



Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road
Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk (860)441-6640
Town Manager
(860)441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Representative Town Meeting

Moderator Rita Schmidt

Representatives Joe Baril, Tom Barnhart, Lori Bartinik, Alicia Bauer, Genevieve Cerf, Michael Collins, Syma Ebbin, Peter Fairbank, Robert Garcia, Patrice Granatosky, Dolores Harrell, Debra Jenkins, Carole McCarthy, Kevin McMahon, Richard Metayer, David Miner, Deborah Monteiro, James Moulding, Scott Newsome, Nora Patterson, Deborah Peruzzotti, Joy Plunket, Robert Post, Kevin Power, Don Pratt, Mary-Ellen Schefers, Eleanor Scussel, Jack Sebastian, Jennifer Smuts, Eleanor Steere, Fritz Stein, Joan Steinfeld, Irma Streeter, Mark Svencer, Patti Thunberg, Cheryl Tilney, Kevin Trejo, Tom Vivirito, Robert Walker Sr, and John Wheeler.

Monday, May 1, 2006

7:30 PM

Senior Center

ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING

A. ROLL CALL

*Moderator Rita Schmidt called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.
30 members were present, and a quorum was declared.*

Members Present: Moderator Schmidt, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Plunket, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Vivirito, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.

Members Absent: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Garcia, Rep. McMahon, Rep. Miner, Rep. Post, Rep. Power, Rep. Schefers, Rep. Tilney and Rep. Trejo

(Rep. Trejo was not elected until the May 3 session of this meeting.)

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Mayor Harry Watson, Councilor Frank O'Beirne, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, School Superintendent Dr. James Mitchell, several members of the Board of Education, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

B. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The members observed a moment of silence followed by the Salute to the Flag led by Rep. Metayer.

C. CALL OF THE MEETING

The Call of the Meeting was read by Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox.

2006-0075 Annual RTM Budget Meeting

RESOLUTION SETTING RTM BUDGET MEETING DATE ON THE 2006-2007 ANNUAL TOWN BUDGET

RESOLVED, that pursuant to Section 8.4.3 of the Groton Town Charter, the Annual Budget Meeting of the Representative Town Meeting will be held at the Groton Senior Center, Newtown Road (Route #117), Groton, Connecticut, on Monday, May 1, 2006 at 7:30 p.m.

D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

Catherine Hoffman, 21 Indigo Street, Mystic endorsed the Council's actions that restored funds to the Town Operations accounts, particularly programs affecting the youth of Groton. She requested that the RTM follow the lead of the Council and not cut Town youth programs. She thanked the RTM members for their time and service to the community of Groton.

Hank Steinford, 32 Valley Road, commented that he supports the actions of the Council in regard to the restoration of funds to Town Operations but feels that the reduction for the Board of Education (BOE) was too much. He would recommend a 1.75% reduction. He requested that the BOE budget book provide clarification of the individual administrative job salaries, as well as titles and duties so that they are identifiable.

Craig Koehler, 263 Brook Street, Noank, requested that the RTM restore the funds cut by the Town Council to the BOE. He feels that necessary educational programs will be eliminated and that this is a disservice to the students and residents that support maintaining and improving the Groton School system. He stated that the restoration of funds would equal a tax increase of approximately \$50.00 to each household.

Jim Young, 27 Clipper Court, Mystic, spoke in favor of restoring funds to the BOE. He feels any reduction would have significant negative impact on the BOE budget. He stated that Groton as a whole is not distressed and therefore a reduction of this magnitude to the BOE is not justified.

Beth Reinhold, 110 Dogwood Lane, Mystic, voiced similar sentiments for restoring funds to the BOE. She noted that significant increases in the BOE operations, transportation and maintenance accounts are due to the rising costs of electricity, fuel, and heating oil. She believes that good schools are necessary to continue attracting people to Groton.

John Sutherland, 32 Neptune Drive, displayed a chart that provided a comparison of educational costs versus cost of living increases over the last six years. He stated that the actual expenditures for BOE have exceeded the cost of living by 34% over the last six years. He requested that the RTM maintain the cut to the BOE as recommended by the Town Council.

Ed Ettinger, 174 Cedar Road, Mystic, endorses the Council's recommended reduction to the BOE. He feels that the current economic outlook for Groton is questionable, with the upcoming revaluation and the loss of two submarines being reassigned from the Subbase. He stated that Groton spends more on education than many surrounding towns with no corresponding improvement in the mandatory achievement test scores. He recommends a \$3 million decrease for the BOE to match budgets of neighboring towns, without touching academics, to trim staff that are underachieving.

A statement from Diane Marley, Crosswinds Drive, was read by John Sutherland. She supports the cuts proposed by the Council and believes that the cuts demonstrate fiscal responsibility. She asked that the BOE consider the proposed reductions outlined by Councilor O'Beirne.

Beth Tillman, 925 River Road, Mystic, requested continued support for the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra. She stressed that many Groton children benefit from the cultural exposure and the strings program, as well as the joint concert held each fall that is partially funded by the \$3,000 budget line item included in account 1054.

Natalie Billing, 15 Ashby Street, Mystic, feels that the reduction to the BOE is not acceptable. The Council's proposed cut does not maintain the current service level for the BOE. She stated that the funds restored to the Town Operations accounts should not be at the expense of reductions to the BOE budget. She feels that the elimination of the curriculum position, kindergarten teachers and strings position, as well as larger kindergarten class size will have a negative impact on students. She requested that funding be restored to the BOE to maintain current level services.

Michael Kane, 51 Jupiter Point Road, asked the RTM to consider restoring the BOE funds. He stated that eliminating science in elementary school is not acceptable. He believes that all-day kindergarten is very beneficial and gives some children the edge that is needed to be successful.

Pattie Hnat, 372 Tyler Avenue, opposes the cuts to the BOE as proposed by the Council. She commented that she has not encountered any underachieving staff with her involvement as a parent of a student at West Side Middle School. She compared the Groton school system to that of an inner-city school. She feels that the Council is only funding 3/4 of the budget that is needed for the schools and requested that the RTM restore the funds.

Lea Graner Kennedy, 152 Cedar Road, Mystic, spoke in favor of restoring the funds to the BOE. She stated that many citizens are in favor of maintaining current service levels for Town operations and BOE programs. She knows first-hand that schools face a long list of unfunded mandates over which the BOE has no control. She feels that Groton has more sub-groups in its schools than neighboring towns and that the "No Child Left Behind Act" impacts the Groton BOE budget immensely.

