



# 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 S. Flax, Councilor Dean G. Antipas, Councilor Diane Barber, Councilor Greg Grim, Councilor Rich Moravsik, Councilor Karen F. Morton, Councilor Bonnie Nault, Councilor Deb Peruzzotti, and Councilor Harry A. Watson**

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Tuesday, November 28, 2017

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

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#### SPECIAL MEETING

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*Mayor Flax call the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher read the roll call of the meeting.*

#### I. ROLL CALL

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

*Also in attendance were Town Manager John Burt, Town Attorney Eileen Duggan, Town Attorney Michael Carey, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher, and Finance Director Cindy Landry.*

#### II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

*The Salute to the Flag was led by Charles Stevens.*

#### III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

*State Representatives Christine Conley and Joe de la Cruz, and State Senator Somers presented out-going Town Councilors with lapel pins from the Connecticut State Senate. Senator Somers presented a citation from the State Senate to Councilor Harry Watson in recognition of his many years of service. State Representatives Christine Conley and Joe de la Cruz presented citations from Secretary of the State Denise Merrill to the out-going Town Councilors Antipas, Barber, Flax, Grim, Morton, Nault, Peruzzotti, and Watson.*

*Mayor Flax presented a plaque, on behalf of the Town Council, to Councilor Harry Watson in recognition of his many years of service to the Town of Groton.*

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

*Kevin Trejo, 536 Shennecossett Road, thanked the out-going Town Council for their years of service. He had questions regarding the process for appointing Boards and Commissions. He made the request that the new Town Council consider altering the rules and procedures to include a provision for posting vacancies.*

*Michael Graner, 496 Noank Road, stated his gratitude for the accomplishments by the Town Council over the past two years.*

*Joe de la Cruz, 10 Corey Road, thanked the Town Council for all of the support that he had received when he was a Town Councilor.*

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

*None.*

#### VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

##### a. Approval of Minutes

**2017-0275 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)**

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of November 8, 2017 are hereby accepted and approved.

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

**b. Administrative Items**

**2017-0272 Special Trust Fund Contributions**

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

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

Virginia Kent - \$40.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving  
Marlen Stevens - \$20.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving  
Kathleen Potter - \$30.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving  
Janet Ledwig - \$25.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving  
Joellen Anderson - \$500.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
Brian and Ellen Russo - \$250.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
Savings Institute Bank & Trust - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary

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

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

**2016-0149 Review of Town Council Appointment Policy**

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

**2017-0215 Police Department Mutual Aid Compact**

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

**2017-0248 Authorization for Animal Control Officer to Charge Certain Fees**

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

**2017-0249 Authorization for Police Department to Collect Fingerprints and Fees**

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

**2017-0251 National Parks and Recreation Training Grant**

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

**2017-0252 USS Groton Sail Update**

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

**2017-0253 Charter Revision Commission - Final Report**

**2017-0254 Filling the Patrol Officer Position in the Police Department**

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

**2017-0255 Filling the Police Support Specialist Position in the Police Department**

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

**2017-0263 FYE 2018 Budget Discussion**

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

**2017-0267 Reappointment of Ann Sloan Rankin to Harbor Management Commission**

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

**2017-0268 Reappointment of Charles Stevens to Board of Assessment Appeals**

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

**2017-0270 Appointment of Jean-Claude Ambroise to Shellfish Commission**

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

**2017-0271 Reversal of Hiring Freeze**

**2017-0273 Debt Policy and Management/Fiscal Practices**

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

**2017-0274 Authorization for Town's Insurer to Settle an Action**

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

**Passed The Consent Calendar**

A motion was made by Morton, seconded by Watson, 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 Peruzzotti read a letter into the record pertaining to her objection to the statements that the current town government is broken. Her letter is on file in the Town Clerk's office.*

*Councilor Moravsik stated that he had attended the monthly meetings for SEAT and the Groton Sail Committee.*

*Mayor Flax stated his gratitude to the citizens for allowing him to serve on the Town Council for the past nine years. He listed what he considered the accomplishments of the current Town Council.*

