



City of Groton, Connecticut

Mayor and Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 7, 2022

City Municipal Building
295 Meridian Street
Groton, CT 06340

AUDITORIUM

7:30 PM

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

*This meeting will be a **HYBRID Meeting, (via Zoom and in-person) at the Municipal Building; Auditorium. Join Zoom Meeting:***

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89946929312?pwd=b0Jhb2xzNlp6a3VTaVVOaWlZVStZdz09>

Meeting ID: 899 4692 9312

Passcode: 424275

Mayor Keith Hedrick called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Keith Hedrick, Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, Councilor Rashaad Carter, Councilor Paul Norris, Councilor Piazza (Zoom), Councilor Stephen Sheffield, City Clerk Edward Jacome and Finance Director Ron Yuhas

Excused: Councilor Lisa McCabe

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS AND MEMORIALS

None.

Mayor Hedrick entertained a motion to limit comments from five minutes to three minutes.

Motion made by Councilor Sheffield, second by Deputy Mayor Depot.

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

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.

Debra Patrick, 8 Mellow Ave – stated her support for the resolution keeping the election in May and adding a question to the November 2023 Ballot.

Michael Boucher, 16 Hillside Avenue – stated his support for the November election. He stated multiple Branford Manor Incident Reports and inquired on when the council was first made aware of the situation at Branford Manor. He also inquired on the status of a committee Chairperson who has been named on multiple police reports. He also stated receipt and

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interactions from the United States Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for information that could have been supplied by the City of Groton.

Doris Pulaski, 224 Shore Avenue – stated her support for having the election in May and adding a question to the November 2023 Ballot.

Bryon Niemann, 76 Allen Street – stated his support for the resolution in having the election in May and adding a question to the November 2023 Ballot.

Elizabeth Duarte, 54 Cottage Street – stated her support for having electors of the City of Groton decide the election change by adding a question on the November 2023 Ballot.

Jean C. Ambrose, 169 Shennecossett Parkway – reminded the council of the signed petition and asked the council to allow the voters to decide the change by having a question on the November 2023 Ballot.

Robert Zuliani, 23 Cushman Street – stated his support for the May election and adding a question on the November 2023 Ballot.

Robert Tompkins, 100 Westwood Drive – stated his support for the May election. He stated the decision to move an election should not be made by five present councilors.

Ian Thomas, 24 Jefferson Drive – stated his support for the November election and a future Charter change. He also stated while the signed petition is something to consider it does not include those who disagree.

Jill Rusk, 85 Baker Avenue – stated her support for the May election. She stated she had reached out to her State Representatives to discuss this topic which was included in a budget bill. She urged the council to support tonight's resolution.

Horace Newbury, 279 Thames Street – stated his support for the May election.

Dane Stevenson, 35 North Street – stated his support for the November election. He discussed information accessibility and logistical simplification with one election in November.

V. RESPOND TO CITIZEN'S PETITIONS/COMMENTS

Deputy Mayor Depot – clarified based on the three-fourths requirement they would still need four councilors to vote in favor of keeping the election in May. She also stated any complaint towards an elected or appointed official should be referred to the Board of Ethics.

Councilor Carter – spoke on streamlining elections and making it easier for residents to vote.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor & Council, October 17, 2022

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

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

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Committee of the Whole, October 24, 2022

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

Public Hearing, October 24, 2022

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

VII. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Councilor Norris – attended the October 28th Branford Manor update meeting.

Councilor Sheffield – attended the MLK Scholarship Award Dinner.

Councilor Carter – attended the MLK Scholarship Award Dinner.

Councilor Piazza – attended the MLK Scholarship Award Dinner her daughter being a recipient of the award. Also acknowledged the girls swim team and the Mystic Football team.

Deputy Mayor Depot – attended the MLK Scholarship Award Dinner. The November Food Box Distribution is on Monday, November 21, 2022. Attended the Branford Manor update meeting on October 28, 2022. Participated in the Emergency Operation Center drill on November 1, 2022.

Groton City and Groton Utilities Financials

Finance Director Yuhas gave a brief overview of city and GU financials with no notable issues.

Mayor Hedrick – If food insecure call (860) 446-4103. Briefly gave an update on Branford Manor. Will be reaching out again about ARPA meetings. Will be on vacation at the end of November and Deputy Mayor Depot will chair November 21st and 28th meetings.

VIII. COMMITTEE REFERRALS

None.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

R-22-10-123 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL APPROVE TO HOLD MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ON THE FIRST MONDAY OF MAY IN ODD-NUMBERED YEARS. ADDITIONALLY, TO ADD A QUESTION TO THE NOVEMBER 2023 BALLOT TO SOLICIT AN OPINION FROM THE CITY OF GROTON ELECTORS REGARDING WHEN THEY PREFER ELECTIONS TO BE HELD.