Carl Robinson, 213 Pequot Avenue, Mystic, requested the restoration of the seed money for the Tercentennial All-Inclusive Playground. He believes that an all-inclusive playground in Groton would benefit the community by creating a special park that is accessible to everyone.

Sandra Gabarra, 24 Sachem Road, Noank, urged the RTM to restore the BOE funds. She feels it is wrong to cut the BOE and is a disservice to the children.

E. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

Moderator Rita Schmidt thanked all who spoke this evening.

Moderator Schmidt announced that several handouts are to be picked up by members. The handouts are a revised RTM Annual Budget Meeting Schedule, refreshment schedule, Budget Summary, Capital Projects Summary and revised Page 71 for CIP.

The Moderator reported that Rep. Power is unable to attend the May 1, 3 and 4, meetings, that Rep. Miner will be absent until after May 9, and that Rep. Barnhart was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

Rep. Walker requested a summary of the Citizens Petitions from this meeting prior to the review of the Board of Education account.

A motion to adjourn at 8:25 p.m. to a time definite Wednesday May 3, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Steinfeld, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Wednesday May 3, 2006

Moderator Rita Schmidt called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

37 members were present, and a quorum was declared. (Reps. Newsome and Collins arrived later.)

Members Present: Moderator Schmidt, Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Plunket, Rep. Post, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.

Members Absent: Rep. McMahon, Rep. Miner, Rep. Power and Rep. Schefers

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Information Technology Manager Lori Parker, Emergency Communications Manager Joe Sastre, Assessor John Philip, Tax Collector Nancy Dytko, Treasurer Cindy Landry, Purchasing Agent John Piacenza, Probate Judge Fred Palm, Registrars of Voters Victoria Rossman and Allen Palmer, representatives from Groton Ambulance and Mystic River Ambulance, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

COMMUNICATIONS

Moderator Rita Schmidt announced the election of Kevin Trejo to fill the vacancy in District Two at a special caucus held prior to the meeting.

She reported that Rep. Baril will be absent Thursday May 4 and Monday May 8 due to his work schedule.

She noted that a draft of the Citizens' Petitions from the RTM Annual Public Hearing held on May 1, 2006 is available for the members.

(Rep. Newsome arrived at 7:08 p.m.)

The Town Manager noted that new revenue information received from the State of Connecticut and the federal government prompted him to distribute a special memo. He noted that the Town will receive approximately \$475,000 more in revenue from the State than projected for FYE 2007. He stated that Federal Impact Aid will be approximately \$1.25 million less in FYE 2006 and \$2.25 million less in FYE 2007. He commended Hugh Hunter, the Business Manager of the BOE, for providing these preliminary projections during the budget process.

F. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Rules & Procedures Committee

Chairman Fritz Stein read the minutes from the meeting held on April 6, 2006. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Stein, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 1003 - Voter Registration

A motion for \$104,847.00 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Stein, seconded by Rep. Granatosky and so voted unanimously.

Account 1004 - Probate

A motion for \$18,925.00 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Stein, seconded by Rep. Scussel and so voted unanimously.

Account 1005 - Town Clerk

A motion for \$414,942.00 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Stein, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Finance Committee

Chairman Patrice Granatosky read the minutes from the meetings held on April 19, 20 and 24, 2006. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Garcia and so voted unanimously.

(Rep. Collins arrived at 7:34 p.m.)

Account 1006 - Legal Services

A motion for \$345,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 1010 - Executive Management

A motion for \$375,365 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld and so voted unanimously.

Account 1013 - Finance Administration

A motion for \$1,340,298 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Account 2120 - Revaluation Fund

A motion for \$179,475 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld and so voted unanimously.

Account 1014 - Administration Services

A motion for \$2,713,169 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Smuts.

In response to Rep. Collins, Mr. Ackerman stated that the reallocation of funds between cost centers is the reason for the change in figures.

The vote on \$2,713,169 carried unanimously.

Account 6050 - Computer Replacement Fund

A motion for \$77,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Fairbank.

In response to Reps. Cerf and Scussel, Mr. Ackerman and Lori Parker explained the replacement schedule for computers and printers, the different needs of departments, printer quality and quantity of usage. Ms. Parker noted that the older computers are donated to the library for public use.

The vote on \$77,500 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Network Infrastructure Upgrade

A motion for \$55,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Smuts.

Rep. Cerf opposes this expenditure as the current technology is unreliable, stating that the Town's web site is adequate as it is.

Emergency Communications Manager Joe Sastre noted that this is part of an ongoing CIP program and is building capacity for the future. He stated that the Town is reviewing fiber optics versus wireless.

The vote on \$55,000 carried 36 in favor, 1 opposed (Rep. Cerf)

Capital Item - Mobile Data Terminals for Police, Fire and EMS

A motion for \$130,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Smuts.

In response to Reps. Barnhart and Newsome, the Town Manager and Mr. Sastre explained that this is a step project, building and leading the way in the region for a coordinated local, regional and State communication system. Training costs will be minimal, as it can be done by the IT Department, and the programs should be user friendly.

The vote on \$130,000 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Emergency Equipment

A motion for \$39,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Walker.

Items discussed were types and size of generators, locations, and maintenance.

The vote on \$39,000 carried unanimously.

The Moderator announced a short recess at 8:03 p.m.

(Rep. Sebastian left during the recess.)

Account 10260 - Groton Ambulance Services

A motion for \$79,565 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Baril and so voted unanimously.

Account 10261 - Mystic River Ambulance

A motion for \$37,500 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld and so voted unanimously.

Account 10263 - LCL Emergency Planning Council

A motion for \$1,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Jenkins and so voted unanimously.

Total for Account 1026: \$118,065

Account 1070 - Insurance & Claims

A motion for \$587,600 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Account 1071 - Self Funded Plans

A motion for \$4,858,292 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Walker.

In response to Rep. Cerf, the Town Manager informed the members that his memo distributed prior to the meeting provided updated estimates from the health insurance consultant that would result in a reduction of \$240,000 to Account 10710-5153 Employee Benefits-Health Insurance.

He recommended to the RTM that instead of reducing this function by \$240,000, these funds should be reallocated to Account 10713-5170-Other Post Employment Benefits Liability.

The RTM agreed by consensus to this reallocation of money between the cost centers of function 1071 for FYE 2007.