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

*Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher announced that the RTM will be meeting on December 13, 2017 at the Groton Senior Center at 7:30 pm. She state that this will be the first meeting of the newly elected RTM members. She stated that the body will adopt temporary Rules and Procedures and elect the Moderator. She stated that the RTM will also have an opportunity, if it so chooses, to veto the Ordinance to Designate the Planning Commission as the Planning and Zoning Commission for the Town of Groton and to abolish the Zoning Commission.*

**c. Clerk of the Council**

*Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher thanked the member of the Town Council for their service. She distributed certificates of appreciation to the out-going Councilors.*

**d. Town Manager**

*Town Manager John Burt thanked the Town Council and the out-going members for hiring him. He stated that he and his family are very happy living in Groton.*

**e. Department Heads**

*No report.*

**VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS****a. Personnel & Appointments - Chairman Watson**

*Chairman Watson read the report from the November 8, 2017 meeting. The report is on file.*

**b. Rules - Chairman Antipas**

*No meeting, no report.*

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

*No meeting, no report.*

**IX. NEW BUSINESS****Suspension of Town Council Rule 7 b) to consider and act upon:**

*Councilor Antipas made a motion to suspend Town Council rule 7 b) to consider and act upon items 2017-0253. Councilor Moravsik seconded the motion. The vote carried unanimously.*

**2017-0253 Charter Revision Commission - Final Report**

## CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION - FINAL REPORT

## RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TOWN CHARTER WITH THE EXCEPTION OF 3.3.2

WHEREAS, on November 16, 2017, the Charter Revision Commission submitted to the Town Council its Final Report with proposed amendments to the Town Charter, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has reviewed and considered the proposed amendments to the Town Charter and per Connecticut General Statute 7-909d must approve or reject proposed amendments in total or in part. and is hereby

RESOLVED, that the Town Council accepts the proposed amendments to the Town Charter with exception toe 3.3.2.

**A motion was made by Nault, seconded by Barber, that this matter be Adopted as Amended.**

*Mayor Flax stated that the Town Council had received the Final Report from the Town Clerk last week. He stated that the Town Council has until the end of the month to decide whether to accept or reject the report.*

*In response to Mayor Flax, Town Attorney Duggan stated that according to State Statute you can accept the report in part and reject it in part. She stated that with the number of items that are in this proposed revision, she suggests that the Town Council be careful in doing that because they could choose to adopt items that do not mesh with the other parts. She advised them not to vote on it in pieces.*

*In response to Mayor Flax, Town Attorney Duggan stated that it would be difficult to incorporate multiple questions on the ballots.*

*Councilor Nault stated that we need to get the Charter Revision to the voters. She stated that the Charter Revision Commission worked very hard. She stated that there are only seven RTMs in the State of Connecticut: Fairfield, Greenwich, Darien, Westport, Branford, Waterford and Groton, out of one-hundred-sixty-nine towns. She stated that the only town with a Town Council and an RTM is Groton. She stated that the current RTM was meant as a temporary transition away from a real Town Meeting. She stated that the representing is redundant. She stated that her husband served on the RTM for two years and was Chair of the Finance Committee. She stated that he was never called by any constituents. She opined that they can just email all nine Councilors or the Town Manager for answers. She stated that she doesn't agree with electing the Finance Board by district, but deferred to the Public Hearing choices. She disagreed with the notion that the Town Council should have a four year term. She stated that the referendum should be in November in conjunction with another election in order to keep the cost down.*

*Councilor Morton stated that she joins Councilor Nault in support of sending this to the voters. She stated that she agonized over this decision. She stated that she would have liked to have seen triggers on the referendum and minimum voter turnout. She stated that it would only take one budget to pass that was voted in by special interest before the voters would wise up and realize that they need to be involved in what goes on in their town. She stated that this was not enough incentive for her not to support this. She stated that during the four years she served on the RTM she though that system was broken. She stated that she doesn't feel that it truly represents everyone in the Town. She stated that she is concerned with a statement that she had heard repeated numerous times that a Board of Finance would deny representation to the City of Groton residents. She explained that the representation is just as great or greater with the Board of Fination then compared to the representation currently on the RTM. She stated that she will support sending the*

report to the voters.

