



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

Representatives Jeffrey Armstrong, Joseph Baril, Lori Bartinik, Genevieve Cerf, Wayne Chiapperini, Michael Collins, Joseph delaCruz, Luanne DeMatto, Debra Dickey, Susan Dowling, Shirley Dunbar-Rose, George Edwards Jr, Suzanne Elliot, Robert Garcia, Patrice Granatosky, Dolores Harrell, Barbara Hoelck, David Miner, Nancy Mitchell, Deborah Monteiro, Matt Morton, Scott Newsome, Nora Patterson, Darcy Peruzzotti, Kevin Power, Don Pratt, Rita Schmidt, Jack Sebastian, Jennifer Smuts, Eleanor Steere, Fritz Stein, Joan Steinfeld, Irma Streeter, Mark Svencer, George Swift, Patricia Thunberg, Tom Vivirito, Robert Walker Sr, John Waller and Elizabeth Weil.

Wednesday, November 10, 200

7:30 PM

Senior Center

Regular Meeting

A. ROLL CALL

Moderator Shirley Dunbar-Rose called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. 30 members were present, and a quorum was declared.

Members Present: Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Chiapperini, Rep. Collins, Rep. delaCruz, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Dickey, Rep. Dowling, Rep. Dunbar-Rose, Rep. Edwards, Jr., Rep. Garcia, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hoelck, Rep. Miner, Rep. Mitchell, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. M. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Power, Rep. Schmidt, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Swift, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Weil

Members Absent: Rep. Armstrong, Rep. Baril, Rep. Cerf, Rep. Elliot, Rep. Granatosky, Rep. Peruzzotti, Rep. Pratt, Rep. Steere, Rep. Walker, Sr. and Rep. Waller, II

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Assistant Town Clerk Sally Whitney, and Town Council Skrmetti.

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. Hoelck.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 13, 2004

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. DeMatto. The vote on approval of the minutes carried 29 in favor, 1 abstention. (Abstaining: Rep. Smuts.)

D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

None.

E. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

Moderator Shirley Dunbar-Rose stated that Rep. Granatosky is absent due to a work commitment, Rep. Walker had surgery on November 9. Reps. Baril, Cerf, Elliot and Pratt called to say they are unable to attend.

The Moderator informed the RTM that a copy of the RESOLUTION APPROVING COMPUTATION OF RTM MEMBERSHIP was distributed this evening. The changes are a decrease of one representative in District 2 and an increase of one representative in District 5.

2004-0281 Groton Community Events Fund

RESOLUTION TRANSFERRING AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE GROTON COMMUNITY EVENTS FUND

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton needs to provide start-up money for the Groton Tercentennial Celebration, and

WHEREAS, there is currently a fund balance of \$18,000 from previous appropriations to the Community Events Fund, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the amount of \$43,000 is hereby appropriated to be spent from the Community Events Fund, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the amount of \$25,000 is hereby transferred from General Contingency (Function 1074) to the Groton Community Events Fund (10774).

This matter was Referred to the RTM Parks & Recreation Committee, due back on December 8, 2004. The motion carried.

2004-0289

Reauthorization of Funding and Authorization of Additional Funding for Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

RESOLUTION APPROVING ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION AND EXTENDING APPROPRIATION FOR ADDITIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY FACILITY.

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton (the "Town") approved Ordinance No. 233 at referendum on November 5, 1996, which appropriated \$10,388,000 and authorized borrowing in the same amount for additions and improvements to the Water Pollution Control Facility; and

WHEREAS, the Town approved Ordinance No. 242 at referendum on May 23, 2000, which appropriated an additional \$5,112,000 for the project and included in the project facilities to remove nitrogen from the wastewater and authorized borrowing in the same amount, for an aggregate appropriation and borrowing authorization of \$15,500,000;

WHEREAS, Section 8.4.5 of the Charter provides that any appropriation for construction or other permanent improvement which has not been completely expended at the end of five years from the date thereof shall thereupon lapse;

WHEREAS, the Town Manager has reported that the additions and improvements to the Water Pollution Control Facility for which said appropriation was made cannot reasonably be completed, and the entire amount of said appropriation cannot be expended by the end of five years from the effective date of the last appropriating ordinance and has recommended that said appropriation be extended by reappropriating that portion of the \$15,500,000 which has not been expended on the effective date of this resolution;