The vote on \$4,858,292 carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. to a time definite Thursday May 4, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Smuts, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Thursday May 4, 2006

Moderator Rita Schmidt called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

35 members were present and a quorum was declared. (Reps. Peruzzotti and Tilney arrived later.)

Members Present: Moderator Schmidt, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Plunket, Rep. Post, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.

Members Absent: Rep. Baril, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. McMahan, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Power and Rep. Schefers

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, City of Groton Mayor Dennis Popp, City Police Chief Bruno Giulini, City Finance Director Tony Timpano, Economic/Community Development Specialist Barbara Strother, Inspection Services Manager Kevin Quinn, Planning & Development Director Michael Murphy, SEAT representatives Charles Kosloskey and Joann Jones, Deputy Town Clerk Janet Downs, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Finance Committee**Account 1090 - City of Groton**

The Moderator noted that Account 1090-City of Groton will be approved by individual cost center for police, highway and school crossing guards.

Account 10900 - City of Groton Police

A motion for \$2,110,615 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. Fairbank and so voted unanimously.

Account 10901 - City of Groton Highway

A motion for \$1,834,759 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Account 10902 - City of Groton School Crossing Guards

A motion for \$141,983 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. Harrell and so voted unanimously.

Total for Account 1090: \$4,087,357.

Account 10910 - Groton Long Point - Police

A motion for \$193,600 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Miner, and was seconded.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$186,195 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Harrell. Rep. Granatosky's rationale was to give the Groton Long Point police the same percentage of increase that was given to the City police. She feels a 9% increase for such a small district police force is not appropriate. She would like the savings to be spent on the education budget and will not support the committee's recommended figure.

Items discussed were the ownership of the Groton Long Point (GLP) police vehicles, maintenance and gas payments, mutual aid, extra services necessary due to the special character of the area, historical funding of this account, and cost if police service was provided by the Town.

(Reps. Perruzzoti and Tilney arrived during this discussion.)

Rep. Sebastian stated he would not support the amended motion because historically the Town has provided about 50% of the funding which would equal the cost for the Town to provide the services. He noted that many homes in this district are summer homes that are vacant for three-quarters of the year, and that even the year-round residents are generally gone several months of the year.

Rep. Cerf supports the original motion because she feels that the Town could not do the job for less than the GLP budget request. She stated that the summer population grows immensely causing a potential large liability for the Town with many children playing in the streets and that motor vehicle traffic is strictly monitored by the GLP police.

The vote on the Amendment of \$186,195 was defeated 11 in favor, 24 opposed. (In favor: Reps. Harrell, Patterson, Granatosky, Tilney, Wheeler, Plunkett, Stein, Post, Metayer, Walker, Trejo.)

The vote on \$193,600 carried 26 in favor, 9 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Harrell, Patterson, Granatosky, Tilney, Plunket, Stein, Post, Walker, Trejo.)

Account 109011 Groton Long Point - Highway

A motion for \$192,058 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Miner and was seconded.

Rep. Granatosky stated she will oppose this figure, but will not move an amended number. She stated that her rationale is similar to the previous account.

Items discussed were the accessibility of the roads to all citizens, reported harassment of non-resident drivers, payment for road maintenance, and the long term plan for scheduled resurfacing, repair and reconstruction of roads and sidewalks.

Rep. Cerf supports this account.

The vote on \$192,058 carried 32 in favor, 3 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Granatosky, Patterson, Post.)

Total for Account 1091: \$385,658

Account 1092 - Fire Districts PILOT

A motion for \$246,012 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. Sebastian and so voted unanimously.

Community & Economic Development Committee

Chairman Vivirito read the portion of the minutes of the meeting held on April 17, 2006 concerning items on this agenda. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Garcia and so voted unanimously.

Account 1001 - Legislative Policy

A motion for \$60,640 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Svencer and so voted unanimously.

Account 1007 - Regional Agencies

A motion for \$95,253 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Account 1046 - Planning & Development Services

A motion for \$1,192,692 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Economic Assistance Fund

A motion for \$50,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, and was seconded.

MOTION TO AMEND the figure to \$0 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Harrell. Rep. Granatosky feels that the \$100,000 now in the account is adequate. She is also troubled that money can be spent from this account without RTM approval.

The Town Manager provided history of this item and pointed out the advantages to having more growth in this fund for future diversification and implementation of the goals set forth in the strategic plan.

Mr. Murphy talked about the projects that were assisted, the application process for obtaining these funds and the anticipated needs for the fund.

Rep. Monteiro stated she will support the original motion since these funds may assist in the completion of items set forth in the new strategic plan and may help create a more attractive downtown area.

Rep. Cerf supports and agrees with Rep. Monteiro's statements. She feels it is essential to nurture small business and economic development in the Town.

Rep. Vivirito supports the original motion because having an economic assistance fund may attract potential development.

Rep. Steinfeld supports the original motion since the funds could be an incentive to attract new businesses to Groton. She also disclosed that her husband is a member of the Planning Commission.

MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Smuts, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

The vote on the Amendment of \$0 was defeated 3 in favor, 32 opposed. (In favor: Reps. Garcia, Granatosky, Patterson.)

MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Harrell and so voted unanimously.

The vote on \$50,000 carried 33 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Granatosky, Patterson.)

A motion to adjourn at 8:10 p.m. to a time definite Monday May 8, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Garcia, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Monday May 8, 2006

Moderator Rita Schmidt called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

33 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

Members Present: Moderator Schmidt, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartnik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Collins, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Plunket, Rep. Post, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.

Members Absent: Rep. Baril, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. McMahon, Rep. Miner and Rep. Schefers

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent,

Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Public Works Director Gary Schneider, Parks and Recreation Director John Silsby, Senior Center Supervisor Mary Jo Riley, Assistant Public Works Directors Carl Almquist and John Carrington, Town Councilor Jim Streeter, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Public Works Committee

Chairman Michael Collins read the minutes of the meetings held on April 17 and 19, 2006. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Garcia and so voted unanimously.

Account 1035 - Public Works

A motion for \$6,722,962 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Walker.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,704,292 was made by Rep. Barnhart, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld. Rep. Barnhart's reason for this reduction is the cost for the operation of the Mystic River pump out boat program. He feels that this service, on the Mystic River only, is a great service but opens the Town up to possible liability. He enumerated the costs of this program. He stated that there are 13 marinas on the Mystic River and that 7 marinas have pump out capability.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$6,690,000 was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded by Rep. Newsome. Rep. Sebastian's rationale is that the Public Works Department has too many layers of management based on a organizational chart that he received from the Town Manager's office. Mr. Schneider addressed these concerns, reviewing the history of personnel within the department since his employment with the Town in 1980's. He stated that the department has been able to downsize and is more efficient since obtaining newer and improved equipment.

