



City of Groton, Connecticut

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

**Committee of the Whole
MINUTES**

Council Chambers

Monday, June 28, 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**

Mayor Keith Hedrick called the meeting to order at 6:05pm

I. ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Councilor Rashaad Carter and Councilor Christine Piazza.

II. REFERRALS:

1 APPOINTMENTS

5/14/01

SARAH WELCHEL (EASTERN POINT HISTORIC DISTRICT)

6/28/21

Sarah Welchel is a lifelong City resident and Engineer at Electric Boat who currently lives within the historic district and grew up working on historic homes.

Councilor Lisa McCabe thanks Sarah for her willingness to join the group.

Motion made by Councilor Stephen Sheffield, seconded by Councilor Lisa McCabe. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

790 CONNECTICUT CANNABIS LEGALIZATION

6/28/21

State Representative Christine Conley speaks to the new Connecticut Cannabis Legalization Regulations and how they pertain to Municipalities.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield references a Supreme Court decision and questions the protocols when a vehicle is pulled over and the scent of marijuana is present.

State Representative Christine Conley clarifies that the smell alone is not reason enough to search.

Councilor Lisa McCabe questions how it will be decided if we get an establishment within the city.

State Rep CC mentions that a referendum would be done. She also mentions that 1 establishment is allowed for every 25,000 residents.

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Mayor Keith Hedrick explains to the group that this is being researched by the City in all aspects. The difference between smoking and edibles is discussed and all items are being discussed prior to being brought ultimately to the Council.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot would like to start an initiative to solicit questions from residents and bring them to an upcoming event – Coffee with a Cop on July 17, 2021.

State Rep Christine Conley confirms that training will be done for officers.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield questions the fee to start a cannabis establishment.

State Rep Christine Conley states that it is a high fee. She also describes that there are two types of licenses – cash license & equity partner. Details vary on both licenses.

Mayor Keith Hedrick asks if there are any further questions. None are heard.

736 MOTHER BAILEY HOUSE RFP

1/16/19

Attorney Brian LeClerc reviews the purchase of the Mother Bailey House and 0 Broad Street. He details the purchase agreement which includes the following stipulations - preservation, adaptive re-use residential, historical materials, no visual changes, restoration as close as possible to historic accuracy, 15-month period to complete restoration and an insurance bond to ensure that the developer does not walk away from the project.

City Planner Leslie Creane mentions that an 8-24 was completed with the Planning and Zoning Commission and a favorable recommendation was given.

Mayor Keith Hedrick discusses all the steps that have been completed to get us to this point on the sale of the properties.

City Planner Leslie Creane notes that 0 Broad Street is tied to the Mother Bailey House, they cannot be separated. It is a sale of both or a sale of none.

Attorney Brian LeClerc also clarifies the purchase agreement and the two properties as a complete deal.

Buyers Frank Jeanette & Torrence Jeannette, 142 Benham Rd., speak to the purchase of the Mother Bailey House and 0 Broad Street and their plan for the properties. They clarify that based upon the changes in cost of goods since the original proposal pre-COVID, the Mother Bailey House will be renovated into a single-family home rather than the originally proposed three-family. Plans include on keeping the esthetic look of the Mother Bailey House and renovating it with more durable materials to benefit the structure of the house and the environment we live in.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot mentions that Frank Jeanette and son are City residents and that she is thankful that a city resident is so dedicated to restore this historic property. She also mentions

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that she is happy that the Mother Bailey House will be a single-family home.

Councilor Lisa McCabe agrees with Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot. She is happy to hear that it will remain a single-family home and would love to see pictures of the house after the remodel.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot requests a before and after from the buyers to show residents the result of the decision to sell this property.

Frank Jeanette currently takes pictures of all his projects and is happy to present them to the community when completed. Their goal is to rebuild and make this a viable property again.

Councilor Paul Norris thanks them, this is a perfect example of engagement within the community. He comments that this is a win-win all around, and he thanks them very much.

Mayor Keith Hedrick asks for further questions. None heard. Mayor Keith Hedrick mentions to Attorney Brian LeClerc that they would like this adjusted and still on schedule for the July 6, 2021 Mayor and Council Meeting.