Councilor Barber stated that when the Council first started to vet the applicants that wanted to sit on the Charter Revision Commission, at least one person expressed that their desire to serve was so there would be no changes. She stated that at first, when this volunteer was appointed, she thought that this would not be a good idea. She stated that looking ahead, this was probably the best move that the Town Council made. She stated that by having someone on the Commission to challenge and to dispute every idea, it made the process more in-depth. She stated that this wasn't stalling the process, it was actually giving more weight to the actual outcome. By questioning and challenging every aspects of the Charter, these recommended changes were dissected and scrutinized. She stated that given the ultimate vote to move forward with these changes has more merit. She stated that the Commission voted nearly one hundred changes. She praised the Commissioners for putting in their due diligence and understanding of how important these changes are for our community. She stated that she supports bringing this charter revision to the voters.

Councilor Grim stated that he agree with the sentiments of Councilor Morton, Nault, and Barber in moving this report forward to the voters and letting them decide. He recognized all of the hard work that the Charter Revision Commission had done. He stated that he supports bringing this to the voters.

Councilor Moravsik stated that he could support bringing this to the members also. He stated that he was disappointed that non-resident tax payers still can't vote and he wished that this measure would have been put into the Charter. He stated that unfortunately, this battle was lost, this time. He stated that the Charter Revision Commission did a wonderful job. He stated that Bob Frink did a lot of the research on it and he should be given credit for the work that he did. He thanked all of the other members as well. He stated the he can support this going to the people. He stated that we should let the people make the decision.

Councilor Watson stated that he agrees with Councilor Peruzzotti's earlier statement. He stated that he is going to vote no. In response to his question, Attorney Duggan stated that the incoming Town Council can not rescind or modify a vote because of the language in the Statute and that the Statute is mandatory rather than directory. She stated that in part, the Council is tasked with making a decision within fifteen day of receiving the final report. She stated that by the time the new Council is seated, the time will be up. The Council is bound by the fifteen days and can not go back and change it. It is true that a new Council is not bound by its predecessor on other issues. She stated that the Charter Revision statutory framework runs against that theory.

In response to Councilor Moravsik, Attorney Duggan stated that the in-coming Town Council cannot reconsider this Council's decision.

Councilor Antipas, stated that he understands and appreciates the work that was put into this. He stated that he thinks it was a mistake to put people on the Commission who came in with an agenda, whether it was pro referendum or pro RTM. He stated that he would have preferred something a little more neutral. He stated that the law requires that we establish a Commission, but that the Commission's product then comes to the Council. He stated that this means that the Council is the second opinion. He stated that it is the Council's job to consider this independently. He considered a few of the items to be changed including the Finance Board and district representation, pointing out that members are to be elected one from each of the 7 districts. He posed the question of what would happen if we have more or less number of districts. He questioned how minority representation for the Council and Board of Finance would be achieved. He suggested that an appointed Board of Finance would allow for a better control on the quality of candidates. He stated his concern with the new change in the ability to remove the Mayor and the Town Manager. He suggested that some of the directives for the Town Council should be

considered policy issues and placed in the rules of the Town Council. He stated that the referendum on the budget is the heart of the revision. He stated that he voted for the establishment of the Charter Revision Commission as a way to clear up some of the questions left from the 2008 revision. He stated that the budget referendum was the driving factor, which would eliminate the RTM. He reviewed past budget decisions that illustrated that the RTM did its job in cutting Town Council budgets. He stated that the current system of government works. He stated that he cannot support this revision.

In response to Councilor Peruzzotti, Attorney Duggan stated that the Statue provides for a referendum vote fifteen months after the Town Council vote. She stated that it could happen in the next regular election or special election.

