



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Town Council

Mayor James L. Streeter, Councilors Bruce S. Flax, Bill Johnson, Catherine Kolnaski, Deborah B. Monteiro, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Deborah L. Peruzzotti, Paulann H. Sheets, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, December 15, 2009

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 Mayor Streeter.

Members Present: Mayor Streeter, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti and Councilor Watson

Members Absent: Councilor Sheets

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Office Assistant Lori Watrous.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Salute to the Flag was led by Former State Representative Betsy Gibson.

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

Presentation of Plaques to Former Town Councilors

Mayor Streeter presented plaques to Dean Antipas, Kathryn Brown-Tracy, and Rita Schmidt for their service on the Town Council.

2009-0318 Proclamation Honoring Harry A. Watson

PROCLAMATION HONORING HARRY A. WATSON

Read

The proclamation was read by Mayor Streeter.

Expression of Gratitude

Mayor Streeter thanked Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox for her many years of service to the Town of Groton and as a token of appreciation gave her a printer's block of the first Town Seal of Groton.

2009-0307 Proclamation Honoring Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce Award Recipients

Read

The proclamation was read by Mayor Streeter.

IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

State Senator Andrew Maynard gave a brief update on the deficit mitigation plan for the State, noting that efforts are being made to avoid an \$84 million cut in municipal aid.

State Representative Elissa Wright, 51 Pearl Street, Noank, continued the update on the State budget. She mentioned that regionalization of some services and departments such as purchasing, payroll, and emergency dispatch centers is being considered.

Jack Sebastian, 4 East Shore Avenue, RTM District 8, is concerned that taxes are increasing at a greater rate than inflation. He distributed a chart showing the rate of inflation minus debt service. Mr. Sebastian thinks that the Council should provide the Town Manager with measurable objectives and that the Town should be run like a business. He feels that some areas where cuts could be made are the Public Works Department, the Police Department, and the Board of

Education. Mr. Sebastian stated that a plan needs to be developed to control spending well before the budget is reviewed by the RTM.

John Peters, 233 Judson Avenue, continues to be concerned about a drainage problem at the Fishtown Brook watershed and storm drain. Every time it rains he needs to take time off work because he may have flooding. He would like the Town to look into this problem.

V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

In response to Mr. Sebastian, Councilor O'Beirne stated that revenue account fluctuations should be taken into account when determining inflation. Mr. Sebastian's chart is a simplistic look at a complex formula; things that affect a citizen's inflation rate, such as the cost of food, are not the same as those that would affect a town's inflation rate.

Councilor Watson thanked the local legislators for their update on the State budget.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approval of Minutes

2009-0315 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meetings of December 1, 2009 and December 8, 2009 are hereby accepted and approved.

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

b. Administrative Items

The Mayor expressed his gratitude for all the special trust fund contributions, highlighting a \$1,078.33 contribution by the Mystic Rotary and a \$5,708.80 contribution made jointly by the Groton Lions, Groton/Ledyard Rotary, and Liberty Bank.

2009-0296 Special Trust Fund Contributions

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

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

Rhonda Ward - \$100.00 - Arts Cafe Miscellaneous

Various Donations - \$303.99 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

City of Groton Matching Funds - \$267.03 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

Marilyn Baird - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary

William Beaman - \$25.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Fitch Sr. High School \$503.98 - Social Services Discretionary

Richard and Jane Miller - \$20.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Mystic River Homes Residents - \$70.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Richard and Karen Neff - \$50.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Poquonnock Bridge Neighborhood - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Albert and Janiss Rudolph - \$75.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Lisa Tess - \$20.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Knights of Columbus - \$300.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

Cardinal Honda Employees - \$320.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Marjorie Fondulas - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Groton Police PBA - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Groton/Ledyard Rotary - \$5,708.80 - Social Services Discretionary

Judy Hancock - \$20.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Mystic Rotary - \$1,078.33 - Social Services Discretionary

Jayvardhan Pandit - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church - \$450.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Marilyn and John Turkowski - \$25.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Eileen through United Way - \$52.82 - Parks and Recreation Revolving
Susan McMillin (Pfizer matching donation)- \$250.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

c. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List

2009-0256 Town Clerk Salary Range

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

2009-0280 No-Freeze Homeless Shelter Initiative

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

2009-0294 Local Prevention Council Grant Program

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

2009-0297 Acceptance of Open Space in the Mystic Ice House Subdivision

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

2009-0298 Acceptance of Ice House Lane

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

2009-0302 Appointment of Town Attorney

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

2009-0306 Appointment of a Code of Ethics Task Force

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

2009-0308 Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant DOE Response

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 Kolnaski, to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried unanimously

VII. COMMUNICATION REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)

a. Town Councilors

Councilor Monteiro, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Watson, Councilor Peruzzotti, and Mayor Streeter attended the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce's Annual Meeting and Dinner.

