



City of Groton, Connecticut

City Municipal Building
295 Meridian Street
Groton, CT 06340

Committee of the Whole
Minutes

Council Chambers

Monday, January 24, 2022

6:00 PM

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

Meeting was called to order at 6:02pm by Mayor Keith Hedrick.

I. ROLL CALL

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

Excused: Councilor Christine Piazza

II. REFERRALS:

1 APPOINTMENTS

5/14/01

- MARTIN ARTALE, JR. SCWA (REAPPOINTMENT)

1/24/22

Mayor Keith Hedrick introduces Martin Artale, who is being re-appointed to the Southeastern CT Water Authority Representative Advisory Board.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requests a motion to move this to the February 7th Mayor & Council Meeting. Motion made by Councilor Stephen Sheffield, second by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot.

All in favor, 4-0-0. Motion carried.

773 PARKS AND RECREATION

7/27/20

-PARK AND RECREATION USER FEES

1/24/22

Parks and Recreation Director Mary Hill presents modifications to the Zbierski House User Fees to the Council. Changes to the user fees include a \$5 increase to City Residents and a \$10 increase to Non-residents to the hourly rental fee.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot states that in the past she was not in favor of an increase to the rental fees but she is now in favor of the increase.

Councilor Paul Norris inquires about the cost to run the Zbierski House and if the hourly rates cover our expenses.

Director Mary Hill states that she will look into the actual cost of running the Zbierski House but right off the bat we are paying \$18 per hour for the monitor to open and close the doors.

Councilor Rashaad Carter enters the meeting.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot asks Director Mary Hill about the recovery rate for Parks and Recreation and the programs.

This topic will be looked into further when reviewing the budget.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022

Councilor Paul Norris would like to suggest that we look into National Recreation and Park Association as to the standards of program recovery.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requests a motion to move this to the Mayor and Council Meeting on February 7, 2022.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield. All in favor, 5-0-0. Motion carried.

-RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR EASTERN POINT BEACH **1/24/22**

Parks and Recreation Director Mary Hill presents the changes to the Rules and Regulations for Eastern Point Beach to the Council.

Changes to the rules include the following-

- Due to the lifeguard shortage, lifeguard hours will be adjusted from 8:00am – 8:00pm to 8:00am – 6:00pm.
- Golf carts have been added to the list of prohibited vehicles.
- Guest passes are for 4 “adults”.
- Parking is only for “registered” motor vehicles.
- Pop up tents have been added back into the rules as being allowed with the condition that they are behind the lifeguard stands.
- Recreational motor scooters and mopeds are now added to the bicycle riding rule of no riding on beach property.
- Added to the rule in regards to music, no profanities, obscenities or vulgarities will be tolerated on beach property.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot was happy to see the rule in regards to the music. She also finds that the change to the lifeguard hours is a good solution to the current lifeguard shortage.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield inquires if we have ever considered charging a motorized scooter to enter the beach.

Councilor Paul Norris suggests scheduling lifeguards based upon the times of day with the most volume.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requests a motion to move this to the Mayor and Council Meeting on February 7, 2022.

Motion made by Councilor Lisa McCabe Deputy, second by Mayor Gweneviere Depot. All in favor, 5-0-0. Motion carried.

742 GROTON UTILITIES **2/21/19**
-CHANGE ORDER NO. 23-29 **1/24/22**

Groton Utilities Director Ron Gaudet explains the need for the above change orders. He mentions that this request will be reviewed now and moved right into our Special Mayor and Council Meeting following tonight’s Committee of the Whole Meeting. He review the changes with the group as well as the final contingency.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022

Councilor Stephen Sheffield inquires when this last change order is complete will the project be final.

Director Ron Gaudet explains the process after this change order is completed. Director Ron Yuhas and Mayor Keith Hedrick also explain the next steps in this process.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield inquires as to the final balance showing in the cost book.

Director Ron Yuhas further explains the remaining balance.

Mayor Keith Hedrick moves forward by explaining to the council that the Groton Utilities items will be moving to the Special Mayor and Council Meeting following this meeting and wants to ensure that all councilors are clear and informed on these items.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requests a motion to move this to the Special Mayor and Council Meeting for tonight directly following this meeting.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield.
All in favor, 5-0-0. Motion carried.

-WRIGHT PIERCE ENGINEERS

1/24/22

The Wastewater Treatment System is going through a study to determine the next big project that is needed for the Wastewater Treatment Facility. The odor has been a major issue as of late and therefore this may be the next large project. This is the engineering bid package for this project.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot states that this is the type of project and reason why we separated the sewage budget from the main budget.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield inquires as to if this project will solve the smell and odor issues from the residents.

Director Ron Gaudet states a “hopeful” yes. This project should solve the majority of odors.

Councilor Lisa McCabe clarifies the amount requested and its purpose.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield inquires if there is an estimate for the next steps.

Director Ron Gaudet states that the estimate for this project will come out of the bid project.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requests a motion to move this to the Mayor and Council Meeting on February 7, 2022.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Lisa McCabe.
All in favor, 5-0-0. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022

-SCADA MINSAIT ADVANCED CONTROL SYSTEM

1/24/22

Director Ron Gaudet states that this is for maintenance to this system.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requests a motion to move this to the Mayor and Council Meeting on February 7, 2022.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Lisa McCabe.

All in favor, 5-0-0. Motion carried.