Mayor Flax stated that this is really serious stuff for our Town and it is big changes for a big Town. He stated that there is no question that the Commissioners on the Charter Revision Commission worked very hard and put a lot of time into what they were doing. He stated that he thinks that some of the Councilors came in with preconceived notions of what they wanted and were looking at it more for an outcome that they wanted, rather than trying to figure out a story and doing what is best for the Town. He stated that they probably thought they were doing what was best for the Town. He stated that the Council had mentioned to the Commission, a number of times, if there is a lot of changes, yet the Commission told the Council that there aren't that many changes. He stated that there are a lot of changes. He stated that there was an opportunity here for the Charter Revision Commission to come back with not as many changes as it did. He stated that by throwing everything into the pot, a little bit of chaos has been created. He stated that we all know that people don't like change. He stated that if we were trying to change the Town, doing so by changing a lot of the Charter isn't going to get that complete. He stated that one of the issues with the RTM is attendance. He stated that he finds this rationale hypocritical if there isn't a minimum turnout required for referendum. He stated that one of the must haves for him was to include a minimum voter turnout. He stated that he would like to see change and that there is room for change, whether it be by reducing the amount of members on the RTM, but adding a referendum and keeping the RTM would not have worked. He stated that along the way, the process got a little lost. He stated that the Charter is for the entire Town. He stated that we have a responsibility to govern for the whole Town. He stated that his decision is made on whether he thought it was legal, which we know it is legal, and that it was sensible and that it treats everybody respectfully. He stated that for this reason, he will reject it. He stated that he encourages the next Town Council to form another Charter Revision Commission. He encouraged one of the other Councilors to rethink his/her decision. He stated that the changes need to be a little more level-headed. He stated that there are people on both sides of this issue who have said that everybody who came to the public hearing last time were saying don't put it through. He stated that the people who came to the first public hearing were all for a referendum. He stated that opinions change depending on who turns out for a public hearing, but it often does not represent the whole Town. He stated that he can't, with good conscience, support it. He stated that he appreciates the work that went into the report and that there are lessons to be learned for the next one.

Councilor Moravsik stated that he was going to pull his favorable vote, too. He stated that we can't reconsider this at the next meeting with the new Town Council. He stated that we should let the new Council decide whether or not they want to have another Charter Revision Commission.

Councilor Nault made a motion to accept the Charter Revision Commission Final Report as submitted, with the exception of the provision in section 3.3.2 that would change the term of office of the Town Council member from two years to four years and having a referendum at the November 2018 State Election. The motion was seconded by Councilor Barber.

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher stated that the RTM is very misunderstood by the Town Council

and the RTM members. She stated that the RTM is actually the most powerful body in the town. She stated that it not only has the last say on the budget, but it also can and should enact legislation. It can enact ordinances and resolutions and make the Town Council act on their measure. She stated that if the Council does not act, then there are provision for what happens, including a referendum.

Mayor Flax responded by stated that he disagrees and believes that this Council tried to come together with the last RTM and work together to make the budget process go better.

Councilor Barber stated that after the long and hard work that the Commission did, she thinks it is only right that it goes to the voters. She stated that if the voters turn it down then they can revisit it again.

Councilor Peruzzotti stated that she read her letter to the editor earlier and that she didn't have much else to add. She stated that she has to agree and reiterate that changing our government is a serious decision to make. She stated that she still hopes that Councilors make the right choice for our Town when they vote on this.

Councilor Watson stated the he is an RTM fan. He stated that the size may be reduced. He stated that there are only so many RTMs in the State of Connecticut, but that there is only one Groton in the State of Connecticut. He stated that Groton is such a diverse community. He stated that he is afraid that if we change things, one or two of our communities might get left out of the whole process when it comes to government and budgets. He stated the we are a very unique and diverse community. He stated that with the RTM system that we have, at least everybody has their say and their representatives. He stated that the RTM is very important.

**The motion failed by the following vote:**

**Votes:** In Favor: 4 - Barber, Grim, Morton and Nault  
Opposed: 5 - Councilor Flax, Councilor Antipas, Peruzzotti, Watson and Councilor Moravsik

**2016-0149**

**Review of Town Council Appointment Policy**

**RESOLUTION APPROVING A REVISED TOWN COUNCIL APPOINTMENT POLICY FOR BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

WHEREAS, the Town Council Appointments Policy was last revised effective March 17, 2015, and

WHEREAS, the Personnel and Appointments Committee and Committee of the Whole of the Town Council have considered a revision to the policy, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council adopts the Town Council Appointments Policy as attached, said policy to be effective immediately.

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

Councilor Watson read the resolution into the record. He stated that the Council received a communication from Mrs. Billing. He stated that the committee worked pretty hard and that what is proposed is better than what we had before. He stated that it is worthy of passing the way it is. He stated that the next Town Council can consider changing the policy again. He stated that the proposed changes should be considered progress toward a good policy and that it should pass.

