



**City of Groton, Connecticut**

**City Municipal Building  
295 Meridian Street  
Groton, CT 06340**

**Committee of the Whole  
MINUTES**

**Council Chambers**

**Monday, May 24, 2021**

**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**

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Meeting was called to order by Mayor Keith Hedrick @ 6:15pm.

**I. ROLL CALL**

Clerk Megan Peters conducted roll call.

Present: Mayor Keith Hedrick, Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, Councilor Rashaad Carter, Councilor Lisa McCabe via Zoom, Councilor Paul Norris, Councilor Christine Piazza, Councilor Stephen Sheffield, City Clerk Megan Peters and Finance Director Ronald Yuhas.

**II. REFERRALS:**

**1 APPOINTMENTS**

**5/14/01**

**- JAMES STREETER - PLANNING AND ZONING (REAPPOINTMENT) 5/24/21**

Deputy Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Stephen Sheffield seconded, motion carried. (6-0-0)

**- SUSAN BERGERON – PLANNING AND ZONING (REAPPOINTMENT) 5/24/21**

Deputy Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Stephen Sheffield seconded, motion carried. (6-0-0)

**- TERRY RICE – PLANNING AND ZONING (NEW APPOINTMENT) 5/24/21**

Terry Rice was present at meeting, he spoke to the group regarding his wanting to serve the city with Planning and Zoning. He also spoke to his resume and previous relevant experience.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot thanked Terry Rice for volunteering.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield thanked Terry Rice for volunteering to serve and inquired about his recent move to the city.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requested a motion to move to the Mayor and Council Meeting on June 7, 2021.

Deputy Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Stephen Sheffield seconded, motion carried. (6-0-0)

**- CHARLES HWANG – PLANNING AND ZONING (NEW APPOINTMENT) 5/24/21**

Charles Hwang was present at the meeting. He spoke to why he would like to volunteer with the Harbor Management Commission. He also spoke to why Harbor Management is relevant to his life here in Groton City/Jupiter Point as well as the experience he brings to the table.

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Mayor Keith Hedrick requested a motion to move to the Mayor and Council Meeting on June 7, 2021.

Deputy Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Christine Piazza seconded, motion carried. (6-0-0)

**783 GROTON CITY BREW RUN**

Mayor Keith Hedrick introduced Executive Director of the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce Bruce Flax to the group to discuss the 5K Beer Run. Bruce Flax briefed the group on the event and the known logistics of what is planned.

Mayor Keith introduced Jill Rusk who will represent the City of Groton in the planning of the event to talk about what is needed today from the council.

Bruce Flax & Jill Rusk came to the group to ask the council if they would approve the use of alcohol at Eastern Point Beach for this one day event. All alcohol would be for event use only and served only by alcohol distributors who are allowed to serve.

Mayor Keith Hedrick reminded the group that this has been done before.

Councilor Rashaad Carter is for this event and has been wanting to have a 5K run to showcase our city for a long time. He spoke very highly of the running community and the respect they have and the reach that this will provide to the City of Groton. His only inquiry is to the name (Groton City Brewfest presented by.....), but that has not been decided as of yet. He also commended Bruce Flax for bringing the Chamber to the City of Groton. Lastly, he would like to start to change the rules to allow for more events of this kind for the city and the beach.

Jill Rusk mentioned that the rule is included in the current year's approved rules for the beach, but can be looked at for next year's rules.

Mayor Keith Hedrick spoke to accessing the rules on a case by case basis and each event will be reviewed by the Council.

Mayor Keith Hedrick inquired on the route of the run. Jill Rusk and Bruce Flax have a proposed route that is still being reviewed. Jeff Anderson of Kelly's Pace in Mystic is working on refining the route for the group.

Councilor Rashaad Carter inquired about the proceeds of the event. All proceeds will go to the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce.

Deputy Gweneviere Depot mentioned that she thought that this is a great idea. She inquired as to whether local Groton City businesses will be involved.

Bruce Flax said yes, they are starting here but will be working with all of CT and further to fill the event needs.

Mayor Keith Hedrick mentioned that this event is in its preliminary steps and the question

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regarding alcohol on the beach today is only the first step.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot inquired on the date of this event.

Bruce Flax has a tentative date of October 2, 2021 with proposed timing of the run @ 11am, beer served from 12p - 2pm with the event to conclude at 3pm.