WHEREAS, according to the City of Groton Charter, Article II (ELECTIONS), Section 2 (ELECTION OF MUNICIPAL OFFICERS), and (b) the election of Municipal Officers in the City shall, as determined by this Charter, be held on the first Monday of May in odd-numbered years;

WHEREAS, according to the State of Connecticut, PA 21-2, Sec. 116 that “On or after January 1, 2022, and notwithstanding any contrary provision of law, there shall be held in each municipality, biennially, a municipal election on the Tuesday after the first Monday of November of the odd-numbered years, except that such municipal election may be held on the first Monday

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of May of the odd-numbered years if the legislative body of such municipality so determines by a three-fourths vote.”;

WHEREAS, on October 24, 2022 the Mayor and Council held a Public Hearing for the residents of the City of Groton to discuss the May vs November election;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council approve to hold municipal elections on the first Monday of May in odd-numbered years. Additionally, to add a question to the November 2023 ballot to solicit an opinion from the City of Groton electors regarding when they prefer elections to be held.

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

There was lengthy discussion among the council both in support and against the resolution. They discussed finances, logistics and the electors.

Motion Failed. 2-2-1

In Favor: Deputy Mayor Depot, Councilor Norris

Opposed: Councilor Carter, Councilor Sheffield

Abstained: Councilor Piazza

R-22-10-119 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL AUTHORIZE GROTON UTILITIES MANAGEMENT TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER TO 3PHASE LINE CONSTRUCTION, 35E INDUSTRIAL WAY, SUITE 202, ROCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED TWO HUNDRED SIX THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED SIXTY SIX DOLLARS AND SIXTY THREE CENTS (\$206,566.63) INCLUDING A TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT (25%) CONTINGENCY TO PURCHASE HIGH SIDE STEEL FOR THE BUDDINGTON SUBSTATION CONSTRUCTION AS PART OF THE EASTERN CONNECTICUT TRANSMISSION PROJECT TO BE PAID FROM TRANSMISSION LINES 1410/1280/400/BUDDINGTON SUBSTATION BOND FUND PROJECT

WHEREAS, 3Phase Line Construction was selected using the approved bidding process and was the only vendor able to meet the required deadline; and

WHEREAS, the previous vendor is unable to meet their previously agreed to deadline; and

WHEREAS, high side steel is needed to finish the Buddington Substation Project within the agreed upon timeline; and

WHEREAS, the cost breakdown is as follows:

Cost of Service	\$165,253.30
25% Contingency	\$ 41,313.33
Total Request	\$206,566.63; and

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WHEREAS, at its regular meeting held on October 19, 2022, the Groton Utilities Commission/ Water Pollution Control Authority authorized Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to 3Phase Line Construction, 35E Industrial Way, Suite 202, Rochester, New Hampshire for an amount not to exceed Two Hundred Six Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Six Dollars and Sixty Three Cents (\$206,566.63) including a twenty-five percent (25%) contingency to purchase high side steel for the Buddington Substation construction as part of the Eastern Connecticut Transmission Project to be paid from Transmission Lines 1410/1280/400/Buddington Substation Bond Fund Project, and furthermore that the City Council be apprised of this action with the recommendation that it concur;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council authorize Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to 3Phase Line Construction, 35E Industrial Way, Suite 202, Rochester, New Hampshire for an amount not to exceed Two Hundred Six Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Six Dollars and Sixty Three Cents (\$206,566.63) including a twenty-five percent (25%) contingency to purchase high side steel for the Buddington Substation construction as part of the Eastern Connecticut Transmission Project to be paid from Transmission Lines 1410/1280/400/Buddington Substation Bond Fund Project.

Motion to approve made by Deputy Mayor Depot, second by Councilor Carter
All in favor. Motion carried. 5-0-0

R-22-10-120 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL AUTHORIZE GROTON UTILITIES MANAGEMENT TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER TO BARNHART CRANE, 25 MILL STREET, MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT, NOT TO EXCEED EIGHTY ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED EIGHTEEN DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$81,818.00) INCLUDING A TEN PERCENT (10%) CONTINGENCY FOR THE RELOCATION OF THE 1X SPARE TRANSFORMER FROM THE OPERATIONS COMPLEX TO THE BUDDINGTON SUBSTATION TO BE PAID FROM THE TRANSMISSION LINES 1410/1280/400/BUDDINGTON SUBSTATION BOND FUND PROJECT

WHEREAS, Barnhart Crane has also been used by Eversource; and

WHEREAS, on June 1, 2020, Groton Utilities entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Eversource allowing the use of shared resources to purchase materials, and to perform construction including drilling, civil work, vegetation management, and clearing, to save money; and