In response to Councilor Nault, Chairman Watson stated that Mr. Trejo was concerned with a vacancy posting. He stated that the policy changes address how unaffiliated voters get appointed and whether an applicant has an affiliation with any conflicting organizations. It also affords an opinion from the Chairs of the Commissions for reappointments. He stated that the most

important policy statement is in 4.2.1, which reads that the job of the Personnel and Appointments Committee is appoint the most qualified citizens.

Councilor Antipas stated that he wears the party hat because he is the party chair. He stated that he has always had a problem with making people who happen to check one box or another while registering to vote, running the applicants through the committee because he thinks that people should have a choice of whether they want the party's improviser, rather than make it a fixed feature of our appointments process.

Chairman Watson stated that the intention of policy change is when an unaffiliated voter applies for a Board or Commission through the Town Clerk, that they don't go through the political committees. He stated that right now the political committee are given these applications, along with the Personnel and Appointments Committee.

Councilor Peruzzotti stated that because it seems as though in some cases, by the time the two political parties submit their recommendations it was almost to the point where the unaffiliated applicant had been waiting for ninety days just to get an interview. She stated that the Committee was trying to find a balance.

Councilor Morton stated that one of the issues is where the Town Clerk is probably the one person who knows up to the current minute who is in positions and what is open. She stated that administratively there is some lag time as to when updates are posted on the town web site. She stated that there needs to be some way to get the information out when there are vacancies.

Councilor Moravsik stated that this is about an application that we processed. If one fell the crack, that is unfortunate. He stated that both the Town Clerk and the new Personnel & Appointments Committee will look into this to make sure that it doesn't happen again. He stated that we do not think it is the fault of the procedures that we had because we nailed those down. He stated that things may just fall through crack. He stated that these things happen. He stated that this happened only once in a long while. He stated that he thinks everyone did a good job and we should recognize the Town Clerk for the fine records that she keeps and maintains.

**The motion carried unanimously**

Members Present: Councilor Flax, Barber, Grim, Morton, Nault, Peruzzotti, Watson and Councilor Moravsik  
Members Absent: Councilor Antipas

2017-0215

**Police Department Mutual Aid Compact**

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF GROTON TO ENTER INTO A MUTUAL POLICE ASSISTANCE COMPACT WITH PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES

WHEREAS, Section 7-277a of the Connecticut General Statutes authorizes municipalities to enter into agreements for mutual police assistance whenever a chief executive officer of a participating municipality, or his or her designee, determines it necessary in order to protect the safety and well-being of his or her municipality, and

WHEREAS, participating municipalities must meet the terms of the signed compact when requesting the outside assistance of personnel and equipment, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Town Manager John Burt is authorized to enter into a Mutual Police Assistance Compact with other participating municipalities.

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

**The motion carried unanimously**

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

2017-0248

**Authorization for Animal Control Officer to Charge Certain Fees**



RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER AND HER ASSISTANTS TO CHARGE CERTAIN FEES

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF GROTON THAT:

In addition to fees and costs the amounts of which are set by the Connecticut General Statutes, the Town of Groton Animal Control Officer and her assistants may impose fees and recover costs as follows:

- a. Redemption fee. \$15 per day per animal.
- b. Storage fee. \$15 per day per animal or \$25 per day per animal if the animal is a horse or other large livestock.
- c. Quarantine fee: Same as (b).
- d. Newspaper ad fee. \$25 (to be collected only from animal's owner upon his/her reclaiming the animal.
- e. Owner sign over fee. \$50 per animal.