Motion made by Councilor Paul Norris, second by Councilor Lisa McCabe. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

**655 DEPARTMENT PRESENTATIONS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM**

**10/17/17
5/24/21**

Cierra Patrick, Economic Development Specialist, reviews the current and upcoming Community Design Workshop Series. She further reviews the many upcoming events on Economic Development for the City of Groton.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot questions our communication and if there are alternative ways to get the message out to our residents. She suggests that we have a visible area at our upcoming Farmer's Market to gather questions and suggestions from our residents.

Cierra Patrick is always looking for valuable feedback on getting the message out and improving communication and engagement.

Councilor Paul Norris also suggests possible surveys and questionnaires.

Cierra Patrick promotes the City of Groton website for more engagement. She explains that there are more interactive items on the horizon digitally.

Cierra Patrick continues by explaining the Economic Development Grant Program. She reviews the eligibility requirements and the items that qualify for this grant and the reimbursement of the projects.

Mayor Keith Hedrick explains the history of this grant and how it relates back to the Council.

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Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot questions how local business are being notified of this grant program? Does this only apply to future projects or relatively recent projects?

Cierra Patrick confirms that it is advertised on our website and all projects are eligible if completed 6 months prior to their application submission.

Councilor Paul Norris notes that he would like to engage our business more than just via the website.

Councilor Lisa McCabe agrees with Councilor Norris and would also like to make a better effort in reaching out to our local businesses. This is a great opportunity and it's important that local business is aware and in participation.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot questions who our businesses should reach out to if they would like to participate. She also questions how this could be correlated with the America Rescue Fund Act. She suggests an email blast of information to our businesses. Cierra Patrick notes that she is the contact and that the newsletter can be sent to businesses and they have a version that is specifically for business.

Councilor Paul Norris questions the change from this grant to the last grant presented.

Motion made by Councilor Lisa McCabe, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting

PLANNING AND ZONING PRESENTATION

6/28/21

City Planner, Leslie Creane, presents her Planning and Zoning Presentation to the Council. She explains that she reviewed and made changes to the Zoning Regulations when she became the City Planner here in 2020.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot thanks City Planner Leslie Creane for her presentation and the information provided.

Councilor Lisa McCabe questions form-based zoning and how it is applicable to the City of Groton?

City Planner Leslie Creane explains that the best view is from overhead but the zones are generally divided in the middle of the streets. From overhead you can see the major components to each zone or area and where a new building or business belongs. She also mentions that the market can also dictate the need for businesses in each space. Leslie Creane uses form-based zoning in her planning.

Councilor Paul Norris would like to look at equity when planning here in the city.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield questions planning and zoning in relation to public housing areas.

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City Planner, Leslie Creane, and Economic Development Specialist, Cierra Patrick, are always working together to brainstorm the areas of the City including public housing areas and equity concerns.

PARKS AND REC PRESENTATION

6/28/21

Director Mary Hill gives an overview of her department, Parks and Recreation, which includes herself and an Administrator plus 4 additional full-time employees. She also gives a brief overview of Seasonal staff that helps to run Seasonal Programs. A few mentioned Seasonal Programs include Summer Playground, the Farmer's Market, and roughly five special events throughout the year. The team also maintains multiple city property maintenance, Washington Park and Eastern Point Beach which sees 55,000 visitors within 80 days.

Mayor Keith Hedrick speaks highly of the Farmer's Market and the progress that Mary and her team have done to this event over the years.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot comments on the lifeguard situation that has recently come up in the community. She elaborates on the circumstances of COVID and getting lifeguards certified this year has been difficult. She also mentions that the gate staff has been notifying residents upon arrival to the beach.

Mayor Keith Hedrick mentions that the lifeguard shortage is a national issue and we will do our best to communicate this to residents and guests as they visit the beach.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield inquired as to when community bus trips will resume.

Mary Hill confirms that they do have a holiday trip on the horizon. Stay tuned for further information.

Councilor Paul Norris questions Director Mary Hill on her top 5 challenges she foresees with her program.

Director Mary Hill states that she feels her top challenges will be staffing and engagement from the younger generation who she employs. She also mentions that technology will be a challenge for her and her team, stating examples of the challenges she faces at the beach as well as Washington Park. She also mentions that the new proposed marina at Thames View Park will also be a new challenge for her, as this will be a new property for her team to maintain and manage.