The vote on the Amendment of \$6,690,000 was defeated 1 in favor, 32 opposed. (In Favor: Rep. Sebastian.)

The vote on the Amendment of \$6,704,292 carried 28 in favor, 7 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Bauer, Jenkins, Metayer, Post, Pratt, Stein, Streeter.)

Account 2020 - Sewer Operating Funds

A motion for \$4,667,292 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 2030 - Solid Waste Fund

A motion for \$2,978,977 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Jenkins and so voted unanimously.

Account 6040 - Fleet Reserve Fund

A motion for \$1,972,350 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Walker.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$1,926,350 was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Sebastian. Rep. Power's rationale is that the Town should operate like any business in that there is not a guarantee of lifetime employment. He knows it is difficult to reduce staffing but feels this account should be reduced to the Manager's proposed number with the elimination of the mechanic position.

Rep. Granatosky stated she will oppose the amendment since ambulance and fire district accounts have already been approved and are dependent on the position proposed for elimination.

Rep. Smuts agreed with Rep. Granatosky and stated that the reduction to these accounts would be even greater since the equipment maintenance and service provided by the Town are less expensive and save employee time for the ambulance and fire districts.

The vote on the Amendment of \$1,926,350 was defeated 2 in favor, 31 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Power, Sebastian)

The vote on \$1,972,350 carried 31 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Power, Sebastian.)

Capital Items - Crystal Lake Road

A motion for \$50,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Jenkins and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - New Sidewalk Construction - Rte 215

A motion for \$150,000 was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Walker. Items discussed were construction cost overruns, and the bid process since this is not an in-house project. Rep. Thunberg stated she will not support this project since it is not necessary.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Steinfeld, seconded by Rep. Scussel.

The vote on the Amendment of \$0 carried 17 in favor, 16 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Bartinik, Bauer, Garcia, Granatosky, Jenkins, Monteiro, Patterson, Plunkett, Post, Pratt, Stein, Streeter, Svencer, Tilney, Trejo, Walker.)

Capital Items - New Sidewalk Construction - Thomas Road

A motion for \$40,000 was made by Rep. Collins, and was seconded.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Thunberg, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld.

Rep. Thunberg's rationale was that this improvement should not be funded at this time due to the current economic situation.

Rep. Granatosky stated she will not support the amendment because of safety concerns. She noted that this road has heavy pedestrian and bicycle traffic and that the new maritime school is proposed for the Spicer property on this road.

Rep. Moulding disclosed that his wife works in the Planning & Development office. He stated that for safety reasons he supports the \$40,000 motion.

Rep. Collins noted his support of the \$40,000 in agreement with Reps. Granatosky and Moulding. He emphasized that vehicular traffic has increased with the expansion of Pfizer and will continue to grow with the new maritime school.

In response to Reps. Peruzzotti and Thunberg, the Town Manager reviewed the renewal of expiring CIP funds and the additional request of \$15,000 for this project. He explained the scope of construction and the process for the project since State DOT and Federal grants are involved. He estimated that the project will actually be constructed in FY2008.

The vote on the Amendment of \$0 was defeated 2 in favor, 31 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Harrell, Thunberg.)

The vote on \$40,000 carried 31 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Harrell, Thunberg.)

Capital Item - Sidewalk Replacement - Oslo Street

A motion for \$100,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Smuts.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Scussell.

Rep. Vivirito's rationale was that this location has an existing asphalt sidewalk.

Rep. Garcia stated he would support the amendment of \$0.

Items discussed were the timing of the sidewalk construction in connection with building the new school, damage to a new sidewalk during school construction, the life span of concrete versus asphalt, and the cost to patching and resurfacing the existing sidewalk.

The vote on the Amendment of \$0 was defeated 4 in favor, 29 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Garcia, Moulding, Steere, Vivirito.)

The vote on \$100,000 carried 29 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Garcia, Moulding, Steere, Vivirito.)

*The Moderator announced a short recess at 8:25 p.m.
(Rep. Newsome left during the recess.)*

Capital Item - Spicer House - Parks & Recreation Office

A motion for \$15,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Town Hall Annex - Salt/Sand Storage

A motion for \$225,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Jabez Smith House

A motion for \$55,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

Items discussed were the annual number of visitors, the activities sponsored by the Jabez Smith House Committee, and the rental opportunities to small private organizations.

The vote on \$55,000 carried 31 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Moulding.)

Capital Item - Golf Course Facilities

A motion for \$135,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Monteiro.

Items discussed were the future self-sufficiency of the golf course, the State DEP requirement for this project, and the daily fines if the project is not completed.

The vote on \$135,000 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Senior Center

A motion for \$10,600,000 was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Walker.

The Moderator ruled this motion out of order since the committee's vote on this item resulted in a tie vote.

A motion for \$195,000 (the Council figure) was made by Moderator Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Collins.

The Town Manager explained the confusion on this account in the proposed manager's budget. He explained it was not his intent for the RTM to act on the CIP project. Action on the CIP project is a separate process and no action is required now. His intent was to add \$195,000 to fund the study for the next level of engineering, addressing the concerns raised by the Council for more options and the costs for individual phases for this project.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$0 was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Smuts.

Rep. Granatosky stated she does not think it wise to proceed with this large expansion of the Senior Center in view of the current school building projects already approved.

Rep. Streeter disagreed with Rep. Granatosky citing usage and future needs of the residents. She believes that now is the time to go ahead with this project.

Rep. Sebastian noted that the taxpayers should have the opportunity to vote on this project at referendum.

Rep. Pratt disclosed that his wife is an employee at the Senior Center.

Items discussed were the age of the facility, the increase of usage by "baby boomers", and the options of building in several phases with associated costs provided.

Rep. Steere is not in favor of this project; she would prefer a community center serving all ages.

Senior Center Supervisor Mary Jo Riley stated that the center is in constant use, that non-residents pay for classes when room is available, and that an expanded facility would allow the center to be open to adults as well as Seniors, thus serving more of our community.

The vote on the Amendment of \$0 was defeated 6 in favor, 26 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Granatosky, Harrell, Scussel, Smuts, Steere, Steinfeld.)

