



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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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, November 15, 2016

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Flax called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Flax, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Barber, Councilor Grim, Councilor Morton, Councilor Nault and Councilor Watson

Members Absent: Councilor de la Cruz and Councilor Peruzzotti

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 Boy Scouts Peter Lawton and Michael Reily.

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

None.

IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Rosanne Kotowski, 24 Ann Avenue, Mystic shared her comments with the Town Council regarding the letter that the Town Council is sending to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority for the proposed Branford Manor Development. She stated that more information was needed for the public. She stated that this property uses more services than a typical single family household in the areas of police, social services, and education. She asked the Town Councilors why they would consider taking more from the taxpayer in order to give tax incentives to the multi-million dollar corporation that is considering the purchase of Brandford Manor. She stated that the new owners are being rewarded because the current owners did not maintain the property. She ask for the explanation of any benefit to the Groton taxpayer.

V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

None.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approval of Minutes

2016-0269 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of November 1, 2016 are hereby accepted and approved.

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

b. Administrative Items

2016-0262 Special Trust Fund Contributions

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

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

Bernice Barres - \$200.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Lee Vincent - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary
 Groton Congregational Church - \$1,000.00 - Social Services Discretionary
 Michelle Kravath - \$25.00 - Library Donations
 Sue Chojnacki & Judy Mugovero - \$72.00 - Library Donations
 Carol Ruszenas - \$100.00 - Library Donations
 Margaret Adams - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary
 Catherine Kolnaski Magnet School - \$630.00 - Social Services Discretionary

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

c. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List

2016-0250 LED Conversion for Streetlights

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

2016-0261 Rotary Club of Mystic Grant - Library

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

2016-0264 Agreement with Lincoln Center

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

2016-0265 Local Prevention Council Grant for Ledge Light Health District

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

2016-0267 Joint Land Use Study Grant

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

2016-0268 Farm Viability Grant

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

2016-0270 Introduction of an Ordinance Amending Ordinance #229 (Enterprise Zone Ordinance)

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

2016-0271 Connecticut Housing Finance Authority Letter of Support for Branford Manor Development

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

2016-0272 Amendment of FYE 2017 CIP Project for LED Streetlights

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

2016-0273 Scheduling of a Public Hearing on an Ordinance Amending Ordinance #229 (Enterprise Zone Ordinance)

Passed The Consent Calendar

A motion was made by Councilor Morton, seconded by Councilor Nault, 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 Nault reported that she attended the CCM Conference at Foxwoods Casino on November 14 - 15, 2016.

Councilor Watson reported that he attended the same conference.

Councilor Morton reported that she attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Ledyard Police Department building on November 12, 2016. She stated that the Ledyard Town Center looks beautiful and that our town should do more to improve the esthetics throughout town.

Councilor Antipas reported that he attended the Cable Television Advisory Council of Southeastern Connecticut meeting on November 10, 2016.

Mayor Flax reported that he attended the Board of Education/Town & City Council/RTM Liaison Committee meeting on November 2, 2016. He stated that he attended the military breakfast on November 4, 2016 and the Veterans' Parade on November 11, 2016 at Foxwoods Casino. He stated that he attended the Groton Elks Veterans' dinner on November 11, 2016.

b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher reported that the Representative Town Meeting last met on November 9, 2016 where they discussed and unanimously voted on referral 2016-0236 Fiscal Year Ending 2017 Contingency Transfer for United Steelworkers Wages. She announced that there will be a joint meeting with the Town Council on November 16, 2016 at the Groton Senior Center at 7:00 p.m. She stated that the next regular RTM meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2016 at the Groton Senior Center at 7:30 p.m.

c. Clerk of the Council

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher that the November 8, 2016 election was a success and that no recounts were warranted. She stated that a total of 1,483 regular absentee ballots, 17 overseas ballots, one Presidential ballot, and 18 Federal Write in Absentee Ballots were cast. She reported that the referendum for the Groton 2020 Plan passed with 6975 in favor and 6293 opposed. She reported receiving an application for the Parks and Recreation Commission which she forwarded to the Democratic Party for their review.

d. Town Manager

Town Manager Mark Oefinger review the upcoming calendar for meetings with the Town Council. He highlighted items in the weekly status report. He announced that the Groton Elks Club will host their annual Law Enforcement Night on November 19, 2016.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Personnel & Appointments - Chairman Watson

No meeting, no report.

b. Rules - Chairman Antipas

No meeting, no report.

c. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Flax

Mayor Flax announced that the Committee of the Whole met and discussed the items on the agenda.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