Mayor Keith Hedrick mentioned that this event will not interfere with our normal beach events as it is after the beach closes for the season.

Deputy Gwenevire Depot asked one last question, where can people go to stay updated on event information?

Bruce Flax will post all finalized details through the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce website and Mayor Keith Hedrick mentioned that we will also cross-promote this event on our website, Facebook, etc.

Council Christine Piazza inquired as to can anyone participate and will this be open to people with disabilities?

Bruce Flax mentioned it is open to everyone.

Councilor Paul Norris inquired about the serving at the beerfest portion and how that will be handled at the event? And, will the beer garden be roped off?

Bruce Flax mentioned that this is all still in the planning phase and that he assumed that the breweries would monitor the amount served to attendees. Yes, the event will be roped off.

Councilor Paul Norris inquired to the amount of participants and capacity.

Bruce Flax said that Jeff Anderson of Kelly's Pace had predicted about 150/200 runners, but he feels that it is a low estimate. This is still tentative and will be furthered discussed, he is planning to work with the police with capacity.

Councilor Paul Norris further inquiries about parking.

Bruce Flax mentioned that this has been discussed and that they are evaluating parking, we have 225 parking spots at the beach and we also have Avery Point for overflow parking.

Mayor Keith Hedrick confirmed we have 234 parking spots at the beach. He mentioned that we can fit about 300 cars at the beach and we can be creative with the additional grass and open space.

Councilor Paul Norris inquired as to why the beach opposed to other areas of Groton City? The beach area is mostly residential and doesn't highlight the prominent areas of the city. Also, the route he mentioned can be difficult with the turn down to Jupiter Point for runners who are running

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at a faster pace.

Bruce Flax answered his questions, first he feels the beach is the best part of the city and that is why he would like to highlight it. He is open to all locations in the city, Jill Rusk than stepped forward to talk further on the location. It is the best location for closing roads, least impact to people, easiest for the police to monitor and safest for the community. The site of the beach is ideal for the event layout and logistics.

Mayor Keith Hedrick mentioned that as this is our preliminary “walk before we run” event, let’s start with the beach and then look at additional locations for future events.

Councilor Paul Norris inquired about the cost of the event and what it will cost the city? Police costs, etc.

Bruce Flax mentioned that the money that comes in will first go to cover costs.

Rashaad Carter mentioned that the police costs could be contributed to overtime and hopes that we get money from the event to be donated to our city programs.

Mayor Keith Hedrick mentioned that the profit is unknown and if there is a profit, than that could be spread to the city. He continued to mention that we do have money budgeted for this event.

Councilor Paul Norris continued to mention that he does support this event and has so many questions because this is what he does for his career. He is inquiring about costs for the tax payers.

Bruce Flax is looking forward to incorporating the City of Groton more into the Chambers events and activities. He thanked the city and Groton Utilities for the opportunity.

Councilor Christine Piazza questioned the age restrictions.

Bruce Flax would like to incorporate all ages.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requested a motion to move to the Mayor and Council Meeting on June 7, 2021.

Deputy Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Stephen Sheffield seconded, motion carried. (6-0-0)

Councilor Paul Norris inquired as to the budget, Jill Rusk clarified that this vote is only to request permission for alcohol at the beach for this one day.

Ronald Gaudet, Director of Utilities - Groton Utilities, jumped in to speak on behalf of Groton Utilities, the involvement and excitement of this event for the city.

Mayor Keith Hedrick stated again to the group that more details will follow in regards to this event.

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**655 DEPARTMENT PRESENTATIONS** **10/17/17**  
**-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM** **5/24/21**

Mayor Keith Hedrick introduces Cierra Patrick, Economic Development Specialist to the floor.

Cierra Patrick introduces the City of Groton Soft Cost Grant, the purpose of this grant is to strengthen the City's business base and stimulate growth by providing incentives to qualifying new or expanding businesses.

Eligible applicants are able to use grant funds for architectural fees, survey and/or soil scientist fees, engineering fees and/or legal fees.

Ciera Patrick would also like to include a façade improvement aspect to the program which would include signage, façade paintings, and masonry work, anything that would improve the streetscape to the business.

Mayor Keith Hedrick called for questions from the councilors.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield inquires about the search for contractors to do the approved work?

Cierra Patrick clarifies that the business is required to find the contractor and pay for the initial cost. They will be reimbursed by the city for their improvements if they fall within the grant rules.