The vote on \$195,000 carried 27 in favor, 5 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Granatosky, Harrell, Scussel, Smuts, Steinfeld.)

Capital Item - WPCF Sewer Line Infrastructure Repair

A motion for \$100,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Mechanical/Electrical Equipment Repair - WPCF

A motion for \$700,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Roof Replacements - WPCF

A motion for \$25,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Jenkins and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Eastern Point School - Reuse

A motion for \$45,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Trejo.

In response to several members, the Manager explained that this study would provide a cost estimate for the discovery of asbestos and hazardous material handling and disposal. The study would also provide full disclosure information that would be necessary if the Town decides to sell or give the property "as is" to a potential buyer.

Mr. Schneider responded that information would be incorporated from the Board of Education on the condition of the building, such as fungus, mold and lead. He stated that geo site testing needs to be done to investigate for potential buried coal ash from the early 1900's and any other hazardous material on the site.

The Town Manager stated that a grant is not available for demolition since the new school will not be located on this site.

The vote on \$45,000 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Flanders Road Utility Installation

A motion for \$100,000 was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Walker

The Moderator ruled this motion out of order since the committee amended the figure to \$0.

A motion for \$0 was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Monteiro and carried 30 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Pratt, Wheeler.)

Capital Item - Hurricane/Disaster Projects

A motion for \$65,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Jenkins.

The Town Manager stated that this project would evaluate the structural integrity of buildings in order to comply with the latest building code and identify buildings that would need fortification in case of a natural disaster.

The vote on \$65,000 carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn at 9:27 p.m. to a time definite Wednesday May 10, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. following the regular RTM meeting was made by Rep. Walker, seconded by Rep. Streeter and so

voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Wednesday May 10, 2006

Moderator Rita Schmidt called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

39 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

Members Present: Moderator Schmidt, Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Plunket, Rep. Post, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steere, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.
Members Absent: Rep. McMahon and Rep. Schefers

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Mayor Harry Watson, Town Councilors Heather Sherman Bond, Frank O'Beirne, and Catherine Kolnaski, School Superintendent Dr. James Mitchell, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds Wes Greenleaf, Board of Education Administrative Staff, Planning & Development Director Mike Murphy, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Education Committee

Chairman Nora Patterson read the minutes of the meetings held on April 26 and May 3, 2006.

(Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER - Account 1035 Public Works

A motion to reconsider Account 1035-Public Works was made by Rep. Jenkins, seconded by Rep. Sebastian.

Subjects discussed were the ability of the RTM to identify a specific line item for elimination, the procedural process and options of reconsideration, the number of votes needed to pass this motion, and Robert's Rules.

The Town Manager stated in his opinion that the RTM can only recommend and identify a specific line item for elimination. He noted that ultimately it is the Town's prerogative to decide exactly what would be eliminated from the account; he has not discussed this item with the Council or the Public Works Director.

A request was made by Rep. Granatosky for a roll call vote on reconsideration.

Referencing Roberts Rules, the Town Clerk noted that an account may be reconsidered at the same meeting or the next succeeding meeting. She stated that once a motion for reconsideration passes, that account is immediately on the floor for discussion. She noted that action could then be taken to postpone in order to have staff present since the entire Public Works Account 1035 is open to discussion and amendment. She announced that a majority vote is needed to pass the motion to reconsider.

Rep. Moulding will not support the motion for reconsideration as he believes that no further discussion is necessary and that people who either break or follow the laws on the waterways will continue to do so even if the \$18,000 for the pump-out program is restored.

The vote on reconsideration of Account 1035-Public Works was defeated 14 in favor, 25 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Barnhart, Bartinik, Cerf, Ebbin, Jenkins, McCarthy, Monteiro, Plunkett, Sebastian, Steere, Streeter, Walker, Wheeler. Opposed: Reps. Bauer, Collins, Fairbank, Garcia, Granatosky, Harrell, Metayer, Miner, Moulding, Newsome, Patterson, Peruzzotti, Post, Power, Pratt, Scussel, Smuts, Stein, Steinfeld, Svencer, Thunberg, Tilney, Trejo, Vivirito, Schmidt.)

Account 1080 - Education

A motion for \$68,073,295 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Post.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$65,771,300 was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Thunberg. Rep. Vivirito's rationale was that the Board of Education needs to "get their house in order". He stated that this is the seventh budget season that Town Operations has had to reduce spending and programming. He noted that any savings on the side of Town Operations has been nullified by the increases to the BOE budget. He suggested that a mechanism exists to return to the Council and RTM for additional appropriations if needed and that the RTM should at least support the number approved by the Council.

Rep. Cerf is in favor of restraining the increases for the BOE budget. She enumerated the costs, percentage increases and possible reductions for the BOE budget.

Items discussed were the validity of the percentages and costs presented in a handout distributed prior to the meeting by Rep. Cerf; the cost per student; the expenditures at the end of the fiscal year to spend all of the FY appropriation; the decrease in and formula for Federal Impact Aid; unfunded mandates by Federal and State government; the time line for closing Noank Elementary School; the funding of the International Baccalaureate Program; the payment for Advance Placement testing from public funds as compared to payment for the SAT testing by students themselves.

MOTION TO AMEND to \$67,000,000 was made by Rep. Scussel, seconded by Rep. Garcia.

Rep. Post will oppose all of the amendments since he feels that the BOE original request should be funded.

Rep. Sebastian reviewed all of the Board of Education goals and not one of them is a measurable goal that affects the performance of the children.

Additional items discussed were the salaries of the Administrators and the Administrative Staff, as well as the number of support staff, and the accountability for achieving the objectives and goals of the BOE.

Dr. Mitchell addressed many of these concerns. He stated that less than one-third of the three hundred plus children attending Noank School are residents of district eight. He noted that redistricting town-wide will be an ongoing process of the BOE due to the construction of two new elementary schools and renovations of other schools, as well as the changing demographics of the community. He enumerated the accomplishments of our Town's high school graduates noting that this is a positive indicator of the success and achievements of our school system. He stated that overall staff has been reduced by attrition and early retirements and that those savings in personnel costs were returned to the Town. He stated that during the last two years, he has reduced the staff-to-student ratio.

Rep. Fairbank opposes the amendment of \$67,000,000, noting that at the public hearing, 12 out of 15 taxpayers requested full or partial restoration of the BOE budget request. He feels that unfunded mandates from the Federal and State governments have a major impact on the budget that is not under the control of the BOE.

