



# Town of Groton, Connecticut

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

## Meeting Minutes - **Draft**

### Representative Town Meeting

**Moderator Kevin Power, Representatives Jean-Claude Ambroise, Joe Baril, Nancy E. Barnhart, Peter J. Bartinik, Jr., Alicia Bauer, Nancy E. Beckwith, Christopher J. Burns, Michael Collins, Nancy M. Congdon, Warren T. Cooper, Syma Ebbin, Peter Fairbank, Nancy E. Gilly, Patrice Granatosky, Dolores Harrell, Keith L. Hedrick, Damon Q. Helme, Lynn Crockett Hubbard, Michael Dean Johnson, Rosanne E. Kotowski, Elizabeth Luck, Jackie Massett, Carole McCarthy, Karen F. Morton, Scott Newsome, Dana C. Parfitt, Richard J. Pasqualini, Jr., Kristen L. Powers, Don Pratt, Betty A. Prochaska, Sandry Ramos-Morales, John F. Scott IV, Jack Sebastian, Dana S. Semeraro, Jennifer Smuts, Joan Steinfeld, Irma Streeter, Mark Svencer, Archie C. Swindell, and Robert A. Warn**

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Wednesday, February 17, 2010

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex-Community Room 1

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#### Regular Meeting

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#### A. ROLL CALL

*Moderator Kevin Power called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.*

*25 members were present, and a quorum was declared.*

*The Moderator reported that Reps. Barnhart, Fairbank, Helme, Powers, Prochaska, Semeraro and Svencer called to say they are unable to attend this meeting.*

Members Present: Moderator Power, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartinik, Jr., Rep. Bauer, Rep. Beckwith, Rep. Burns, Rep. Collins, Rep. Congdon, Rep. Cooper, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Luck, Rep. Massett, Rep. Morton, Rep. Parfitt, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. Ramos-Morales, Rep. Scott, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Steinfeld and Rep. Streeter

Members Absent: Rep. Ambroise, Rep. Barnhart, Rep. Ebbin, Rep. Fairbank, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Helme, Rep. Hubbard, Rep. McCarthy, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Powers, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Prochaska, Rep. Semeraro, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Swindell and Rep. Warn

*Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Public Works Director Gary Schneider, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher, 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. Johnson.*

#### C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 20, 2010

*A motion that the minutes be adopted was made by Rep. Smuts, seconded by Rep. Luck and so voted unanimously.*

#### D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

*None.*

#### E. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

*Moderator Power introduced Christopher Burns, newly elected to fill the District 5 vacancy created by the resignation of Tom Vivirito. The Moderator announced that Reps. Luck and Pasqualini will serve jointly as liaisons to the Town Council.*

*The Moderator informed members that they are invited to the Fifteenth Anniversary Celebration of the Friends of Fort Griswold on Wednesday, February 24 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bill Memorial Library. Jim Streeter will be speaking on the history of Fort Griswold and a reception will follow.*

#### F. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER:

##### 1. Financial report

*The Town Manager reported that the Unreserved & Undesignated Fund balance as of January 31,*

2010 is approximately \$10.3 million; the General Contingency balance is \$350,000 with no transfers to date; the Capital Reserve balance is \$1,561,697 and the increase from November is attributable to interest earnings. He noted that the Capital Reserve balance reflects the supplemental appropriation of \$74,000 for an IT Disaster Recovery Project that was approved by the Town Council in November and the RTM in January.

## 2. Monthly briefing

The Town Manager highlighted articles in the Town Manager's News.

In response to Rep. Sebastian, the Town Manager stated that the funds for snow removal are exhausted and he expects a request for a fourth quarter transfer from contingency. He does not have an estimated figure available this evening.

In response to Rep. Steinfeld, the Town Manager noted that the only bond project that may be in jeopardy is the State funding of \$100,000 for Town Road Aid.

In response to Rep. Granatosky, the Manager stated that he received the Mystic-Noank Library newsletter for the first time and it contained an insert which comments on Groton's decrease in funding last year. Conversations with the First Selectman of Stonington and several Stonington residents indicated that their newsletter did not contain an insert regarding Stonington's continued lack of support and last year's additional decrease. He felt that the insert unfairly portrayed Groton as failing to support the library.

## G. LIAISON REPORTS

### 1. Town Council - Rep. Luck

Rep. Luck summarized the actions taken by the Council at the Committee of the Whole and Town Council meetings held on February 2, 8 and 9, 2010. She noted the approval of \$2,000 to Americares, a relief program identified by Governor Rell that is helping in Haiti. She reported that the Council has had budget discussion with the City and Town departments.

## H. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 1. FINANCE

#### a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Bartinik

No meeting, no report.