WHEREAS, the Director of Finance has certified that whatever portion of said appropriation is extended may be financed by grants and Town general obligation bonds previously approved;

WHEREAS, the Town Manager has recommended that the Town approve an additional appropriation of \$2,000,000 for the Water Pollution Control Facility project to be funded from a State grant, and the Director of Finance has certified that the State grant funds will be applied to fund the additional appropriation;

WHEREAS, the State has authorized in Section 40 of Public Act No. 04-1, May 2004 Special Session, an additional grant in the amount of \$2,000,000 for the Town's Water Pollution Control Facility additions and improvements; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the Town to continue the Town's Water Pollution Control Facility additions and improvements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

(a) That any portion of said \$15,500,000 appropriation which has not been expended on the effective date of this resolution shall be extended and reappropriated, provided that the total amount expended as of the effective date of this resolution, pursuant to said appropriation under Ordinance No. 233 and Ordinance No. 242, plus the portion which is reappropriated shall not exceed \$15,500,000; and

(b) That the appropriation and reappropriation for the Water Pollution Control Facility project approved in Ordinance Nos. 233 and 242 be increased by an additional \$2,000,000 for an aggregate appropriation of \$17,500,000, that said increase be funded from the State grant authorized by Public Act No. 04-1, and that said grants authorized by Public Act No. 04-1 be applied to fund said additional appropriation and not to reduce the \$15,500,000 borrowing authorization for the project.

This matter was Referred to the RTM Public Works Committee, due back on December 8, 2004. The motion carried.

F. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER:

1. Financial report

Mr. Vincent reported that the Unreserved & Undesignated Fund balance as of July 1, 2004 is approximately \$8.3 million; the General Contingency balance is \$254,000 subsequent to the approval of transfers at tonight's meeting and \$25,000 for Groton Community Events Fund scheduled for December 8; the Capital Reserve balance is \$3,071,850.

Mr. Vincent announced the establishment of the Railroad Quiet Zone at the School Street (West Mystic) crossing with an effective date of December 1, 2004.

2. Monthly briefing

The Town Manager provided an update on the school building project. He stated that budget preparations have begun. The Manager volunteered to present a preview at the next meeting; as an alternative he invited the RTM Leadership to attend a discussion meeting with Town staff and himself.

Mr. Oefinger extended congratulations to Carl Almquist, Assistant Director of Public Works, for his reappointment to the State Nitrogen Credit Advisory Board and thanked John Silsby, Director of Parks and Recreation, for leading this year's highly successful United Way Campaign.

G. LIAISON REPORTS

1. Town Council - Rep. Cerf

No report.

2. Economic Development Commission - Rep. Schmidt

Due to lack of a quorum, the meeting could not be held.

3. Town Council/Board of Education Liaison Committee - Rep. Patterson

Rep. Patterson reported on the discussion of health insurance and the impact of English as a Second Language (ESL) at the October 27 meeting. She reported that area schools are impacted by the lack of State funding for the mandated (ESL) programs and would like to enlist the support of the RTM and the Town Council for procuring additional funding from the State Slot Revenues for impacted towns.

4. Permanent School Building Committee - Rep. Miner

Rep. Miner provided an update on the committee's discussion concerning materials, color, lighting, building styles, and assorted appliances and furniture in conjunction with price and longevity of use. He stated it is hoped that a contract with Jeter Cook and Jepson will be finalized by the first of the year for Phase One.

5. P.B.F.D. Consolidation Review Committee - Reps. Steinfeld & Svencer

Rep. Steinfeld reported that the purpose of this committee is to find the impact and costs of

proposed consolidation. She stated that discussion centered on the services already provided by the Town and noted that the Fire District's intent may be more Town cooperation rather than consolidation.

6. Economic Development Strategic Planning Steering Committee - Reps. Dowling & Mitchell

Rep. Dowling stated that the steering committee is still being formed and that the department head has offered to attend and explain the budget needs at a RTM meeting.

Rep. Chiapperini asked for clarification of the difference between the Economic Development Commission and the steering committee.

