



# Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road  
Groton, CT 06340-4394  
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*

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Tuesday, October 18, 2016

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

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#### REGULAR MEETING

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*Mayor Flax called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.*

#### I. ROLL CALL

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

*Also Present were the Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Town Attorney Michael Carey, and Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher.*

#### II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

*The Salute to the Flag was led by Craig Koehler.*

#### III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

*None.*

#### IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

*Craig Koehler, 263 Brook Street, Noank, introduced himself as the Chairman of the School Facilities Initiative Task Force and the Co-Chair of the Groton Schools 2020 PAC. He urged members of the Town Council and citizens of the Town to come out and vote in favor of the school referendum on November 8, 2016. He stated that the project will cost \$124.00 a year for every \$100,000 of assessed property. He stated that 65% of all homes in Groton are assessed at less than \$300,000, which equates to \$260.00 a year for this project. He stated that the maintenance and replacement costs for the five schools would be \$64,000,000 if they are not closed. He stated that the town may lose out on some economic development if we do not show commitment to our community and school system. He stated that this vote is all about the commitment we have to our community. He urged the people that support the project to encourage others to do the same and vote in favor on November 8, 2016.*

#### V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

*Councilor de la Cruz thanked Mr. Koehler for his commitment and dedication on the Schools Initiative Task Force and for all of the work that he has done for the Town.*

*Councilor Nault thanked Mr. Koehler for bringing this information to the meeting. She stated that it is important that citizens are informed of the issues.*

*Mr. Koehler announced that there will be informational meetings. The first will be at Fitch High School on Wednesday, October 26, 2016 at 6:30 p.m., and the second will be on Thursday, October 27, 2016 at the City of Groton Municipal Building at 6:30 p.m.*

#### VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

##### a. Approval of Minutes

**2016-0249 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)**

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of October 4, 2016 are hereby accepted and approved.

**This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.**

**b. Administrative Items**

**2016-0245 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 Zimmerman - \$10.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Emily Nelson - \$10.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Linda Robbins - \$1.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Christine Parizo - \$1.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Nicole Depot - \$1.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Andrea Kennett - \$1.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Martha Christina - \$10.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Veronique Lamarque - \$10.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Annie Jackson - \$1.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

John McMicken - \$1.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Alexandra Gozzola - \$1.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Melinda Georges - \$10.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Dawn Scanlon - \$1.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Donelle Bartlett - \$1.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Groton Utilities Matching Funds - \$950.00 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

**This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.**

**c. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List**

**2015-0184 Aquarion Water Tower - Northeast Academy Property**

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

**2016-0238 Amtrak Northeast Corridor Rail Investment Plan**

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

**2016-0243 School Project Management**

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

**2016-0246 Appointment of Susan Archer to the Zoning Commission**

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

**2016-0247 Appointment of Jacob Merrow to Zoning Commission**

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

**2016-0248 Appointment of Mike Edgerton to Zoning Commission**

**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 de la Cruz, 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 Barber announced that she attended the Economic Development meeting on October 6, 2016.*

*Councilor Watson stated that he attended the Groton Fall Festival on October 8, 2016.*

*Councilor Nault stated that she attended the Groton Fall Festival on October 8, 2016, the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new business Slim Nation, and the Groton Business Association meeting at Outer Lights.*

*Councilor de la Cruz stated that he attended the Heritage Park Foundation Celebration at Fort Griswold and the Groton Fall Festival on October 8, 2016, and that he met with three of the members of the Merritt family.*

*Mayor Flax stated that he attended the Groton Fall Festival on October 8, 2016, the Heritage Park Foundation Celebration at Fort Griswold, and the Town & City Council/BOE/RTM Liaison meeting. He extended his congratulation to Groton City Mayor Marian Galbraith in receiving recognition for her efforts for coordinating the successful Heritage Park Water Taxi.*

**b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting**

*Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher reported that the RTM October 12th meeting had been canceled. The next RTM meeting is scheduled for November 9th where they will discuss referral 2016-0236 Fiscal Year Ending 2017 Contingency Transfer for United Steelworkers Wages.*

**c. Clerk of the Council**

*Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher reported that absentee ballots are available for anyone who will be unable to vote in the November 8, 2016 election during normal voting hours. As of October 7th, she reported that 723 ballots had been issued. She reported that all 5 of the 90-day Military ballots that had been sent out have been received back. She reported that an application for the Inland Wetlands Agency had been received and forwarded to the Town Council Appointments and Personnel Committee.*

**d. Town Manager**

*Town Manager Mark Oefinger reviewed some of the upcoming events that are listed in the Weekly Status Report. He extended an invitation for the Commissioning of the U.S.S Illinois on October 29, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. He extended the invitation to the 50th Anniversary of the Connecticut Council of Municipalities and Expo on November 14 and 15, 2016. He reviewed items for the next Committee of the Whole meeting.*

**VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**a. Personnel & Appointments - Chairman Watson**

*Chairman Watson read the report of the October 4, 2016 Personnel and Appointments Committee meeting.*

**b. Rules - Chairman Antipas**

*No meeting, no report.*

**c. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Flax**

*Mayor Flax stated that if any of the Town Council would like to attend the Commissioning of the U.S.S. Illinois that they should contact the Town Manager's office. He stated that he met with RTM Moderator Scott Newsome to discuss scheduling a joint meeting to review budget ideas. He stated that the agenda will include a review of the process of the development of the budget, financial predictions for the next budget cycle, and an open discussion of the budget process between the Town Council and the RTM.*