Rep. Ebbin agreed with Rep. Fairbank and will oppose the amendments, but will support the committee's figure. She stated that reducing funding will not assist with achieving improved test scores.

Rep. Steere addressed the "No Child Left Behind Act" noting that it could potentially affect our Town budget if the schools do not achieve the required performance level. She suggested that reductions to the BOE budget could be achieved by reducing the number of secretaries and administrative costs.

Rep. Svencer disclosed that his wife is an employee of the school system and that he will not support any figure except the committee's.

Rep. Bauer also will not support the amended figures and feels that any reduction to the BOE budget is not warranted.

A MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Walker, seconded by Rep. Miner.

The vote on moving the question carried 37 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Smuts, Sebastian).

The vote on the Amendment of \$67,000,000 failed 11 in favor, 28 opposed. (In favor: Reps. Barnhart, Cerf, Moulding, Plunkett, Post, Power, Scussel, Steere, Steinford, Thunberg, Vivirito. Opposed: Reps. Baril, Bartinik, Bauer, Collins, Ebbin, Fairbank, Garcia, Granatosky, Harrell, Jenkins, McCarthy, Metayer, Miner, Monteiro, Newsome, Patterson, Peruzzotti, Pratt, Sebastian, Smuts, Stein, Streeter, Svencer, Tilney, Trejo, Walker, Wheeler, Schmidt.)

The vote on the Amendment of \$65,771,300 failed 8 in favor, 31 opposed. (In favor: Reps. Cerf, Moulding, Scussel, Sebastian, Steere, Steinford, Thunberg, Vivirito. Opposed; Reps. Baril, Barnhart, Bartinik, Bauer, Collins, Ebbin, Fairbank, Garcia, Granatosky, Harrell, Jenkins, McCarthy, Metayer, Miner, Monteiro, Newsome, Patterson, Peruzzotti, Plunkett, Post, Power, Pratt, Smuts, Stein, Streeter, Svencer, Tilney, Trejo, Walker, Wheeler, Schmidt.)

A MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Granatosky and was seconded. The Town Clerk clarified that this is a vote on moving the question on the committee's figure. The vote on Moving the Question carried 28 in favor, 11 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Barnhart, Cerf, Moulding, Newsome, Patterson, Power, Sebastian, Steinford, Thunberg, Trejo, Vivirito.)

The vote on \$68,073,295 carried 31 in favor, 8 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Barnhart, Cerf, Moulding, Power, Sebastian, Steinford, Thunberg, Vivirito. In favor: Reps. Baril, Bartinik, Bauer, Collins, Ebbin, Fairbank, Garcia, Granatosky, Harrell, Jenkins, McCarthy, Metayer, Miner, Monteiro, Newsome, Patterson, Peruzzotti, Plunkett, Post, Pratt, Scussel, Smuts, Steere, Stein, Streeter, Svencer, Tilney, Trejo, Walker, Wheeler, Schmidt.)

The Moderator announced a brief recess.
(Rep. Barnhart left during the recess.)

Capital Item - Planning Study

A motion for \$200,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Collins.

Items discussed were the scope of the study and any effect on the timing of closing Noank School. The vote on \$200,000 carried 36 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Cerf, Vivirito.)

Capital Item - Fitch High School

A motion for \$420,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Fairbank, and carried 37 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Moulding.)

Capital Item - West Side Middle School

A motion for \$50,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Walker.

In response to Rep. Trejo, Mr. Greenleaf explained that this study will answer questions about the nearby wetlands, reconditioning, proper drainage and extension of the athletic fields.

The vote on \$50,000 carried 37 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Sebastian.)

Capital Item - Charles Barnum

A motion for \$50,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep.

Fairbank.

In response to Rep. Sebastian, Mr. Greenleaf explained that this project is in the last phase projected for 2015. He stated that due to safety concerns it is being requested now and that any work completed would be compatible with future renovations.

The vote on \$50,000 carried 35 in favor, 3 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Moulding, Sebastian, Vivirito.)

Capital Item - Claude Chester

A motion for \$758,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Post.

Rep. Cerf stated she is opposed, as this work could wait for the results of the Phase II study.

Rep. Peruzzotti reiterated for the record that it is the desire of the committee that any future design or renovation of this school would incorporate the reuse of these windows.

Rep. Ebbin agreed with Rep. Peruzzotti.

The vote on \$758,000 carried 34 in favor, 4 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Cerf, Sebastian, Thunberg, Vivirito.)

Capital Item - Fuel Spill Containment

A motion for \$65,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Patterson, seconded by Rep. Steinford.

In response to Rep. Trejo, Mr. Greenleaf explained that due to their age, many boilers have been identified as vulnerable to oil leaks and spills that may result in environmental contamination. He noted that any money left after the study would roll over to the improvements that were recommended.

The vote on \$65,000 carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn at 10:18 p.m. to a time definite Monday May 15, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Walker, seconded by Rep. Steinford and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Monday May 15, 2006

Moderator Rita Schmidt called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

35 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

Members Present: Moderator Schmidt, Rep. Baril, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Miner, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Plunket, Rep. Post, Rep. Power, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinford, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Wheeler, Jr. Members Absent: Rep. Garcia, Rep. McMahon, Rep. Schefers, Rep. Steere, Rep. Tilney and Rep. Walker, Sr.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Parks and Recreation Director John Silsby, Senior Center Supervisor Mary Jo Riley, Park and Recreation staff, Police Chief Kelly Fogg, Assistant Chief Michael Crowley, Deputy Town Clerk Janet Downs, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Recreation Committee

Chairman Kevin Power read the minutes of the meeting held on April 24, 2006. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Collins and so voted unanimously.

Account 1064 - Parks & Recreation

A motion for \$2,564,389 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Collins.

Items discussed were the summer playground program attendance figures and fees, a request for an in-depth assessment for fees based on ability to pay for the summer program, and the

maintenance costs for the active open space areas in subdivisions.

The vote on \$2,564,389 carried unanimously.

Account 2010 - Shennecossett Golf Course

A motion for \$1,218,379 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Svencer.

Items discussed were the Council's approval of a subsidy to this account, the history of self sufficiency for the golf course, the Par Four restaurant lease and utility costs, and the loan repayment schedule to the General Fund.

The Town Manager noted that this account is held to a different standard than any other recreational facility or activity in the Town for attaining self-sufficiency. He stated that the revenue is weather dependent.