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

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2017-0249**

**Authorization for Police Department to Collect Fingerprints and Fees**

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE POLICE DEPARTMENT TO COLLECT FINGERPRINTS OF PERSONS WHO NEITHER WORK NOR RESIDE WITHIN THE TOWN OF GROTON AND TO AUTHORIZE THE CHIEF TO ESTABLISH A FEE THEREFOR

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF GROTON THAT:

- a. The employees of the Town of Groton Police Department expressly authorized to do so by the Chief of Police may collect fingerprints of persons who neither work nor reside in the Town of Groton in the same manner employees of the Town of Groton Police Department collect fingerprints of persons who do work and/or reside in the Town, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 29-17c(a).
- b. The Chief of Police Department may establish a fee to be charged for the collection of fingerprints of persons who neither work nor reside in the Town of Groton. Said fee shall in no case be less than the fee charged by the Police Department for the collection of fingerprints of persons who reside and/or work in the Town, but may be in a greater amount sufficient in the judgment of the Chief of Police to reasonably compensate the Police Department for the costs of providing these services to persons who do not reside and/or work in the Town.

**A motion was made by Barber, seconded by Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2017-0263**

**FYE 2018 Budget Discussion**

RESOLUTION CONCERNING FYE 2018 EXCESS STATE REVENUE

WHEREAS, the adopted FYE 2018 budget included a \$5 million reduction in anticipated State Education Cost Sharing (ECS) revenue, and

WHEREAS, the final adopted State budget did not reduce ECS funding and it is anticipated that additional state revenue will be received in FYE 2018, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council agrees to put anticipated FYE 2018 excess State revenue of \$5,762,000 in the General Fund.

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

*Mayor Flax, stated that he knew that we agreed to put it all into the General Fund, but he thought they had agreed to change wording to have the General Fund reflect at least eleven percent.*

*In response, Town Manger John Burt stated that the first resolution has the Fund going to eleven percent. He stated that the next resolution would actually deposit the money. He stated that the policy would be changed by the first resolution.*

*Councilor Watson stated that we are just determining where we are depositing the money for the time being and when we talk about it under debt policy, that is how we would distribute it, but we have to put it into our accounts by resolutions.*

*Town Manager John Burt stated that the first resolution sets the policy and the second resolution dictates where the money goes. He stated that if anything changes at the State, or the State holds back funds, his preference would be to have flexibility and go with the ten percent. He stated that it is hard to predict what will happen.*

*Councilor Grim commented that the Town Manager may always feel this way. He stated that if the Town Manager's goal is to have fifteen percent in the Fund Balance, then the Council should try marching forward.*

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2017-0273**

**Debt Policy and Management/Fiscal Practices**

**RESOLUTION INCREASING THE GENERAL FUND'S UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE**

WHEREAS, the adopted FYE 2018 budget included a \$5 million reduction in anticipated State Education Cost Sharing (ECS) revenue, and

WHEREAS, the final adopted State budget did not reduce ECS funding and it is anticipated that additional state revenue will be received in FYE 2018 and the Fund Balance is expected to increase at year end, and

WHEREAS, the Town's Debt Policy and Management/Fiscal Practices reads that the Town shall maintain "An unassigned General Fund reserve maintained in an amount equal to at least seven and three-quarters (7.75%) percent of annual general fund expenditures", and

WHEREAS, the Town has an Aa2 bond rating from Moody's Investors Service and the Town's unassigned fund balance percentage is below the median (13.6%) and mean (15%) of other Aa2 Connecticut municipalities, and

WHEREAS, due to an anticipated increase in revenue and increase in fund balance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council amends its Debt Policy and Management/Fiscal Practices and increases the General Fund's unassigned fund balance to an amount equal to at least eleven percent (11%) with a gradual increase to a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the annual general fund expenditures.

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

*In response to Mayor Flax, Town Manager John Burt stated that as things stand, he is comfortable with the eleven percent. He stated that for flexibility, what he does not want to do is to set it at eleven and find out that the State wants to pull any money back during the year. He stated that we might not review well for our bond ratings if we have to reduce our contribution to the fund.*

*In response to Councilor Barber, Town Manager John Burt stated that one percent represents approximately \$1.2 million.*

*Mayor Flax commented that the Town Council may have to give back \$1.6 million to the Board of*

*Education, but that will still leave about \$300,000 as padding to the eleven percent.*

*Councilor Grim stated that similar communities have fifteen percent and may stand in a better position for bond rating. He stated that if we get downgraded one level, it would be worth about \$4 million for our school funding project. He stated that it is important to try to move toward the fifteen percent like other communities in our area.*