The Town Manager explained that the steering committee will support, look at and review the Town's direction in future development opportunities. It will also assist Town staff at a number of public workshops to ensure public input for the direction of Town development.

7. Shellfish Task Force - Rep. Svencer

No report.

H. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. FINANCE

a. Chairman's notes of the business of the Town - Chairman Schmidt

There was no meeting, but Rep. Schmidt met with the Town Manager to discuss health and other employee costs. She reported that current guidelines need to address costs for the next 30 years, instead of only year-by-year appropriations.

2. COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

a. Chairman's notes of the business of the Town - Chairman Dickey

No meeting; no report

3. EDUCATION

a. Chairman's notes of the business of the Town - Chairman Newsome

No meeting; no report

4. HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

a. Chairman's notes of the business of the Town - Chairman DeMatto

No meeting; no report

5. RECREATION

a. Chairman's notes of the business of the Town - Chairman delaCruz

No meeting; no report

6. PUBLIC SAFETY

a. Chairman's notes of the business of the Town - Chairman Vivirito

No meeting; no report

7. PUBLIC WORKS

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

Chairman Collins read the minutes of the meeting held on October 25, 2004. (See minutes attached.)

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

2004-0263 Study for Water and Sewer Extension - Flanders Road Industrial Area

RESOLUTION APPROVING AN ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT AND COST ESTIMATE STUDY FOR THE FLANDERS ROAD INDUSTRY AREA, AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

owners, for extension of water and sewer facilities for the area known as the Flanders Road industry area, and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has discussed these water and sewer concerns with the Groton Economic Development Commission, which now supports a professional study of whether sewer and water should be obtained for the Flanders Road area, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager should arrange for an engineering assessment study of the advantages or disadvantages of potential routes for sewer and water extensions, including detailed engineering costs and other costs affecting design, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a supplemental appropriation of \$100,000 is hereby made to the Capital Reserve from Contingency for this purpose.

Refer to RTM.

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

A discussion ensued in response to concerns and questions raised by several representatives. The Town Manager provided necessary background information which stressed the need for the study and detailed the reasons for outsourcing. He stated the study would be investigating several routes to assure that the sewer costs involved would ultimately bring benefits to the Town; providing an unbiased opinion of costs with individual breakdowns; investigating the issues of each of the businesses involved; and identifying other potential development based on the length of the extension of the sewer and water lines.

Mr. Oefinger explained that only one company has stated any expansion plans if the lines are extended.

Rep. Chiapperini cited his reasons for opposition to this study. The difference in cost quotes (\$7 million by the town vs. \$2 million by the Flanders Road property owners) was due to the incorrect design standards for the size of the water and sewer mains. He also feels that the Town Staff is the most capable of providing different scenarios for development in that area.

A MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION was made by Rep. Swift, seconded by Rep. Harrell. The vote on moving the question carried 27 in favor, 3 opposed. (Opposed: Reps. Dickey, Newsome, Smuts.)

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 26 - Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Collins, Rep. delaCruz, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Dickey, Rep. Dowling, Rep. Dunbar-Rose, Rep. Edwards, Jr., Rep. Hoelck, Rep. Mitchell, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. M. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Power, Rep. Schmidt, Rep. Sebastian, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Swift, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Weil
Opposed: 4 - Rep. Chiapperini, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Harrell and Rep. Miner

2004-0272

Steamboat Wharf Dredging

RESOLUTION MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FROM GENERAL CONTINGENCY FOR DREDGING AT STEAMBOAT WHARF

WHEREAS, silt accumulation has again occurred in a lagoon of the Mystic River adjacent to the property known as Steamboat Wharf, and

WHEREAS, it is understood that the silt at that location results from a combination of runoff from both State and Town of Groton surfaces, and

WHEREAS, the State Department of Transportation has obtained permits for five years of dredging, including permits for the placement of the dredged material, and

WHEREAS, if this dredging is carried out promptly, it can be performed at a reasonable cost by using Town staff and equipment, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves a transfer of \$21,000 from the General Contingency appropriation for FYE 2005 to the Department of Public Works.

