signature on the previously submitted Brownfields grant and further authorizes Mark R. Oefinger, Town Manager, to sign the Brownfields grant agreement upon receipt of said grant.

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

so in so

The motion carried unanimously

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman pro tem Watson adjourned the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher
Clerk of the Town Council*