*Councilor Watson stated that he needs to understand this completely. He asked if this locks up the next Council's possibilities. He asked if the money would be put away and locked up.*

*In response to Councilor Watson, Town Manager John Burt stated that this action is more for appearance and that the new Town Council will have the ability to reduce the amount in the fund.*

*Councilor Nault commented that the Town Manager would rather they make a modification to this resolution to ten percent, but he still want to increase to fifteen if we can.*

*Councilor Watson made a motion to amend Resolution 2017-0273 to change the eleven percent to ten percent. Councilor Nault seconded the motion.*

*Councilor Antipas stated that eleven is for precaution. He stated that if we really wanted to be careful, we wouldn't adopt a policy like this at all. He stated that he is not in favor of this budget and that it took a Herculean effort to get to where we are. He stated that we have got a hot iron, let's bang on it as hard as possible. He stated that he is in favor of the eleven percent.*

*Councilor Peruzzotti and Mayor Flax stated that they agree with Councilor Antipas and to keep the Fund Balance at eleven percent.*

*Mayor Flax called for a vote on the amendment. and it failed with Councilor Watson voting in favor.*

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2017-0251**

**National Parks and Recreation Training Grant**

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO APPLY FOR A NATIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION TRAINING GRANT TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTOR TRAINING FOR AN EVIDENCE-BASED "FIT AND STRONG" PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, the Senior Center would like to apply for grant funds in the amount of \$800 from the National Parks and Recreation Association Instructor Training Program, and

WHEREAS, funding would be used to provide instructor training for a Senior Center staff member so that the Senior Center can offer a "Fit and Strong" program, and

WHEREAS, the Fit and Strong program goal is to promote an increase in exercise to continue participant independence, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager or his designee is authorized to apply for a National Parks and Recreation Training Grant in the amount of \$800 to support programs at the Groton Senior Center.

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

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2017-0266**

**Reappointment of Laurel Butler to Library Board**

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING LAUREL BUTLER TO THE LIBRARY BOARD

RESOLVED, that Laurel Butler, 697 Noank Road, Mystic, is hereby reappointed to the Library Board for a term ending 12/31/20.

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

The motion carried unanimously

**2017-0267 Reappointment of Ann Sloan Rankin to Harbor Management Commission**

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING ANN SLOAN RANKIN TO THE HARBOR MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Ann Sloan Rankin, 25 Spring Street, is hereby reappointed to the Harbor Management Commission for a term expiring 9/1/20.

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

The motion carried unanimously

**2017-0268 Reappointment of Charles Stevens to Board of Assessment Appeals**

RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING CHARLES STEVENS TO THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS

RESOLVED, that Charles E. Stevens, 12 Stony Hill Drive, Mystic, is hereby reappointed to the Board of Assessment Appeals for a term ending 12/31/20.

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

The motion carried unanimously

**2017-0270 Appointment of Jean-Claude Ambroise to Shellfish Commission**

RESOLUTION APPOINTING JEAN-CLAUDE AMBROISE AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE SHELLFISH COMMISSION

RESOLVED, that Jean-Claude Ambroise, 169 Shennecossett Parkway, is hereby appointed as an alternate member of the Shellfish Commission for a term ending 12/31/22.

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

The motion carried unanimously

**2017-0274 Authorization for Town's Insurer to Settle an Action**

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN'S INSURER TO SETTLE AN ACTION

RESOLVED, that the Town of Groton does hereby provide its consent to the Town's insurer, Trident Public Risk, to settle the action entitled Aisha Porter v. Richard Carleson, et al., No. 3:16-cv-01024 (VLB), as recommended by defense counsel in that action.

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

The motion carried unanimously

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

*Councilor Antipas stated his gratitude to the citizen for all this time. He stated that he does not know what he will be doing, but he plans to be back. He thanked his fellow Councilors for the wonderful experience. Mayor Flax offered the best of luck to the incoming Council. Many of the Councilors echoed this statement. Councilor Barber stated that if the new Town Council succeeds, then the Town of Groton succeeds.*

*Councilor Flax made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilor Watson and so taken at 7:43 p.m.*

*Attest:*

*Betsy Moukawsher  
Groton Town Clerk and Clerk of the Council*