2016-0250 LED Conversion for Streetlights

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS TO CONVERT TOWN OWNED STREET AND PARKING LOT LIGHTS TO LIGHT-EMITTING DIODE (LED)

WHEREAS, the Town Council previously authorized the Director of Public Works to contract with Tanko Streetlighting, Inc. to conduct an Investment Grade Audit of the Town-owned street lights and parking lot lights, and

WHEREAS, Tanko has completed the audit and developed a conversion plan to replace the existing High Pressure Sodium (HPS) street and parking lot lights with Light-Emitting Diode (LED) lights, and

WHEREAS, the contract with Tanko requires Town Council concurrence with the conversion plan prior to proceeding with the installation phase of the project, and

WHEREAS, financing alternatives were reviewed and a financial plan for the project was

developed, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council concurs with the conversion plan and financing the plan through rebates and loans from Eversource, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager, Mark R. Oefinger, is authorized to complete the streetlight conversion and execute the financial plan.

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

In response to Mayor Flax, Town Manager Mark Oefinger stated that the funds will be borrowed at a 0% financing plan, to be paid in part by the Public Works Department. Town Manager Mark Oefinger explained that the sagging street lights are a result of undersized brackets that were originally install as part of Streetscape project in downtown Mystic. He stated that the weight of the lights have caused the brackets to bend, which make the lights look like they are sagging. In response to Councilor Grim, Town Manager Mark Oefinger stated that the warranty wouldn't cover this issue and that there would be no use in engaging the contractor for reimbursement.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0272

Amendment of FYE 2017 CIP Project for LED Streetlights

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT OF AN FYE 2017 CIP PROJECT FOR LED STREETLIGHTS

WHEREAS, Capital Improvement Program project 9)A) for LED Streetlights was approved in FYE 2017, and

WHEREAS, the scope of the project has expanded to include not only Town owned streetlights, but Town owned parking lot lights, building wall units, and correction of sagging streetlights on Water Street, and

WHEREAS, the funding source for the project remains "Other" consisting of rebates and third party financing, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council authorizes an amendment to FYE 2017 CIP Project 9)A) LED Streetlights to increase the project cost from \$465,000 to \$584,000.

Refer to RTM.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0261

Rotary Club of Mystic Grant - Library

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SEEK GRANT FUNDING FROM THE ROTARY CLUB OF MYSTIC TO BENEFIT THE GROTON PUBLIC LIBRARY'S BOOK BUDDIES PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, the Groton Public Library collaborates with the Mary Morrisson School and Fairview Odd Fellows Home on the intergenerational, literacy-based Book Buddies Program, and

WHEREAS, the program benefits both the fifth graders and the residents of the nursing home, and

WHEREAS, the program promotes literacy, community partnerships, and compassion for the elderly, and

WHEREAS, the Rotary Club of Mystic donates funds to local non-profit organizations, primarily serving the Groton, Mystic, and Stonington areas, therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Groton Town Council hereby authorizes the Town Manager or his designee to seek grant funding in the amount of \$1,000 from the Rotary Club of Mystic, which will be utilized to purchase books and craft materials to support the Book Buddies program.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0264

Agreement with Lincoln Center

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT WITH LINCOLN CENTER FOR PRESENTING DIGITALLY STREAMED PERFORMANCES AT THE GROTON SENIOR CENTER

WHEREAS, Lincoln Center and the Groton Senior Center desire to promote and engage in cultural and artistic exchange for the purpose of sustaining, encouraging, and promoting the performing arts, and of educating the general public with relation thereto; and

WHEREAS, Lincoln Center and the Groton Senior Center seek to bring a world-class performing arts non-profit education experience to the general public based on the belief that art has the power to uplift, heal, and inspire individuals, as well as build bridges across diverse communities; and

WHEREAS, in support of the parties' mutual desire to promote the advancement of the arts and education, they are together developing a cooperation for the exploitation of the Lincoln Center performing arts events in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement and at the same time share a commitment to respecting the intellectual property rights of others; and therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger is empowered and authorized to execute and deliver, in the name and on behalf of the Town of Groton, an agreement with Lincoln Center on behalf of the Town of Groton for presenting on-demand digitally streamed recordings of past Lincoln Center performing arts events or hosting Lincoln Center's live streaming events (the "Programs") (collectively, the "Screenings") at its designated location in Groton, Connecticut.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0265

Local Prevention Council Grant for Ledge Light Health District

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN A LOCAL PREVENTION COUNCIL GRANT FOR THE LEDGE LIGHT HEALTH DISTRICT