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

**2015-0184 Aquarion Water Tower - Northeast Academy Property**

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION AND ACCESS EASEMENT AND A PERMANENT ACCESS AND UTILITY EASEMENT WITH AQUARION WATER COMPANY FOR A WATER TOWER ON THE NORTHEAST ACADEMY PROPERTY

WHEREAS, Aquarion Water Company plans to build a new water tower to replace the existing water tower on Nantucket Drive to provide enhanced water service to the northeast area of Town, and

WHEREAS, the proposed location of the new water tank is the Town-owned Northeast Academy elementary school property, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has reviewed and expressed its support for the proposal, which would provide pedestrian access from the school to Ann Avenue, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission approved a site plan for the project on April 12, 2016, which delineates a temporary construction and access easement and a permanent access and utility easement, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger is authorized to execute: (1) a Permanent Access and Utility Easement, and (2) a Temporary Construction and Access Easement over the Town-owned Northeast Academy site, each in the form and substantially the same as the drafts of the documents reviewed by the Town Council at the October 11, 2016 Committee of the Whole meeting, to allow Aquarion Water Company to construct and operate a new water tower and various related facilities and provide an access way from Ann Avenue, and may it be

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger is authorized to sign the October 18, 2016 letter from Aquarion concerning compensation that Aquarion will pay the Town for the permanent and temporary easements.

**A motion was made by Councilor Antipas, seconded by Councilor Morton, that this matter be Adopted as Amended.**

*Discussion followed with Town Manager Mark Oefinger suggesting that the resolution be amended to include the language that the Town Attorney had supplied.*

*Councilor Antipas made a motion to amend, seconded by Councilor de la Cruz, in order to include additional language in the resolution, as read by Town Manager Mark Oefinger.*

*Councilor Nault stated that the construction period seems to be an excessively long period of time.*

*In response to Councilor Nault, Elizabeth Camerino-Schultz of the Aquarion Water Company stated that the construction of the water tower should take no more than a year and a half. She stated that the company expects to take less time than that, but that weather conditions could play a factor in the delay.*

*Councilor Grim asked if anyone had the right to put an antenna on the tower. Ms. Camerino-Schultz stated that only the Town would be allowed to erect an antenna for emergency communication. She stated that Aquarion will place a whip antenna, which will be used to monitor the tower. Town Manager Oefinger stated that the Town must approve any additional antennas before being placed on the tower.*

*Councilor Antipas confirmed that the location of the tower is not located on the Northeast Academy property and that the playground at the school will not be disturbed. Ms. Camerino-Schultz stated that the construction site will be properly fenced to prevent intrusion and that access to the site will be from Ann Avenue. Town Attorney Carey stated that the Town of Groton Office of Planning and Development will have oversight of the construction.*

*Town Councilors voted unanimously on the amended resolution.*

*Councilor Watson made a motion to amend, seconded by Councilor Nault, to include that the*

*Town Manager has the authority to sign the letter from Aquarion dated October 18, 2016, which states the compensation that Aquarion will pay the Town for the permanent and temporary easements. This motion passed unanimously.*

*Mayor Flax confirmed that the additional payment is due to the increased square footage of the original appraisal of the property.*

*Councilor Grim confirmed that Aquarion will pay personal property tax for the tower and any equipment on the site.*

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2016-0243**

**School Project Management**

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS TO SOLICIT STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS FROM FIRMS FOR OWNER'S REPRESENTATION SERVICES TO AUGMENT STAFF FOR MANAGING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GROTON 2020 PLAN

WHEREAS, the Town Council has authorized the Groton 2020 School Modernization Plan referendum question to be placed on the ballot for the November general election, and

WHEREAS, the Public Works Department has been evaluating the project, departmental staffing, and potential methods of project management and delivery, and

WHEREAS, the assistance of a qualified and experienced Owner's Representative to manage the project under the Director of Public Works, including engaging qualified Architects and Construction Managers would be invaluable, and

WHEREAS, following the Request for Qualification (RFQ) and Request for Proposal process in selecting a qualified, experienced firm would ensure eligibility for reimbursement of these costs by the state; and

WHEREAS, there is funding in the project budget for these types of professional services, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Director of Public Works, Gary Schneider, is authorized to proceed with the RFQ process and select the most qualified candidate firm to act as Owner's Representative for the Groton 2020 Project.

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

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2016-0246**

**Appointment of Susan Archer to the Zoning Commission**

RESOLUTION APPOINTING SUSAN ARCHER AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE ZONING COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Susan K. Archer, 112 Spyglass Circle, is hereby appointed as an alternate member to the Zoning Commission for a term ending 9/30/18.

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

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2016-0247**

**Appointment of Jacob Merrow to Zoning Commission**

RESOLUTION APPOINTING JACOB MERROW AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE ZONING COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Jacob D. Merrow, 88 Main Street, is hereby appointed as an alternate member to the Zoning Commission for a term ending 9/30/17.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0248

**Appointment of Mike Edgerton to Zoning Commission**

RESOLUTION APPOINTING MIKE EDGERTON AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE ZONING COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Mike Edgerton, 113 Seneca Drive, is hereby appointed as an alternate member to the Zoning Commission for a term ending 9/30/21.

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

*Councilor Watson stated that the term has an expiration date of September 30, 2021.*

The motion carried unanimously

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

*Councilor Watson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilor Nault. Mayor Flax adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.*

*Attest:*

*Betsy Moukawsher  
Clerk of the Town Council*