



# 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 Heather Bond Somers, Councilors Dean G. Antipas, Bruce S. Flax, Bill Johnson, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Deborah L. Peruzzotti, Rita M. Schmidt, James L. Streeter, and Harry A. Watson**

Tuesday, December 6, 2011

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

### REGULAR MEETING

#### I. ROLL CALL

*The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher.*

Members Present: Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Streeter 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 Kevin Trejo.*

#### III. ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE TO TOWN COUNCILORS - Town Clerk

*The Town Clerk administered the oath of office to the new Town Councilors.*

#### IV. ADOPTION OF TWENTY-EIGHTH COUNCIL TEMPORARY RULES AND PROCEDURES

##### 2011-0222 Adoption of Temporary Rules and Procedures for Twenty -Eighth Town Council

RESOLUTION ADOPTING TEMPORARY RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE TWENTY-EIGHTH TOWN COUNCIL

RESOLVED, that the Rules and Procedures of the Twenty-Seventh Town Council are temporarily adopted as the Rules and Procedures for the Twenty-Eighth Town Council, elected November 8, 2011.

**A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., that this matter be Adopted.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

#### V. ELECTION OF MAYOR - Town Clerk

*The Town Clerk called for nominations for Mayor.*

*Councilor O'Beirne nominated Councilor Somers, seconded by Councilor Antipas.*

*MOTION TO CLOSE nominations was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Flax, and so voted unanimously.*

*VOTE to elect Heather Bond Somers as Mayor passed unanimously.*

#### VI. PRESENTATION OF GAVEL TO NEWLY ELECTED MAYOR

*Town Clerk Moukawsher presented newly-elected Mayor Somers with the gavel.*

#### VII. APPOINTMENT OF RULES COMMITTEE

##### 2011-0233 Appointment of Temporary Rules Committee by Mayor

APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY RULES COMMITTEE BY THE MAYOR

the Twenty-Seventh Council Rules as temporarily adopted for the Twenty-Eighth Council:

1. Councilor Flax
2. Councilor O'Beirne
3. Councilor Johnson

**A motion was made by Mayor Somers, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Adopted.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

#### **VIII. ADOPTION OF REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE**

##### **2011-0223 Adoption of 2012 Town Council Regular Meeting Schedule**

###### RESOLUTION APPROVING 2012 TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby approves the Town Council regular meeting schedule for 2012 as follows:

Tuesday, January 3, 2012 (Special Meeting)  
 Tuesday, January 17, 2012  
 Tuesday, February 7, 2012  
 Tuesday, February 21, 2012  
 Tuesday, March 6, 2012  
 Tuesday, March 20, 2012  
 Tuesday April 3, 2012  
 Tuesday, April 17, 2012  
 Tuesday, May 1, 2012  
 Tuesday, May 15, 2012  
 Tuesday, June 5, 2012  
 Tuesday, June 19, 2012  
 Tuesday, July 3, 2012  
 Tuesday, July 17, 2012  
 Tuesday, August 7, 2012  
 Tuesday, August 21, 2012  
 Tuesday, September 4, 2012  
 Tuesday, September 18, 2012  
 Tuesday, October 2, 2012  
 Tuesday, October 16, 2012  
 Wednesday, November 7, 2012\*  
 Tuesday, November 20, 2012  
 Tuesday, December 4, 2012  
 Tuesday, December 18, 2012

All meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. in Community Room 1, Town Hall Annex, 134 Groton Long Point Road, on the First and Third Tuesdays of each month, except as noted.

\* Moved to Wednesday because of Election Day on Tuesday, November 6, 2012.

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

**The motion carried unanimously**

#### **IX. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS**

*None.*

#### **X. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS**

*Bill Bertsche, 131 High Street, Mystic, represents a group of six local architects who have designed projects in Mystic's Historic District. He stated that the Historic District Commission is*

dysfunctional. He outlined possible steps which could be taken, including requesting the resignation of all commissioners or, if legal and desired by property owners, eliminating the Historic District designation entirely. Mr. Bertsche stated that his group of architects and local historic district property owners would like to discuss their concerns and possible solutions with the Council at an upcoming Committee of the Whole meeting.

Carl Peruzzotti, 69 Noble Avenue, Noank, had appraisals done on his property in 2004 and 2009. Due to those appraisals and the current economy, Mr. Peruzzotti believes that the revaluation company's assessment value is too high. He met with a gentleman from the revaluation company to determine how the assessment values were arrived at, and did not feel his questions were answered adequately. Mr. Peruzzotti would like the opportunity to present his material to someone qualified to interpret it.