Mr. Silsby reported that a Golf Advisory Board has been established as a result of the national study report. This board has begun implementation of items suggested in the report. He noted that many of the items to be implemented will help the golf course achieve recognition as a top golf course and will work to increase revenue.

Rep. Cerf stated that she supports the subsidy to the golf course because it is a well-run facility and a valuable Town asset with the potential for increasing Town revenue.

The vote on \$1,218,379 carried 33 in favor, 2 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Barnhart, Smuts.)

Account 3260 - Community Events

A motion for \$24,250 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Collins and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Copp Property Improvement Project

A motion for \$150,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Scussel and so voted unanimously.

Capital Item - Park Improvement Plan

A motion for \$340,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Collins.

Items discussed were the factors for determining the number and placement of playgrounds including Claude Chester School, Sutton Park and Poquonnock Plains, and the funding of the Tercentennial Playground.

The Town Manager stated that schools have a requirement for age-appropriate playscapes so that some schools have two separate playscape areas. He explained that many CIP projects are not calculated as Town debt since the money is set aside and the project is paid for in cash. He noted that some CIP projects like the WPCF Upgrade and the Senior Center Expansion project will involve some borrowed funds and then those projects will appear on the Town's debt list.

The Vote on \$340,000 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Open Space Acquisition and Development

A motion for \$25,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Ebbin.

In response to questions, the Town Manager reported that this fund could pay for survey work, provide a source of money to be used as deposit on a potential purchase or to secure matching grants if available. The expenditure from this fund requires additional approval by the RTM.

The Finance Director explained the intricacies of the operations of this special revenue fund to members.

The vote on \$25,000 carried unanimously.

Capital Item - Sutton Park Improvement Project

A motion for \$35,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Harrell.

The Town Manager addressed concerns about the duplication of funds designated for park improvement. He noted that this money would provide a master planning and engineering study for Sutton Park. He stated that this is a major park consisting of the skate park, picnic grounds, playground and ballfields; it is over 30 years old. He noted that items for renovation and improvement need to be identified and prioritized.

The vote on \$35,000 carried 34 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Ebbin.)

Capital Item - Golf Course Improvements

A motion for \$0 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Power, seconded by Rep. Collins. Items discussed were the impact of postponing the improvements; the approved expenditure for the DEP-required cart washing station; revenue losses due to drainage problems; year round usage of the course; increased revenue from improvement of the cart paths; the number of closures from wet weather and the effect on subsequent phases for improvements.

A MOTION TO AMEND to \$125,000 was made by Rep. Cerf, seconded by Rep. Scussel. Rep. Cerf feels that the improvements will save money by decreasing the number of course closures and increase revenues from user fees and cart fees. The improvements will benefit the Town by creating a premier golf course in this region.

Rep. Smuts will oppose this amendment. She does not support moving this additional expenditure forward on the CIP schedule since funds were already approved for the cart washing project to avoid penalties imposed by the DEP .

Rep. Trejo will support this amendment since it will create increased usage and revenues for the golf course.

The vote on \$125,000 was defeated 16 in favor, 19 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Bartinik, Cerf, Granatosky, Jenkins, McCarthy, Miner, Monteiro, Plunket, Power, Scussel, Streeter, Svencer, Trejo, Wheeler, Schmidt.)

The vote on \$0 carried 23 in favor, 12 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Baril, Cerf, Granatosky, Jenkins, McCarthy, Plunket, Power, Scussel, Streeter, Svencer, Wheeler, Schmidt.)

The Moderator announced a short recess at 8:15 p.m.

Capital Item - Park Improvement Plan

After the recess the Moderator related to the members that the Town Manager and Finance Director had requested that the motion for the CIP Park Improvement Plan specifically state the sources of funding.

MOTION that the RTM approve funding of \$280,000 from grants and \$60,000 from CIP was made by Moderator Schmidt, was seconded and carried unanimously.

Account 1024 - Public Safety

Chairman Pratt read the minutes of the meeting held on April 10, 2006. (Minutes are on file.) A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

A motion for \$5,997,681 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Pratt, seconded by Rep. Scussel.

Police Chief Fogg explained that the management data records system was not implemented until

June 2005. This system is more sophisticated than the previous system. It requires more data entry with the officer's detailed narratives, and more comprehensive data is collected. The system also provides compatible reporting to State and Federal Agencies.

Chief Fogg also noted that funding was restored for the Drug Task Force to full time level.

The vote on \$5,997,681 carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. to a time definite Wednesday May 17, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. was made by Rep. Steinford, seconded by Rep. Miner and so voted unanimously.

Budget Session - Wednesday May 17, 2006

Moderator Rita Schmidt called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

32 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

Members Present: Moderator Schmidt, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Collins, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Jenkins, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Metayer, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. Moulding, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Plunket, Rep. Post, Rep. Power, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinford, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Tilney, Rep. Trejo, Rep. Vivirito, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Wheeler, Jr.

Members Absent: Rep. Barnhart, Rep. McMahon, Rep. Miner, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Schefers, Rep. Scussel, Rep. Steere and Rep. Streeter

The Moderator noted that Reps. Barnhart, Pratt, Scussel, and Steere are unable to attend.

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Administrative Services Director Doug Ackerman, Finance Director Sal Pandolfo, Library Director Alan Benkert, Human Services Director Marge Fondulas, Bill Memorial Library Director Hali Keeler and board members, Mystic-Noank Library Director Joanne Case and board members, Deputy Town Clerk Janet Downs, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney.

Community & Economic Development Committee

Chairman Vivirito read the portion of the minutes of the meeting held on April 17, 2006 concerning the items on this agenda. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Garcia and so voted unanimously.

Account 1063 Groton Public Library

A motion for \$1,827,640 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Sebastian and so voted unanimously.

Account 1065 - Other Libraries

A motion for \$211,814 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito, seconded by Rep. Power.

Rep. Vivirito clarified that the appropriation is voted as one number but that the individual appropriations are: \$194,814 for the Mystic-Noank Library, and \$17,000 for the Bill Memorial Library.

A MOTION TO AMEND to \$117,000 was made by Rep. Moulding, seconded by Rep. Thunberg. Rep. Moulding stated that the funding should reflect the reduction for the Mystic-Noank Library to \$100,000 and retain \$17,000 for the Bill Memorial Library. His rationale is based on visits to each library, their website information and the fact that he opposes paying for private libraries with taxpayer money. He feels that the Town has a wonderful library which serves the needs of the community.