Councilor Monteiro attended a Golf Advisory Board meeting and a New London Ledge Lighthouse Foundation meeting.

Councilor Kolnaski attended the retirement party for Assistant Superintendent of Schools Sally Keating and a breakfast fund-raiser for Fitch Junior High School students to pay for school field trips.

Councilor Flax attended a PTO meeting at S. B. Butler School. The playground was moved to put in a parking lot and students have not been able to utilize the playground area since it was moved.

Councilor Watson attended a Mystic Co-Op Task Force meeting. He noted that on December 18, 2009, Human Services will be distributing holiday baskets.

Councilor Peruzzotti stated that she received some concerns regarding the new material used on roads for inclement weather.

Mayor Streeter attended a special Town Clerks' training class "Meetings, Minutes and Motions",

given by Barbara Tarbox, the swearing-in of the Board of Education, an open house presented by the Superintendent of Schools, an Avery Copp open house tour, a Mystic Co-Op Task Force meeting, the Christmas tree lighting, and a Comcast open house tour.

b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting

Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox stated that the first meeting of the new RTM will be December 16, 2009; members will be sworn-in and a moderator elected. An orientation for new members was conducted December 7, 2009.

c. Clerk of the Council

The Board of Education was sworn in on December 7, 2009.

d. Town Manager

The Town Manager reminded citizens that Groton is using treated salt before snow or ice accumulates. He expressed his appreciation to the Town Attorney's office for a donation of \$1,500 to the Human Services Energy Assistance Program. The Committee of the Whole meeting on December 22, 2009, and the Town Council meeting on January 5, 2010, have both been cancelled. Holiday baskets and toys will be distributed on December 18, 2009; donations and volunteers are welcome. The Town Manager stated that there will be a book-signing at the Bill Memorial Library on December 19, 2009, for Mayor Streeter's new book "Groton - Historical Bits and Pieces". A significant portion of the proceeds from the book will be donated to the Bill Memorial Library.

Lee Vincent attended the CCM Legislative meeting. He stated that the reason that the Governor has convened the assembly for deficit mitigation is that there is a revenue deterioration of \$245 million.

e. Town Attorney

No report.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Community & Cultural Development - Chairman Peruzzotti

No meeting, no report.

b. Economic Development - Chairman Johnson

No meeting, no report.

c. Education/Health & Social Services - Chairman Kolnaski

No meeting, no report.

d. Environment/Energy - Chairman Sheets

No meeting, no report.

e. Finance - Chairman O'Beirne

No meeting, no report.

f. Personnel/Appointments/Rules - Chairman Flax

No meeting, no report.

g. Public Safety - Chairman Monteiro

No meeting, no report.

h. Public Works/Recreation - Chairman Watson

No meeting, no report.

i. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Streeter

The Mayor stated that the resolutions on tonight's agenda are a result of the last Committee of the Whole meeting.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

X. NEW BUSINESS**2009-0256 Town Clerk Salary Range****RESOLUTION SETTING THE SALARY OF THE TOWN CLERK**

WHEREAS, the compensation of the Town Clerk shall be determined by the Town Council, under Town Charter Section 6.2, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has considered the qualifications of the newly elected Town Clerk along with the Town of Groton non-union pay plan and a survey of the experience and compensation of the clerks of other municipalities, and

WHEREAS, under the Charter Section 6.2 the term of the newly elected Town Clerk will commence on January 4, 2010, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the annual salary of the Groton Town Clerk shall be \$69,000.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2009-0280 No-Freeze Homeless Shelter Initiative**RESOLUTION APPROVING A GRANT FOR A HOMELESS SHELTER**

WHEREAS, the New London Homeless Hospitality Center has previously qualified as the recipient of annual grants from the Town of Groton's Outside Agencies program, and

WHEREAS, the Center has developed a comprehensive plan for providing shelter to homeless persons in the coming winter months and has requested supplemental funding from Groton and other towns, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that a supplemental grant of \$3,000 may be given to the New London Homeless Hospitality Center, Inc., from funds previously appropriated to the Town Council for FYE 2010 under the function Legislative Policy 1001.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2009-0294 Local Prevention Council Grant Program**RESOLUTION ENDORSING A LOCAL PREVENTION GRANT FOR THE LEDGE LIGHT HEALTH DISTRICT**

WHEREAS, the Ledge Light Health District can qualify for a grant of \$4,500 for FYE 2010 for activities in the Town of Groton, by our Local Prevention Council, to reduce abuse of alcohol, tobacco and drugs, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council supports and endorses the Local Prevention Council's grant of \$4,500 and authorizes Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger to sign, on behalf of the Town of Groton, any letters or other documentation as may be needed.

A motion was made by Councilor Johnson, seconded by Councilor Flax, that this matter be Adopted as Amended.