690 CITY BUDGET PRESENTATIONS
- FY23 HIGHWAY BUDGET

4/6/18

1/25/21

Public Works Director William Robarge presents the proposed Highway Budget for FY2023.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot inquires about annual fees associated with the new software programs.

Director Bill Robarge states that Groton Utilities will also be using the system and they have agreed to pay the annual fees associated with the programs.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot inquires if we will partner with the town for the GIS program and do we predict that they will give us any pushback for wanting it.

Director Bill Robarge feels that the town will be receptive to getting the GIS Mapping Program.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot inquires about the overtime increase as well as the meals portion of the budget.

Director Bill Robarge states that the union costs did increase and therefore it increased in the budget.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot lastly inquires about the increase with the Engineering portion of the budget.

Director Robarge states that we have a large project happening on Poquonnock Rd. this upcoming fiscal year and our Engineer will be very involved in that.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield inquires about the increases in oil and how that may affect the budget.

Director Ron Yuhas stated that we are locked in for prices and therefore we should not see much of an increase.

Councilor Paul Norris inquires about the increase in salaries and the percentage of increase.

Director of Finance Ron explains the increases in salaries, both union and non-union.

Councilor Paul Norris questions the Occupational Health Safety line and the clothing stipend for the employees.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022

Councilor Paul Norris inquires about road patching and what the proper procedure is for both organizing the need and reporting the need in areas that may need attention.

Director Bill Robarge states that there is not a proper procedure for identifying and patching potholes, but the mentioned City Works program will assist with this. If a citizen identifies a pot hole, they can report it through the Highway Department at 860-446-4127.

Councilor Rashaad Carter reminisces on his time with the Highway Department. He mentions that he had a pothole issue recently and after reporting the issue, the Highway Team was there that day to fix the issue.

Director William Robarge continues his presentation of the budget with his proposed Capital Improvement Budget.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot inquires as to any changing of the traffic pattern to Brandegee for the school while doing the proposed project.

Director William Robarge states that since the opening of the school some restriping of the traffic pattern has been done and to the best of his knowledge, this has solved most traffic issues.

Councilor Paul Norris inquired as to the bonding of the roads per the proposed budget sheet.

Director William Robarge presents the requested Shore Avenue Sea Wall Project and the need for this project.

Mayor Keith Hedrick explains that he and Town Manager John Burt have discussed funding for the Shore Avenue Sea Wall Project. Town Manager John Burt had recommended that we reach out to Congressman Joe Courtney for Federal funding. Contact was made with the Congressman and the project is being discussed on the State level for funding.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield highly recommends that we reach out to the State as part of the current Infrastructure Plan.

Mayor Keith Hedrick states that this is what we are currently doing. He continues by explaining the urgent need for this project in relations to the retaining wall protecting the utilities that are beyond that wall.

Councilor Paul Norris inquires as to the advantage of spreading the cost over two years versus bonding the total cost.

Mayor Keith Hedrick states that he is trying to present this in the best way to get it passed through the Town budget.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield would like to get federal funding prior to going to the Town to add to the budget.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022

Mayor Keith Hedrick and Director Ron Yuhás states, yes, we would like to get the money through federal funding also, but the funds do need to be requested through the Town in the case we don't receive federal funding.

Councilor Rashaad Carter understands the timing of the request but also speaks to the urgency of the Shore Avenue Sea Wall. He believes that breaking it up into two years appears that it is not as urgent as it is.

Mayor Keith Hedrick explains the urgency of this project.

Councilor Paul Norris inquires as to the timeline of this project.

Director Bill Robarge states that it is projected at 6 – 9 months.

Director Bill Robarge continues by explaining the next proposed project, Jupiter Point drainage.

With no further questions on the budget items, Mayor Keith Hedrick explains the next steps for this budget. Once approved by this council on February 7, 2022 it goes to the Town Manager John Burt and the Town Council. Mayor Keith Hedrick goes on by explaining the 3 on 3 meeting with the Town Councilors to discuss the budget where the Town Councilors can ask any questions they may have in regards to the budget prior to it going to the Budget Meeting.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requests a motion to move this to the Mayor and Council Meeting of February 7, 2022.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield.
All in favor, 5-0-0. Motion carried.

- FY23 POLICE BUDGET

1/25/21

Chief Erick Jenkins comes forward to present the FY2023 Police Budget.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot inquires about State Funding in regards to the Training line in relation to Police Reform.

Councilor Paul Norris questions the crossing guard and how it has changed from a middle school to an elementary school.

Chief Jenkins states that there was a Special Traffic Officer to assist with the traffic flow between Pfizer traffic and school traffic. A Crossing Guard is responsible for the children and not the traffic.

Councilor Paul Norris questions the Boat Operations line.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requests a motion to move this to the Mayor and Council Meeting of February 7, 2022.

Motion made by Councilor Stephen Sheffield, second by Councilor Lisa McCabe.
All in favor, 5-0-0. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022

561 GROTON UTILITIES FINANCIALS

9/24/15

Director Ron Yuhas briefly reviews the Groton Utilities Financials.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requests a motion to move into Executive Session.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Lisa McCabe.

The Mayor and Council move into Executive Session at 8:25pm.

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Enter into Executive Session pursuant to CGS 1-200 (6)(A)

-To discuss personnel – Fire Department

The Mayor and Council exit Executive Session at 8:34pm.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Lisa McCabe, second by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot.

All in favor, 5-0-0. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.