Chaz Zezulka, 18 Maxson Street, Willow Point, West Mystic, alerted the Council to a public safety issue. He noted that there was a structure fire this summer on Willow Point and the fire truck was unable to get to the fire immediately because the railroad crossing gate was down. Mr. Zezulka suggested that a mechanism be installed for opening the gates for emergency vehicles. He also noted that something needs to be done to the Town buildings that have band-aid fixes due to postponing CIPs.

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

In answer to Councilor Schmidt, Mr. Peruzzotti said that he has not heard anything further about his assessment. He would like to understand the methodology used in the revaluation process.

The Town Manager stated that there will be an opportunity for citizens to meet with the Board of Assessment Appeals in February or March 2012.

## XII. CONSENT CALENDAR

### a. Approval of Minutes

#### 2011-0221 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of November 15, 2011 are hereby accepted and approved.

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

### b. Administrative Items

#### 2011-0219 Special Trust Fund Contributions

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

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

Esther, Kim and Tracy Ayrton in memory of Wayne Dole - \$30.00 - Library Miscellaneous  
 Various Donations - \$313.70 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program  
 City of Groton - \$584.46 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program  
 Barbara Palm - \$1,00.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
 Albert and Janiss Rudolph - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
 St. Andrew Presbyterian Church - \$450.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
 Lee Vincent - \$50.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
 Carla and Paul Henschel - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
 George Marshall - \$200.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
 Loretta Michaud - \$50.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
 Mystic Rotary/Liberty Bank - \$989.38 - Social Services Discretionary  
 Old Mystic Fire District - \$763.50 - Social Services Discretionary

Sacred Heart School - \$5.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
 Thomas and Susan Skrmetti - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
 Joan Steinfeld - \$25.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
 Mildred Reed in memory of Virginia Palmer - \$15.00 - Library Miscellaneous

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

**Passed The Consent Calendar**

**A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**XIII. COMMUNICATION REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)**

**a. Town Councilors**

*Councilors attended the Holiday Lights Parade.*

*Councilor Johnson attended the Economic Development Commission meeting and a State presentation regarding small businesses.*

*Councilor Antipas participated in a walk around Morgan Pond with the Bluff Point to Preston (Tri-Town)' Trail Committee.*

*Councilor Watson distributed food baskets at Social Services, attended the middle school consolidation feedback session at Cutler Middle School, and participated in an award ceremony for Groton Adolescent Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (GASP).*

*Councilor Streeter received emails regarding some trees leaning on private property, availability of property data cards, and the Historical District Commission. He attended meetings regarding the Town budget and State funding for the Groton-New London Airport. Councilor Streeter attended the launching of the submarine USS Mississippi at Electric Boat.*

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

*The Town Clerk stated that the newly-elected RTM will be sworn in at its meeting on December 14, 2011.*

**c. Clerk of the Council**

*The Town Clerk stated that there will be a presentation on Freedom of Information (FOI) at the Committee of the Whole meeting on December 13, 2011.*

**d. Town Manager**

*The Town Manager stated that he is assembling an orientation binder for Councilors. He noted that there will be a joint meeting between the Town Council and the Board of Education (BOE) on December 19, 2011. Regular meeting schedules for future joint meetings with the BOE, the City of Groton, and Groton Long Point will be set up at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.*

**e. Town Attorney**

*No report.*

**XIV. OTHER BUSINESS**

**2011-0234 Historic District Commission Concerns**

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION CONCERNS

*Mayor Somers made a referral to discuss concerns regarding the Historic District Commission.*

**2011-0235 Amtrak Gate, School Street**

AMTRAK GATE, SCHOOL STREET

*Mayor Somers made a referral to the Public Safety Committee to make sure that emergency vehicles will be able to get through the Amtrak railroad gate at Willow Point for emergencies.*

**2011-0236 Town Clerk Compensation**

TOWN CLERK COMPENSATION

*Councilor Watson requested a referral to discuss the annual review for the Town Clerk.*

**2011-0237 Community Wide Fire Protection Analysis**

COMMUNITY WIDE FIRE PROTECTION ANALYSIS

*Councilor Streeter requested a referral to conduct a Town-wide study/assessment to evaluate the quantity of fire department personnel, fire equipment and fire department facilities to determine if appropriate levels of fire services are being provided and maintained throughout the Town of Groton.*

**2011-0238 Road Reconstruction Bond Ordinance**

ROAD RECONSTRUCTION BOND ORDINANCE

*Councilor Streeter requested a referral to reevaluate the Town's Pavement Management Program and to evaluate the potential advantages or disadvantages of developing a new funding program on a multi-year basis, possibly funded through bonding, to insure appropriate repair and upkeep of the Town's highway infrastructure.*

**XV. ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion to adjourn at 8:32 p.m. was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti and so voted unanimously.*

*Attest:*

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk  
Clerk of the Council*

*Lori Watrous, Office Assistant*