Councilor Christine Piazza inquired on the amount of businesses eligible.

Cierra Patrick confirms that five businesses are eligible.

Councilor Paul Norris inquired as to the program and when it begin, is it new? Where does the money come from? Is this money available for marketing and advertising purposes?

Cierra Patrick confirmed it had been around since 2018. The money is included in the General Fund and it can be used for storefront signage but not true marketing or advertising costs.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requested a motion to move to the Mayor and Council Meeting on June 7, 2021.

Councilor Paul Norris moved, Councilor Christine Piazza seconded, motion carried.

**742 GROTON UTILITIES** **2/21/19**  
Finance Director Ronald Yuhas gave the council an overall briefing on the Groton Utilities Budgets.

**-ELECTRIC BUDGET** **4/26/21**

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Councilor Paul Norris moved, Councilor Stephen Sheffield seconded, motion carried.

(6-0-0)

**-WATER BUDGET** **4/26/21**

Councilor Paul Norris moved, Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot seconded, motion carried.

(6-0-0)

**-SEWER BUDGET** **4/26/21**

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Paul Norris seconded, motion carried.

(6-0-0)

**-SPRINGBROOK** **5/24/21**

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Stephen Sheffield seconded, motion carried.

(6-0-0)

**-BHI ENERGY T&D SERVICES** **5/24/21**

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Stephen Sheffield seconded, motion carried.

(6-0-0)

**-LOW LIFT INTAKE SCREEN** **5/24/21**

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Stephen Sheffield seconded, motion carried.

(6-0-0)

**561 GROTON UTILITIES FINANCIALS** **9/24/15**

Finance Director Ronald Yuhas provides an overview of Groton Utilities financials.

**690 CITY BUDGET PRESENTATIONS**

Finance Director Ronald Yuhas provides an overview of the City Budget.

**784 TAX COLLECTOR'S SUSPENSE LIST** **5/24/21**

Finance Director Ronald Yuhas explains what the Suspense List is and what it is for. The town is writing these taxes off as they made multiple attempts to collect the debt. The list is created to clean up their records but they will still attempt to collect debt if they can. Although they are listed on the Suspense List, it is still collectible.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requested a motion to move to the Mayor and Council Meeting on June 7, 2021.

Deputy Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Stephen Sheffield seconded, motion carried. (6-0-0)

**773 PARKS AND RECREATION** **7/27/20**

**- MEMORIAL BENCH FOR WALTER CONLEY**

Mayor Keith Hedrick explains that there are two benches left, maximum is 40 benches at the beach.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requested a motion to move to the Mayor and Council Meeting on June 7, 2021.

Deputy Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Paul Norris seconded, motion carried. (6-0-0)

Councilor Paul Norris mentioned that he know Walter Conley and this just makes him smile.

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**785 CITY ATTORNEY**

**5/24/21**

Mayor Keith Hedrick referenced Page 17 of the Charter in regards to the appointment of the City Attorney.

Deputy Mayor Depot asked if we have ever bid out the appointment of City Attorney to explore our options.

Finance Director Ronald Yuhas explained of how the current City Attorney was found and appointed.

Deputy Mayor Depot asked if there is something that they are doing that is superior compared to what another attorney may offer.

Mayor Keith Hedrick said that he would reach out to his department heads for feedback since they work with the City Attorney often.

Mayor Keith Hedrick requested a motion to move to the Mayor and Council Meeting on June 7, 2021.

Deputy Gweneviere Depot moved, Councilor Stephen Sheffield seconded, motion carried. (6-0-0)

**786 CITY COUNCIL RULES AND PROCEDURES**

**5/24/21**

Mayor Keith Hedrick pointed out that a copy of the Rules and Procedures packet was in front of the councilors and it is what was approved the last term. If you would like to change, remove or add something, please let him know prior to the June 7, 2021 Mayor and Council Meeting.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield questioned the timeline for changes, additions or removals. He also has requested the set-up of a Rules Committee.

Mayor Keith leaves it up to the council to decide upon if they would like to set up a Rules Committee.

Mayor Keith Hedrick explains the Group Committee requirements and the policies and procedures to follow while at the Group Committees.

**III. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned by Mayor Keith Hedrick @ 8:55pm.

**APPROVED:** 06/07/2021

**ATTEST:**

Megan Peters  
City Clerk