Items discussed were the number of registered borrowers; the percentage of Mystic-Noank patrons from Groton versus Stonington; the definition of a private library; the yearly budget contribution to Mystic-Noank from the Town of Stonington, the summer reading program; location and accessibility of each of the libraries in the community; the educational value and opportunities

afforded by each of the libraries.

The vote on the Amendment of \$117,000 failed 1 in favor, 31 opposed. (In Favor: Rep. Moulding.)

The vote on \$211,814 carried 31 in favor, 1 opposed. (Opposed: Rep. Moulding.)

Account 3310 - Connecticut Special Revenue Fund

A motion for \$22,000 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Vivirito , seconded by Rep. Stein.

In response to Rep. Ebbin, the Town Manager explained the operational procedure for approving the yearly appropriation from this fund to the budget.

The vote on \$22,000 carried unanimously.

Health & Social Services Committee

Chairman Wheeler read the minutes of the meetings held on April 6, and May 17, 2006. (Minutes are on file.)

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rep. Wheeler, seconded by Rep. Monteiro.

Rep. Steinfeld requested a correction to the figure moved in committee for account 1054 since the number voted on in committee exceeds both the Manager's and Council's figure.

The Moderator requested a short recess.

Following the recess, the Moderator explained that the vote is for the approval of the minutes of that meeting only and that she will move the correct figure for the account at the proper time.

The vote on acceptance of the minutes carried unanimously.

Account 1051 - Human Services

A motion for \$705,771 as approved by committee was made by Rep. Wheeler, seconded by Rep. Garcia.

Ms. Fondulas clarified that the Council restored funding for the full-time counselor at the Family Support Center. She stated that reductions had been made to this account in order to follow the Council's directive for a zero increase budget.

The vote on \$705,771 carried unanimously.

Account 1054 Health/Service/Cultural Agencies

A motion for \$1,243,565 was made by Moderator Schmidt , seconded by Rep. Smuts.

Items discussed were the Ledge Light Health District vehicles; the fleet maintenance costs and the Town contribution level to the District.

The Town Manager noted that only about one-fifth of the District's budget is derived from Groton's contribution. The participation in the fleet maintenance program saves money for the District thus reducing the Town's contribution. Mark commended the District on containing their budget, increasing membership and minimizing cost increases.

The vote on \$1,243,565 carried unanimously.

Account 7320 - Human Services Assistance Fund

A motion for \$21,000 as approved by committee was made by Moderator Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.

Account 5010 - Capital Reserve Fund

Chairman Granatosky reported that the minutes were already approved and are on file.

A motion for \$3,482,000 was made by Moderator Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Walker.

Finance Director Sal Pandolfo provided a review of the hand-out that was distributed prior to the meeting which explains the process for the Capital Reserve Fund calculations.

The vote on \$3,482,000 carried unanimously.

Account 1075 - Capital Reserve (contribution)

A motion for \$1,559,650 was made by Moderator Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Account 1076 - Debt Service

A motion for \$3,156,815 was made by Moderator Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Account 1077 - Contributions to Other Funds

A motion for \$816,407 was made by Moderator Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Smuts. The Town Manager clarified that \$45,743 is a projected number in case the Golf Course revenues do not cover expenses. He stated if revenue increases, the money will remain untouched. In response to Rep. Garcia, the Manager explained the contribution to the revaluation fund. He stated that the Council's action to delay the implementation of the 2005 revaluation has impacted this fund. He stated that additional funds had to be allocated to redo the revaluation for 2006.

Account 2060 - Mumford Cove

A motion for \$10,800 was made by Moderator Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Collins. The Manager explained that the Town only serves as an agent to collect the money that this district budgets for their contracted fire services; this is similar to the other fire districts in the Town. The vote on \$10,800 carried unanimously.

Account 4010 - Groton Sewer District

A motion for \$1,293,003 was made by Moderator Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Walker and so voted unanimously.

Account 1074 - Contingency

A motion for \$350,000 was made by Moderator Schmidt, seconded by Rep. Walker. In response to Rep. Steinfeld's concern, the Town Manager noted he is more confident of the budget now since money has been added to the Manager's requested budget. He hopes that the contingency will not have to be used but he can't project the continual rise in utility costs. He explained that another source of funds is the fourth quarter transfers, in which money from other appropriated accounts that is not projected to be expended can be transferred into accounts that have fallen short. The vote on \$350,000 carried unanimously.

Account 1035 - Public Works

A motion was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded by Rep. Cerf, to rescind the vote on Account 1035-Public Works which reduced the account by \$18,670, the amount for the pump out boat program. He stated that two-thirds of those present must approve this motion. Rep. Granatosky raised a point of order that the motion is inappropriate in this situation and that the Council can take action for an additional appropriation if it chooses. Rep. Walker shared his recollection of the actions taken by the RTM on Wednesday, May 10, 2006 for reconsideration of the Public Works account. Rep. Sebastian withdrew the motion to rescind.

A Motion to express RTM support for the reinstatement of the funds for the sewer pump-out boat program beginning July 1, 2006 was made by Rep. Sebastian, and was seconded. His rationale was that members took action without the benefit of information and comments from the Ledge Light Health District Director and the Noank Harbormaster. He stated that one boating facility stressed that many docked boats are dependent on the pump-out boat program and that many potential problems could arise if the program is discontinued. The Moderator noted that the RTM has no right to tell the Manager or Council where to cut or spend funds within an account. The Manager confirmed the Moderator's comments, stating that the decision where to cut belongs to the Manager and staff. He expressed his appreciation for the struggle the RTM is having concerning this item and noted that he requested a Council referral on this item on May 16. He feels that an indication of support from the RTM for a supplemental appropriation would be

beneficial to the discussion. He stated that the boating season may be half over by the time the program is reinstated, because the supplemental appropriation process can be lengthy. He would like an indication of RTM support before instructing Public Works to go ahead with the program. Rep. Granatosky raised a Point of Order that this discussion is out of order since the item does not appear on the agenda, and no "Other Business" is listed on this agenda. The Moderator ruled the Motion Out of Order.

G. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. was made by Rep. Granatosky, seconded by Rep. Harrell. The vote to adjourn carried 25 in favor, 7 opposed (Opposed: Reps. Cerf, Ebbin, Jenkins, Power, Sebastian, Walker, Wheeler.)

Attest:

*Barbara Tarbox, Town Clerk
Clerk of the RTM*

Sally A. Whitney, Assistant Town Clerk