



Town of Groton, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes

Town Council Committee of the Whole

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

Mayor Harry A. Watson, Councilors Peter J. Bartinik, Jr., Heather Sherman Bond, Catherine Kolnaski, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Rita M. Schmidt, John F. Scott, Paulann H. Sheets, and James L. Streeter.

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

7:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Watson called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mayor Watson, Councilor Bartinik, Jr., Councilor Bond, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Scott and Councilor Streeter
Members Absent: Councilor Sheets

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent and Executive Assistant Nicki Bresnyan.

3. **Calendar and Communications**

Mayor Watson extended an invitation to the VFW Annual Memorial Day Parade to be held on May 28th at 2:00 p.m.

Councilor Schmidt noted the Senior Center's Wounded Warrior Fund collection effort.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

2007-0131 Approval of Minutes (Committee of the Whole)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council Committee of the Whole of May 1, 2008 and May 8, 2008 are hereby accepted and approved.

A motion was made by Councilor Scott, seconded by Councilor Streeter, to adopt.

The motion carried unanimously

5. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

2003-0177 Renovations & Additions to Groton School Facilities - Phase I

Discussed

Town Manager Mark Oefinger noted the business caravan tour of the three school projects. He thanked Rick Norris, Barbara Strother and Peter Manning from Gilbane for their efforts.

Gary Schneider, Director of Public Works, provided an update on scheduling and cost issues associated with the windows. He distributed an estimate for the windows at Kolnaski School. The impact resistant windows weigh 10 lbs. per square foot and increased costs are associated with the glass as well as the window supports and additional labor. There is approximately \$920,000 in additional direct costs, which is more than available contingency. Mr. Schneider reviewed schedule impacts noting that the project completion date has been extended to the middle of December. If the window systems were re-bid, the project completion date would be March. Staff will look at the remaining portions of the project to see if costs can be reduced and items deferred.

At the high school, the preliminary cost estimate is approximately \$750,000, but alternatives are being reviewed. Most of the additional cost (a little more than 60%) may be reimbursed by the state, but costs associated with scrapping and re-work may not be covered.

Town Manager Oefinger then noted a letter from the Town Attorney's Office addressing accusations and claims made by union representatives at the last Town Council meeting. He stated he would place the item on the next agenda and invite the Town Attorney. Councilor Streeter asked if the Town has the authority to do background checks on contractors, and the Town Manager indicated he would seek an answer. The Town Manager noted that the Department of Labor has been monitoring the work site. He also noted receipt of a fax from one of the union leaders regarding an incident in 2004.

2007-0134 Introduction of Animal Shelter Ordinance

Discussed

Mayor Watson and the Town Manager met with Mayor Lathrop and the City Manager of Norwich. There do not appear to be any advocates for a new facility in Norwich. They have an existing building available for renovation. Like Groton, Norwich is concerned with the travel distance to Waterford. Town Manager Oefinger noted that Norwich is in a different place than the Town from a timing standpoint on this issue, although they are interested in pursuing a regional alternative. The Town Manager met with the Norwich City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Chief of Police, and Animal Control Officer. Norwich has posed a number of questions to the Humane Society. A joint effort was discussed, but unless the facility is located somewhere in between, it is more inconvenient for one party or the other. Other alternatives were Groton and Norwich operating as mini-shelters with transportation to Waterford after the 7-9 day window. The Town Manager is trying to set up a staff meeting with the Humane Society to work out some of the logistical issues including transportation issues and operating costs. Norwich must factor in the cost of a new facility, not just compare operating costs. The Town Manager recommends proceeding with the ordinance at this point.

The consensus of the Committee was to hold a public hearing on the Animal Shelter Ordinance on June 19, 2007.

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2007-0135 Resolution Setting Public Hearing on Animal Shelter Ordinance

See 5/22/07 Committee of the Whole discussion under 2007-0134 Introduction of Animal Shelter Ordinance.

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Streeter, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2007-0136 CGS 8-24 Referral to Planning Commission of Animal Shelter Ordinance

Discussed

See 5/22/07 Committee of the Whole discussion under 2007-0134 Introduction of Animal Shelter Ordinance.

A motion was made by Councilor Bond, seconded by Councilor Scott, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2006-0303 FYE 2008 Budget

Discussed

The Town Manager has suggested setting the mill rate on June 5th to allow additional time to

receive the state's budget numbers, update other revenue numbers, and finalize the Grand List.

2007-0137 Adoption of Senior Center Expansion Ordinance

Discussed

Town Manager Oefinger noted that the Planning Commission is considering the 8-24 referral on this item tonight. Action on this item should be tabled until receipt of the Planning Commission's response.

The Town Manager distributed information on the potential impact of the ordinance on the mill rate.

2007-0105 Community Swimming Pool

Discussed

Town Manager Oefinger met with the Town Attorney, Ken Berg, and Mr. Berg's accountant. Some of the outstanding issues were addressed. Mr. Berg is going to pursue his 501(c)3 associated with the training/instructional portion of his program and later seek the IRS classification for fundraising purposes that would lead to construction of a facility.

2007-0138 Gravel Street Pump Station Lease

Discussed

The Town Manager met with the developer of the Central Hall project and his attorney and comments on the draft lease were reviewed. The Town Manager anticipates a revised draft for the Council's consideration at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

2007-0008 Legislative Policy (2007 Standing Referral)

Discussed

Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent noted no new developments in the state budget discussions since the Weekly Status Report, although he provided a report for the viewing public.

2007-0126 Grant for Expanded DUI Enforcement (2007)

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Bartinik, Jr., that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2007-0128 State Office of Policy and Management Grant for Maritime Academy

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Bond, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2007-0133 Historic Document Preservation Grant

A motion was made by Councilor Streeter, seconded by Councilor Scott, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

2007-0139 Local Prevention Council Grant Program

A motion was made by Mayor Watson, seconded by Councilor Bond, that this matter be Recommended for a Resolution.

The motion carried unanimously

7. Consideration of Committee Referral Items as per Town Council Referral List

Councilor Scott asked for a referral on the impact of the phase-in. He distributed information that he prepared and highlighted some of his observations. He noted The Day editorial and a story in the Hartford Courant. He does not feel the revaluation is fair to the majority of the Town.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Kolnaski, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.