Refer to RTM

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

Rep. Sebastian voiced opposition to the dredging because the area to be dredged is not the main river channel but a side area where several individuals moor their boats . Chairman Collins stated that periodic dredging is needed due to the Town's storm drain runoff and flooding in that area.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 29 - Rep. Bartinik, Rep. Chiapperini, Rep. Collins, Rep. delaCruz, Rep. DeMatto, Rep. Dickey, Rep. Dowling, Rep. Dunbar-Rose, Rep. Edwards, Jr., Rep. Garcia, Rep. Harrell, Rep. Hoelck, Rep. Miner, Rep. Mitchell, Rep. Monteiro, Rep. M. Morton, Rep. Newsome, Rep. Patterson, Rep. Power, Rep. Schmidt, Rep. Smuts, Rep. Stein, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Svencer, Rep. Swift, Rep. Thunberg, Rep. Vivirito and Rep. Weil
Opposed: 1 - Rep. Sebastian

2004-0293

Road Acceptance

ACCEPTANCE OF PROSPECT STREET AT THE MYSTIC SHORES OVERLOOK SUBDIVISION

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, at its September 28, 2004 meeting, recommended the acceptance of Prospect Street at the Mystic Shores Overlook Subdivision, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Representative Town Meeting hereby accepts Prospect Street at the Mystic Shores Overlook Subdivision.

A motion was made that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously.

2004-0261

Land/Easement Acquisitions - Pleasant Valley Road South Reconstruction

RESOLUTION APPROVING LAND EASEMENT ACQUISITION FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF PLEASANT VALLEY ROAD SOUTH

WHEREAS, the reconstruction of Pleasant Valley Road South was authorized by a bond referendum of \$3,833,986 in November, 2001, and

WHEREAS, the ordinance for this project included funds for the acquisition of necessary property rights for right-of-way and drainage, and

WHEREAS, care was taken in the road's design to minimize impacts to the abutting property owners, and

WHEREAS, the cost of the project is now expected to be substantially lower than the amount that was approved for borrowing, and

WHEREAS, the land needed by the Department of Public Works has been professionally appraised at a total value of about \$44,700, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Town staff may negotiate with each property owner, and if the needed land or easements can be purchased for not more than the total appraised value, may enter into legal

agreements for such acquisitions, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Manager may execute all legal and related documents necessary for the effectuation of this Resolution.

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

Rep. DeMatto requested clarification on the \$44,700 figure in the resolution.

The Town Manager explained that it is the appraised figure and that the negotiated price is only \$15,200. The purchase price is included in the bonding package for that project.

The motion carried unanimously.

8. RULES & PROCEDURES

a. Chairman's notes of the business of the Town - Chairman Weil

No meeting; no report

I. OTHER BUSINESS

2004-0305 Approval of 2005 RTM Meeting Schedule

RESOLUTION APPROVING 2005 RTM MEETING SCHEDULE

WHEREAS, Freedom of Information Statutes require filing a calendar-year schedule of meetings with the Town Clerk, and

WHEREAS, the Representative Town Meeting has met regularly on the second Wednesday of each month,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Representative Town Meeting hereby approves the meeting schedule for 2005 as follows:

Wednesday, January 12, 2005

Wednesday, February 9, 2005

Wednesday, March 9, 2005

Wednesday, April 13, 2005

Wednesday, May 11, 2005

Wednesday, June 8, 2005

Wednesday, July 13, 2005

Wednesday, August 10, 2005

Wednesday, September 14, 2005

Wednesday, October 12, 2005

Wednesday, November 16, 2005

Wednesday, December 14, 2005 and

Wednesday, January 11, 2006

All meetings will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Groton Senior Center on Newtown Road (Route 117).

A motion was made by Rep. Miner, seconded by Rep. DeMatto, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously.

2004-0324 Revenue Proposal for English as a Second Language

REVENUE PROPOSAL FOR ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM

This matter was Referred to the RTM Education Committee, due back on December 8, 2004. The motion carried.

The Moderator referred to a report from Norwich Public Schools titled "A Proposal for Increased Revenue." She would like the Education Committee to look at the proposal to determine if it might be useful to the Town of Groton in raising funds for its "English as a Second Language Program."

J. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 9:03 p.m. was made by Rep. Smuts, seconded by Rep. Miner. The motion carried unanimously.

Attest:

*Barbara Tarbox, Town Clerk
Clerk of the RTM*

Sally A. Whitney, Assistant Town Clerk