



City of Groton, Connecticut

Mayor and Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 15, 2021

City Municipal Building
295 Meridian Street
Groton, CT 06340

Council Chambers

7:30 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 7:31pm by Mayor Keith Hedrick.

I. ROLL CALL

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

Excused: Director Ron Yuhas and Councilor Lisa McCabe

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS AND MEMORIALS **-SCARECROW TRAIL AWARDS**

Director Mary K. Hill presented the winners of the Scarecrow Trail with their trophies.

A short recess was taken for photos from 7:35pm – 7:40pm.

Councilor Rashaad Carter wants to congratulate the Groton Fitch Falcon Cheer Squad For their win in this weekend's competition.

Councilor Christine Piazza wanted to recognize the Fitch Co-Op Girl's Swim Team for their invitation to the State Competition.

IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZEN'S PETITIONS/COMMENTS

Receipt of Citizens' Petitions is the portion of the Council meeting where the Council welcomes comments from citizens. To address the Council, please sign the sheet on the table at the front of the meeting room. When you are recognized, please approach the podium. Clearly state your name and address. Each presentation should be limited to five (5) minutes or less, and citizens should, if possible, submit emailed or written comments. Presentations should be related to matters pertinent to the City of Groton. City Councilors will only ask questions in order to clarify the speaker's presentation and can respond during the Responses to Citizens' Petitions portion of the meeting.

None.

V. RESPOND TO CITIZEN'S PETITIONS/COMMENTS

None.

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VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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Motion to approve made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield.

No changes to the minutes.

All in favor, 5-0-0.

Motion carried.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Councilor Paul Norris commended the Mayor and City Staff in regards to the Harbor Management ordinance that was recently revised.

Councilor Paul Norris is the Chair of the Group Committee/Economic Development and he and the group are discussing how to capture the tourists who visit our city with city information.

Councilor Paul Norris states that September is National Senior Citizens Month and he would like to have events in the City to promote in this in September 2022.

Director Mary Hill will take on this endeavor and start to brainstorm ideas.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield – Nothing to report.

Councilor Christine Piazza – Wanted to thank all of those involved with the correction of the off ramp from 95N to North Street.

Councilor Rashaad Carter – Nothing to report.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot – Group Committee I Meeting has been discussing assistance for local business and encourages local business to reach out to our Economic Development team.

November 11th - Veteran's Day Ceremony here at the Municipal Building.

November 12th – Food Box Distribution – Thanks all the volunteers.

Groton Utilities Clean-up teams, thank you!

November 13th – Zbierski House rental, reminding all that this building is for rent and a great place and great location. 50 people capacity.

City Clerk Megan Peters - Food Box Distribution and thank you Groton Utilities.

Mayor Keith Hedrick – the mask mandate has been lifted but masks are still encouraged.

Mayor Keith Hedrick agrees that Groton Utilities has kept such a high standard of excellence.

Food Box Distribution was a wet day but we still had a very busy day and all food was given out.

Veteran's Day here at the Municipal Building was hosted by Subvets, great event.

VIII. COMMITTEE REFERRALS

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot received a request from a resident that suggested we add a Christmas tree to the property of Thames View Park. The City is evaluating a potential tree lighting at Thames View Park and had not been mentioned previously as it was in very early stages.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

R-21-11-171 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL INITIALLY APPROVE AN "ORDINANCE APPROVING REVISIONS TO THE EXISTING SEWER RATE SCHEDULE FOR THE CITY OF GROTON, DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES, WASTEWATER DIVISION, FOR ALL

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SEWER SERVICE LOCATED WITHIN THE CITY OF GROTON, TO BE EFFECTIVE FOR SEWER SERVICE BILLED ON AND AFTER FEBRUARY 1, 2022; ON AND AFTER FEBRUARY 1, 2023; AND ON AND AFTER FEBRUARY 1, 2024”

WHEREAS, the City of Groton, Department of Utilities, Wastewater Division, has determined that revisions to the existing Sewer Rate Schedule are necessary; and

WHEREAS, the City of Groton Utilities Commission has arrived at the revised Sewer Rate Schedule after careful consideration; and

WHEREAS, the City of Groton Utilities Commission conducted a Public Hearing on the proposed revisions on Monday, November 8, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council **initially** approve an “ordinance approving revisions to the existing sewer rate schedule for the City of Groton, Department of Utilities, Wastewater Division, for all sewer service located within the City of Groton, to be effective for sewer service billed on and after February 1, 2022; on and after February 1, 2023; and on and after February 1, 2024”:

GROTON UTILITIES
295 Meridian Street
Groton, Connecticut 06340

RATE SCHEDULE FOR ALL SEWER SERVICE LOCATED WITHIN THE CITY OF GROTON SERVICE TERRITORY

BILLED ON AND AFTER FEBRUARY 1, 2022, FEBRUARY 1, 2023, FEBRUARY 1, 2024 respectively

AVAILABILITY: Year-Round Sewer Service for use in a single or multi-family dwelling, business, or industrial establishment.

1. MONTHLY RATE IS THE SUM OF THE SERVICE CHARGE AND THE CONSUMPTION CHARGE:

a. The Monthly SERVICE CHARGE is based on meter size:

		Service Charges					
Meter Size	February 1, 2022	February 1, 2023	February 1, 2024	Meter Size	February 1, 2022	February 1, 2023	February 1, 2024
5/8"	\$ 10.15	\$ 10.90	\$ 11.65	3"	\$ 161.00	\$ 181.00	\$ 201.00
3/4"	\$ 15.00	\$ 16.00	\$ 17.00	4"	\$ 265.00	\$ 295.00	\$ 325.00
1"	\$ 24.00	\$ 24.50	\$ 25.00	6"	\$ 520.00	\$ 570.00	\$ 620.00
1.5"	\$ 47.00	\$ 47.00	\$ 47.00	8"	\$ 877.00	\$ 1,002.00	\$ 1,127.00
2"	\$ 75.20	\$ 75.20	\$ 75.20	10" or Larger	\$ 1,350.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,850.00

b. The Monthly CONSUMPTION CHARGE is based on the number of Cubic Feet (CF) recorded on the water meter during the billing month in accordance with this schedule:

Consumption Charge - Cubic Feet (CF) Per Month			
Consumption	February 1, 2022	February 1, 2023	February 1, 2024
per CF	\$ 0.0547	\$ 0.0555	\$ 0.0563

3. TERM OF SERVICE: One (1) year and thereafter until thirty (30) days written notice of termination. A longer term may be required for an extensive installation.

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4. Rules and Regulations: The Department governing service hereunder as to application for service, character of service, connection, seasonal service, disconnection, reconnection, termination, etc., are on file within the Department.

Motion to approve made by Councilor Paul Norris, second by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot states that many people have inquired about this with her. She asked if customers can reach out to Groton Utilities and for GU to evaluate their bill to access their specific increase. Yes, please call Customer Care and they can answer any questions you may have.

Mayor Keith Hedrick states that all families utilize water differently at different times per year. Typically the summer months are higher for water usage versus winter months.

Councilor Rashaad Carter states that we don't have accurate comparisons because at the time that this happened the first time, COVID hit and families were home using more water thereafter.

Councilor Stephen Sheffield asked if after three years, we will have another study.

Councilor Christine Piazza states that she evaluated her water bill and she will have about a \$3 increase per month. She is upset about the increase and feels that due to COVID and food insecurity it's not something we should be doing at this time based upon the residents, where some are struggling.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot states that the budget can be reviewed every year to ensure that the money is being spent properly. Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot will be paying special attention to this budget specifically based upon the necessary increases.

Councilor Rashaad Carter is behind this proposed increase and moving it forward is necessary. He is concerned for the renters who he feels are on more of a fixed income.

Councilor Paul Norris is happy to see this conversation happening and hopes that this passion will be continued when the 2022 budget is presented. Councilor Paul Norris feels that doing the increases this way, gradually, is a fiscally responsible way of doing an increase.

Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot states that if you have issues with funding of utilities, please reach out to Customer Service to discuss further payment options.

Utility Commissioner, Robert Zuliani, would like the Councilors to reach out to him in regards to this topic as he would be happy to discuss the information necessary to understand the proposed plan.

Robert Zuliani speaks to the Council in regards to the Sewer Usage Fee and offers further conversation if requested.

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Councilor Christine Piazza does want to state that she is very thankful for Groton Utilities and is just passing along what she is being told by residents.

All in favor, 5-0-0.

Motion carried.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, second by Councilor Stephen Sheffield.

All in favor, 5-0-0.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned by Mayor Keith Hedrick at 8:26pm.