### 2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SERVICES

#### a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Pratt

No meeting, no report.

### 3. EDUCATION

#### a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Swindell

No meeting, no report.

### 4. RECREATION

#### a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Warn

No meeting, no report.

### 5. PUBLIC SAFETY

#### a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Parfitt

No meeting, no report.

### 6. PUBLIC WORKS

#### a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Collins

Chairman Collins read the minutes of the meeting held on February 8, 2010. (Minutes are attached.)

*Motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Steinfeld and so voted unanimously.*

2009-0282

**Supplemental Appropriation for Handicap Ramp at Spicer House**

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION FOR A REPLACEMENT LIFT SYSTEM AT THE SPICER HOUSE

WHEREAS, funds in the amount of \$25,000 were approved in FYE 2009 to replace the chair lift at the Spicer House, and

WHEREAS, the cost estimate to replace the lift has been revised to \$35,000, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has reviewed alternatives to replacing the lift including construction of a handicap ramp at a higher cost, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council recognizes the need to provide handicap access to the Spicer House but would like to discuss alternate locations for the Parks and Recreation Department before making a more expensive capital investment in the Spicer House, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that \$10,000 be appropriated from the Capital Reserve Fund's fund balance to a FYE 2010 Capital Improvement Project (#50109) to install a replacement lift system at Spicer House (CIP #6A).

Refer to RTM.

**A motion was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Baril, that this matter be Adopted.**

*In response to Rep. Sebastian, Public Works Director Gary Schneider clarified that the lift is working and is serviced routinely, but that the problem is a liability issue. He reported that the lift has failed several times, stranding disabled persons.*

*Rep. Pasqualini is not in favor of this supplemental appropriation. He stated he would like the Town to consider consolidating the Parks & Recreation services and staff to one location. Rep. Bauer agrees with Rep. Paquilini and feels that Spicer House is not suited for offices.*

*In response to Rep. Smuts, the Town Manager explained that the Council has discussed relocating the offices currently housed at Spicer House. He stated that there is no space immediately available and other possible locations, such as a vacant former school building, would need extensive renovations, costing much more than the lift repair. He reminded members that the Spicer House property was given to the Town for recreational purposes and must be used for that purpose. He clarified that a proper handicap ramp would cost approximately seventy to eighty thousand dollars and would be the best option. He stated that the Senior Center expansion project was not designed to accommodate the administrative staff located at Spicer House.*

*Rep. Smuts would like the Town to investigate consolidating the Parks and Recreation offices so that they are centrally-located and better suited for handicap access.*

*The Town Manager mentioned that residents have access to registration for all programs both on-line and by mail, and do not have to register in-person.*

*MOTION TO SET ASIDE was made by Rep. Smuts, seconded by Rep. Luck.*

*Rep. Granatosky feels that the RTM should list specifically what tasks are to be accomplished and give specific direction to the Town in the motion to set aside. She will not support the motion.*

*Rep. Collins believes it would be best to vote against this appropriation tonight and make a*

*referral requesting that different satellite locations be investigated.*

*Rep. Scott reiterated that a motion to set aside should ask specifically for a study or report and have a return date.*

*Rep. Smuts does not support defeating the original motion since the entire process would have to begin again. She stated her intent was to allow time for options to be investigated.*

*MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Sebastian, seconded by Rep. Luck. The vote on moving the question carried 19 in favor, 6 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Baril, Beckwith, Scott, Steinford, Streeter and Power.)*

*VOTE on the motion to SET ASIDE failed 12 in favor, 13 opposed. (In Favor: Reps. Baril, Bartinik, Bauer, Congdon, Cooper, Gilly, Kotowski, Luck, Morton, Pasqualini, Ramos-Morales, Smuts.)*

*MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Bartinik, seconded Rep. Hedrick. The vote on moving the question carried 17 in favor, 8 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Bauer, Beckwith, Gilly, Granatosky, Kotowski, Scott, Steinford and Power.)*

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

**Votes:** In Favor: 23 - Moderator Power, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartinik, Jr., Rep. Bauer, Rep. Beckwith, Rep. Burns, Rep. Collins, Rep. Congdon, Rep. Cooper, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Luck, Rep. Massett, Rep. Morton, Rep. Parfitt, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. Ramos-Morales, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Steinford and Rep. Streeter  
Abstain: 2 - Rep. Scott and Rep. Smuts

## 7. RULES & PROCEDURES

### 2010-0001 Rules for Twenty-Seventh RTM

RESOLUTION ADOPTING RULES FOR THE TWENTY-SEVENTH REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING

BE IT RESOLVED, that the rules of the Twenty-Seventh Representative Town Meeting as recommended by the Temporary Rules and Procedures Committee are hereby adopted.