WHEREAS, the Ledge Light Health District can apply for a Local Prevention Council grant in the amount of \$7,141.55; and

WHEREAS, grant funds will be used by the Groton Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention (GASP) for programs including youth mental health first aid training; to help raise awareness of the relationship between prescription drug abuse and heroin addiction, life training for youth, parent life skills, and an alcohol prevention campaign in the middle schools and high school in the Town of Groton; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council authorizes Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger to sign the Local Prevention Council Grant Application in the amount of \$7,141.55 for Ledge Light Health District.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0267

Joint Land Use Study Grant

RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE STAFF PARTICIPATION IN A JOINT LAND USE STUDY OF

THE SUBASE NEW LONDON

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG), in conjunction with the federal government, is preparing a Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) of the SUBASE New London; and

WHEREAS, the study will create a community-driven, cooperative strategic planning process among SUBASE New London and the municipalities of the Town of Groton, Town of Waterford, Town of Ledyard, City of Groton, City of New London, and Town of Montville; and

WHEREAS, the study will promote community development that is compatible with military training, testing, and operational missions, and seeks ways to reduce operational impacts on adjacent lands; and

WHEREAS, the goal of the JLUS is to increase public awareness of military missions and contribution to the regional economy, protect and preserve military readiness while supporting continued economic development, and support communication and establish policies for military participation in community development review and planning processes; and

WHEREAS, the goals of the study will serve the needs of the Town, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby endorses staff participation in the year-long Joint Land Use Study with the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments.

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

In response to Councilor Antipas, Town Manager Mark Oefinger stated that town staff would spend no more than 5 to 10 hours a month attending meetings. He stated that most meetings will be electronically attended.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0268

Farm Viability Grant

RESOLUTION ENDORSING STAFF PARTICIPATION IN A REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL VIABILITY PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) is administering a grant application from the Connecticut Department of Agriculture for Farm Viability Grants; and

WHEREAS, SCCOG is seeking interest from municipalities to participate in a year-long project on planning for agriculture-related activities, such as food production facilities, farm markets, vineyard tasting rooms/breweries, event venues, etc., utilizing the services of a consultant to work with a group of municipalities; and

WHEREAS, these municipalities would work with key stakeholders to identify best practices and evaluate potential changes to local regulations that would improve the viability of local farms through value-added activities; and

WHEREAS, the grant will serve the needs of the Town; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby endorses staff participation in SCCOG's year-long project on planning for agriculture-related activities.

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

Councilor Watson requested a follow-up report regarding the viability for aqua agriculture.

In response to Councilor Antipas, Town Manager Mark Oefinger stated that no more than usual staff time would be needed for this study.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0271 Connecticut Housing Finance Authority Letter of Support for Branford Manor Development

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO SEND A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO THE CONNECTICUT HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY FOR A PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT BRANFORD MANOR

WHEREAS, and application has been submitted by Branford Manor Preservation L.P. to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority requesting Long-Income Housing Tax Credit financing for a proposed development at Branford Manor in the City of Groton, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council authorizes Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger to send a letter of support for the application by Branford Manor Preservation, L.P. to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority.

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

Town Manager Mark Oefinger stated that there is a State Statute that requires 10% of town housing to be designated as affordable. He stated that 21% of Groton's housing stock is considered affordable housing.

In response to Councilor Nault, Town Manager Mark Oefinger stated that the Navy Housing complex has less units as a result of Belfour Beatty renovation and reconstruction of the properties.

Councilor Watson offered to share his information regarding the history of mobil homes in the Town of Groton.

Town Manager Mark Oefinger stated that this vote is in support of a letter to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority. He stated that any tax abatement considerations would be separate.

The motion carried unanimously

2016-0270 Introduction of an Ordinance Amending Ordinance #229 (Enterprise Zone Ordinance)

INTRODUCTION OF AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ENTERPRISE ZONE ORDINANCE (#229)

Introduced by the Mayor

2016-0273 Scheduling of a Public Hearing on an Ordinance Amending Ordinance #229 (Enterprise Zone Ordinance)

RESOLUTION SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING ON AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE #229 (ENTERPRISE ZONE ORDINANCE)

RESOLVED, that the Town Council will hold a public hearing on an Ordinance Amending Ordinance #229 (Enterprise Zone Ordinance) on Tuesday, December 6, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. in Town Hall Annex Community Room 1.

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

The motion carried unanimously

X. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Flax adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Attest:

*Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher
Clerk of the Town Council*