Mayor Keith Hedrick further discusses Park and Recreation initiatives.

773 PARKS AND RECREATION

7/27/20

MEMORIAL BENCH WARREN AND BETTY ANN CHAPMAN

6/28/21

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

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MEMORIAL BENCH ROSE AND FRANK SCHEETZ **6/28/21**
Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Lisa McCabe. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting

FARMER'S MARKET GRANT **6/28/21**
Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting

REPLACEMENT OF WASHINGTON PARK SCOREBOARDS **6/28/21**
Motion made by Councilor Stephen Sheffield, second by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

742 GROTON UTILITIES **2/21/19**
D&D POWER **6/28/21**
Mark Biron, General Manager of Operations, Water and Electric Groton Utilities gives overview on the proposed project. Mayor Keith Hedrick gives further background on the project and the need for it.

Councilor Paul Norris questions the length of the cable. Mark Biron states that approximately 600-700 feet. The cable will be replaced the entire length and not just spliced together.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot questions the timeline.

Mark Biron states this summer.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot inquires about any traffic issues.

Mark Biron mentions that there will be some road adjustments but no closures.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot suggests that we notify the public via communication methods of road work to eliminate some congestion.

Motion made by Councilor Paul Norris, second by Councilor Lisa McCabe. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

SCADA UPGRADE **6/28/21**
Mark Biron, General Manager of Operations, Water and Electric Groton Utilities gives overview on the proposed project.

Motion made by Councilor Paul Norris, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

PCB REMEDIATION **6/28/21**
Mark Biron, General Manager of Operations, Water and Electric Groton Utilities gives overview on the proposed project.

Motion made by Councilor Paul Norris, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

KELTIC PAINTING, LLC **6/28/21**

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Mark Biron, General Manager of Operations, Water and Electric Groton Utilities gives overview on the proposed project.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Lisa McCabe. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

CHANGE ORDER NUMBER 21 **6/28/21**

Mark Biron, General Manager of Operations, Water and Electric Groton Utilities gives overview on the proposed project.

Motion made by Councilor Paul Norris, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

HARRY H. STONE AND SONS SLUDGE REMOVAL **6/28/21**

Mark Biron, General Manager of Operations, Water and Electric Groton Utilities gives overview on the proposed project.

Motion made by Councilor Paul Norris, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

PIPING SERVICE, INC. **6/28/21**

Mark Biron, General Manager of Operations, Water and Electric Groton Utilities gives overview on the proposed project.

Motion made by Councilor Lisa McCabe, second by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

HYDROBURST CLEANING SYSTEM **6/28/21**

Mark Biron, General Manager of Operations, Water and Electric Groton Utilities gives overview on the proposed project. He explains the project and the scope of difficulty for the company and the diving team who must complete it.

Motion made by Councilor Paul Norris, second by Councilor Lisa McCabe. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

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

Director of Finance Ron Yuhas gives a brief overview of the Monthly Groton Utilities Financials.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield questions when TVC will be off the books?
2027, final payment is first quarter of 2028.

690 CITY BUDGET PRESENTATIONS **4/06/18**

Finance Director Ron Yuhas gives a brief overview of the City Budget standings.

Councilor Paul Norris requests further explanation in regards to the Building Inspection budget.

787 EAN HOLDINGS LLC, PROPERTY TAX REFUND **6/28/21**

Finance Director Ron Yuhas gives a brief overview of the EAN Holdings LLC, Property Tax Refund.

Motion made by Councilor Lisa McCabe, second by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot. Motion carried. All in favor, 4-0-0. This will be moved to the July 6, 2021 Mayor & Council Meeting.

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789 AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDS

6/28/21

Finance Director Ron Yuhas gives a review of the American Rescue Funds. He explains that we did receive our first payment yet there are still many questions on the rules and regulations pertaining to the use of the funds. Finance Director Ron Yuhas and Mayor Keith Hedrick are continuously working towards further understanding of the usage of funds. Currently we are saving the money until the rules and regulations are clear and concise. Mayor Keith Hedrick is working with the Town on the use of the money and how to work together to use it in the best way.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Councilor Lisa McCabe, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield. Motion carried.

Mayor Keith Hedrick adjourned the meeting at 8:55pm.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

**Megan Peters
City Clerk**