**A motion was made by Moderator Power, seconded by Rep. Hedrick, that this matter be Adopted as Amended.**

*The Moderator explained the issue of voting on the rules as amended at the RTM meeting held on January 20, 2010. He stated that the proposed change to Rule 7. 3 by committee was:*

*"The Moderator may refuse to accept a motion to move the question for ten (10) minutes after the motion on the floor is made."*

*Rep. Beckwith's amendment re-inserted the words "if debate is desired by any member of the RTM."*

*The final amended version would remove the words "for the previous question" in the 26th Rules and substitute the words "to move the question." In addition, the words "original motion" are removed and the words "motion on the floor" are substituted. Rule 7.3 would now read:*

*"Rule 7.3 Debate after Moving the Question*

*The Moderator may refuse to accept a motion to move the question for ten (10) minutes after the motion on the floor is made if debate is desired by any member of the RTM. "*

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

**Votes:** In Favor: 24 - Moderator Power, Rep. Baril, Rep. Bartinik, Jr., Rep. Bauer, Rep. Beckwith, Rep. Burns, Rep. Collins, Rep. Congdon, Rep. Cooper, Rep. Gilly, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Hedrick, Rep. Johnson, Rep. Kotowski, Rep. Luck, Rep. Massett, Rep. Morton, Rep. Parfitt, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. Ramos-Morales, Rep. Scott, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Steinford and Rep. Streeter  
Opposed: 1 - Rep. Smuts

#### a. Chairman's notes on the business of the Town - Chairman Scott

*No meeting, no report.*

**I. OTHER BUSINESS**

**2009-0190 Preliminary RTM Budget Discussion**

**PRELIMINARY BUDGET DISCUSSION FOR RTM'S FY2011 BUDGET PROCESS**

**Discussed**

*Rep. Sebastian requested that property taxes not be increased since many residents are being affected by the current economic crisis. He stated that the Town cannot rely on corporate taxes from Pfizer and Electric Boat forever. He suggested that a budget figure be provided for each account that would not increase taxes.*

*In response to Rep. Steinfeld, the Moderator stated that there is not enough time to require department heads to explain their requested budgets prior to the RTM annual consideration of the budget.*

*Rep. Pasqualini feels that the committees need to discuss and scrutinize the accounts assigned to them. He noted that reductions should be made with a scalpel and not with an axe by asking department heads where reductions would be made. He believes that members need to trust the committees to carefully examine the accounts and make their recommendations to the entire RTM during budget deliberations.*

*The Moderator urged members to be mindful of RTM rule 8.5 Decorum in Debate as the budget sessions are approaching. He specifically cautioned all members that the rule states that "remarks are to be addressed to the Moderator or Committee Chair and shall maintain a courteous tone. Members shall avoid personal affronts and/or accusations of improper motives."*

**2010-0027 Possible Changes to 2010 RTM Meeting Schedule**

**POSSIBLE CHANGES TO 2010 RTM MEETING SCHEDULE**

**This matter was Referred to the RTM Rules & Procedures Committee.**

*Rep. Collins supports changing the meeting date to the second Wednesday of the month.*

*Rep. Smuts is in favor of the current schedule and location. She stated that the annex is permanently outfitted with the necessary video equipment.*

*Rep. Streeter agrees with Rep. Collins and prefers relocating to the newly-renovated Senior Center. She feels there is not enough room at the annex.*

*Reps. Beckwith, Bauer and Granatosky agree with Reps. Collins and Streeter.*

*Rep. Cooper feels the RTM should delay any decision to allow members time to tour the renovated Senior Center before deciding.*

*In response to Rep. Pasqualini, the Town Clerk confirmed there is an additional cost for a building monitor at the Senior Center for each meeting.*

*The Town Manager stated he can provide the cost for the building monitor. He recommends that any decision to relocate to the Senior Center be delayed until after the Senior Center has officially reopened. He suggested that additional tables can be provided at the next meeting to provide members more space.*

*Rep. Steinfeld questioned whether the Annex could be made available to the RTM on the second Wednesday of the month.*

*In response to Rep. Beckwith, the Moderator referred this item to the RTM Rules and Procedures. Rep. Beckwith requested that the committee evaluate the discussion at this meeting and investigate changing the RTM meeting date to the second Wednesday of the month and relocating the meeting to the new Senior Center.*

**J. ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion to adjourn at 8:54 p.m. was made by Rep. Collins, seconded by Rep. Smuts and so voted unanimously.*

*Attest:*

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk of the RTM*

*Sally A. Whitney, Assistant Town Clerk*