



City of Groton, Connecticut

City Municipal Building  
295 Meridian Street  
Groton, CT 06340

**Special  
Committee of the Whole  
Minutes**

Council Chambers

**6:00 PM**

**Monday, April 11, 2022**

Mayor Keith Hedrick, Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, Councilor Rashaad Carter, Councilor Lisa McCabe, Councilor Paul Norris, Councilor Christine Piazza, Councilor Stephen Sheffield, City Clerk Megan Peters

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**I. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Mayor Keith Hedrick, Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, Councilor Lisa McCabe, Councilor Paul Norris, Councilor Stephen Sheffield, City Clerk Megan Peters and Finance Director Ron Yuhas.

**Excused:** Councilor Christine Piazza and Councilor Rashaad Carter.

**II. REFERRALS:**

**690 CITY BUDGET PRESENTATIONS**

**4/6/18**

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

Director of Human Resources, Linda Avedisian comes to the Council to present her budget for Human Resources. She explains that the reasons for the increases include professional development, management training, and some employee moral building events.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot states that she is always an advocate for employee moral building as happy employees tend to work harder. She also inquires about what professional development type training we are looking for.

Director Linda Avedisian states that much of the training is webinar based training, but some is in-person training will include communication courses and customer service training.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot inquires about Notary Services.

Discussion ensues, many people in the building are qualified as notaries.

Councilor Paul Norris inquires about the increase in salaries and does that number include the yearly increase.

Director Linda Avedisian states that one of our HR Generalists started at the base and now with a Master's Degree will get a merit increase but that does not include the entire increase in the budget line. She will look further into the increase and get back to Councilor Paul Norris. Director Linda further explains that a temporary clerk was brought in for the year to assist with filing which did cause for an increase.

**BUILDING AND ZONING**

Building Official, Joseph Summers presents the Building and Zoning Department Budget. First he would like to start off by presenting the accomplishments of the Building and Zoning Department over the past year including online permitting.

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Building Official, Joseph Summers continues with going over the budget specifics. He explains the increases and decreases in the budget and the purpose of those adjustments.

Finance Director, Ron Yuhas directs an explanation to the Contractual Services decrease prior to further discussion and questions for Joseph Summers.

Councilor Lisa McCabe inquires about the new process for electronic permit submissions.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot inquired about a portion of the budget which includes a partial budget for the Blight Officer.

Director Ron Yuhas explains how the Blight Officer's salary and costs are funded.

Councilor Paul Norris confirms that reduction in Contractual Services relates to Finance Director, Ron Yuhas' explanation above.

Councilor Paul Norris also inquires about the budgeted money each year for vehicle replacement.

Director Ron Yuhas states that by putting money away each year for vehicle replacement, when a vehicle is needed we have the money set aside versus budgeting for a vehicle all at once.

Mayor Keith Hedrick explains this process further to explain the benefit to the City of Groton.

Councilor Paul Norris inquires about Boards and Commissions and if the Harbor Master is a paid position.

Mayor Keith Hedrick states that the Harbor Master receives a stipend from the state for holding this position.

Councilor Paul Norris wants to thank the Building Official as he has heard "on the street" that the Building and Zoning Department has been very helpful and thorough when assisting people.

Mayor Keith Hedrick addresses a portion of the building budget that is effected by Electric Boat and the new buildings that are being built. He further explains that the taxes went down this year because the grand list has gone up.

Further discussion ensued about previous budgets and past budgets.

**FIRE**

Fire Chief Robert Tompkins comes to the Council today to present his proposed budget for the Fire Department for fiscal year 2023.

Fire Chief Thompkins gives a brief explanation of the slight increases to his budget which include overtime, contractual services and worker's comp.

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Fire Chief Thompkins is happy to notify the group that his team is currently at full staff!

He continues with explaining some additional increases as well as some other items that will need replacement in the near future.

Chief Thompkins explain the life of his two trucks and the projected budgeting that has been done in the case a new trucks, or trucks, are needed.

Mayor Keith Hedrick further explains the possible need for new trucks and how the city has planned to handle the possible need.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot inquires about the larger increase in salaries, specifically Captain being a 7.9% increase.

Chief Thompkins explains the increase is for staff raises but Director Ron Yuhas states that this is a higher increase and may be adjusted. He will double check this line item.

Councilor Lisa McCabe inquires about the pension line for volunteers. Councilor Lisa McCabe inquires as if we give pensions to volunteer firefighters.

Chief Thompkins states no, we do not. This was a past initiative that is still funded and this service is still necessary to pay for.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield inquires about the 2.5% line increase.

Councilor Paul Norris inquires about the sale of old/used trucks.

Chief Thompkins states that there is a truck for sale/for auction now.

Councilor Paul Norris would like to have an inventory of the current vehicles so the Council can track the vehicles and when they may need to be replaced.

### **GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

Mayor Keith Hedrick presents the budget for General Government.

Mayor Keith Hedrick explains the slight increases for the General Government.

Councilor Paul Norris inquires about the Boards and Commissions increase.

Mayor Keith Hedrick and Director of Finance, Ron Yuhas, states that the increase is for the Retirement Board related to the COLA increase.

Councilor Paul Norris would like to end this session with a few statements including non-departmental budgeting, employee increases and written reasoning for those increases.

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**III. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Paul Norris.  
All in favor, 4-0-0. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned by Mayor Keith Hedrick at 7:19pm.