MOTION TO AMEND the WHEREAS paragraph to add the word "for" after "FYE 2010" was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Mayor Streeter.

VOTE on Motion to Amend passed unanimously.

The motion carried unanimously

2009-0297 Acceptance of Open Space in the Mystic Ice House Subdivision

RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT DEDICATED OPEN SPACE IN THE MYSTIC ICE HOUSE SUBDIVISION

WHEREAS, the Mystic Ice House Subdivision was approved on September 9, 2003, and

WHEREAS, subsequently, on November 10, 2009, the Planning Commission recommended acceptance of an open space parcel of approximately 1.33 acres adjoining the Town-owned Pequot Woods, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts the open space parcel in the Mystic Ice House Subdivision.

A motion was made by Councilor Monteiro, seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2009-0298 Acceptance of Ice House Lane

ACCEPTANCE OF ICE HOUSE LANE

WHEREAS, the Mystic Ice House Subdivision was approved on September 9, 2003, and

WHEREAS, subsequently, on November 10, 2009, the Planning Commission recommended acceptance of a road of 350 linear feet known as Ice House Lane, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts Ice House Lane as a Town street.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2009-0302 Appointment of Town Attorney

RESOLUTION APPOINTING THE TOWN ATTORNEY

WHEREAS, the Town Council has considered the needs of the Town for legal advice, the nature of the litigation currently underway, and the cost and quality of the legal services now being provided, there be it

RESOLVED, that pursuant to Town Charter 8.2.1, Eileen Duggan of the firm of Suisman, Shapiro, Wool, Brennan, Gray & Greenberg, P.C. is hereby appointed Town Attorney, to exercise all powers and duties of that office until her successor shall be appointed and qualified, and that the following attorneys from Suisman Shapiro may assist Attorney Duggan carrying out her duties:

Matthew Auger
 Raymond Baribeault
 James Berryman
 Michael Blanchard
 Andrew Brand
 Eric Callahan
 Michael Carey
 Jack Collins
 Jeanette Dostie
 Bryan Fiengo

Lawrence Greenberg
 Robert Keville
 Hinda Kimmel

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, that this matter be Adopted.

Town Attorney Eileen Duggan stated that her firm has served Groton for over 20 years. She expressed her gratitude to the Council for this appointment.

The motion carried unanimously

2009-0306

Appointment of a Code of Ethics Task Force

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE CODE OF ETHICS TASK FORCE TO SUCCEED THE ETHICS SUBCOMMITTEE

WHEREAS, on August 4, 2009 the Town Council established an Ethics Subcommittee under the Committee of the Whole, with the mission of preparing a Town Code of Ethics pursuant to Charter Section 3.5.3, and then Councilors Antipas, Flax and Sheets were appointed as members, with Councilor Kolnaski as alternate member, and

WHEREAS, following the election of November 3, 2009, Mr. Antipas, who was chosen as chair of the Ethics Subcommittee, is no longer a member of the Town Council but is willing to continue to serve the Town in the preparation of an ordinance for a Code of Ethics and Ethics Commission as required by the Town Charter, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Ethics Subcommittee of the Committee of the Whole shall henceforth be designated as the Code of Ethics Task Force, and its work shall continue to be accountable to the Town Council, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor may from time to time appoint additional members of the Task Force, whether members of the Town Council or not, as the Mayor may deem appropriate.

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

The motion carried unanimously

2009-0308

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant DOE Response

RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE ALLOCATION OF A DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY GRANT

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton is to receive an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant of \$198,100 from the EECBG program of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), of which \$50,000 was originally allocated for the costs of developing an energy efficiency strategy and action plan, and

WHEREAS, DOE has advised Town staff that it would be preferable for a portion of the \$50,000 intended for development of an energy efficiency strategy to be applied instead to direct program accomplishments such as retrofitting public buildings, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council authorizes the Town Manager to amend the previously submitted grant application to be in compliance with DOE objectives and to allocate \$153,100 of the grant funds to direct program purposes.

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

The Town Manager stated that he has had further discussions with the Department of Energy (DOE) and \$25,000 for strategy is an acceptable figure. He handed out a chart with proposed allocations for strategy, carbon footprint, benchmarking, and retrofits. Mr. Oefinger stated that there has been discussion regarding the Town setting up a revolving fund to capture any energy

savings from projects and to set those funds aside to reinvest into other energy saving projects.

The motion carried unanimously

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

The Town Manager stated that the Council should meet with both the City of Groton and Groton Long Point Association to discuss their budgets for FY 2011. He requested that any topics for discussion at the meeting with Groton Long Point Association be relayed to him.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 8:39 p.m. was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Monteiro and so voted unanimously.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk
Clerk of the Council*

Lori Watrous, Office Assistant