WHEREAS, the 1X transformer will replace the current, primary transformer at Buddington Substation; and

WHEREAS the current transformer is in need of repair and once fixed will become a spare transformer, and having two on site will provide reliability; and

WHEREAS, the cost breakdown is as follows:

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Cost of Service	\$74,380.00
10% Contingency	\$ 7,438.00
Total Request	\$81,818.00; and

WHEREAS, at its regular meeting held on October 19, 2022, the Groton Utilities Commission/ Water Pollution Control Authority authorized Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to Barnhart Crane, 25 Mill Street, Middletown, Connecticut, not to exceed Eighty One Thousand Eight Hundred Eighteen Dollars and No Cents (\$81,818.00) including a ten percent (10%) contingency for the relocation of the 1X spare transformer from the Operations Complex to the Buddington Substation to be paid from the Transmission Lines 1410/1280/400/Buddington Substation Bond Fund Project, and furthermore that the City Council be apprised of this action with the recommendation that it concur;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council authorize Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to Barnhart Crane, 25 Mill Street, Middletown, Connecticut, not to exceed Eighty One Thousand Eight Hundred Eighteen Dollars and No Cents (\$81,818.00) including a ten percent (10%) contingency for the relocation of the 1X spare transformer from the Operations Complex to the Buddington Substation to be paid from the Transmission Lines 1410/1280/400/Buddington Substation Bond Fund Project.

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

R-22-10-121 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL AUTHORIZE GROTON UTILITIES MANAGEMENT TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER TO MOUNTAIN LLC, 52 FARM VIEW DRIVE, SUITE 201, NEW GLOUCESTER, MAINE FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED TWO HUNDRED NINETY THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$290,400.00) INCLUDING A TEN PERCENT (10%) CONTINGENCY TO SUPPORT GROTON UTILITIES IN ENGINEERING OF POLE ATTACHMENTS, PENDING GROTON UTILITIES' RECEIPT OF APPLICATION AND PAYMENT FOR SUCH WORK TO BE PAID BY THE CUSTOMER

WHEREAS, Mountain LLC was selected as a preferred vendor because of their advanced knowledge of the customer's project; and

WHEREAS, the purchase order will be contingent upon Groton Utilities receiving an application and payment for such work to be performed, and if no application and payment is received, no work will be completed by Groton Utilities; and

WHEREAS, Groton Utilities must be ready and able to support an agreed upon schedule with a potential third party attacher; and

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WHEREAS, this is outside the scope of Groton Utilities normal business; however, Groton Utilities is required to accommodate third party pole attachers, and Groton Utilities will not begin any work until payment has been received, and

WHEREAS, the cost breakdown is as follows:

Cost of Service	\$264,000.00
10% Contingency	\$ 26,400.00
Total Request	\$290,400.00; and

WHEREAS, at its regular meeting held on October 19, 2022, the Groton Utilities Commission/ Water Pollution Control Authority authorized Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to Mountain LLC, 52 Farm View Drive, Suite 201, New Gloucester, Maine, a preferred vendor, for an amount not to exceed Two Hundred Ninety Thousand Four Hundred Dollars and No Cents (\$290,400.00) including a ten percent (10%) contingency to support Groton Utilities in engineering of pole attachments, pending Groton Utilities' receipt of application and payment for such work to be paid by the customer, and furthermore that the City Council be apprised of this action with the recommendation that it concur;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council authorize Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to Mountain LLC, 52 Farm View Drive, Suite 201, New Gloucester, Maine, a preferred vendor, for an amount not to exceed Two Hundred Ninety Thousand Four Hundred Dollars and No Cents (\$290,400.00) including a ten percent (10%) contingency to support Groton Utilities in engineering of pole attachments, pending Groton Utilities' receipt of application and payment for such work to be paid by the customer.

Motion to approve made by Councilor Carter, second by Councilor Sheffield.
All in favor. Motion carried. 5-0-0

R-22-10-122 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL AUTHORIZE GROTON UTILITIES MANAGEMENT TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER TO INTEGRATED SECURITY GROUP, 19 TUTTLE PLACE, MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT, A PREFERRED VENDOR, NOT TO EXCEED ONE HUNDRED SIX THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED EIGHTY DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$106,980.00), FOR THE PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF SECURITY VIDEO CAMERAS AND PHYSICAL ACCESS CONTROLS AT THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY LOCATED AT 311 THAMES STREET, GROTON TO BE PAID FROM FUNDS AVAILABLE IN THE SEWER DIVISION 2022 - 2023 APPROVED NON-BONDED CAPITAL FOR SEWER TREATMENT FACILITY TECHNOLOGY & SECURITY

WHEREAS, physical security measures are necessary to protect the WWTF critical infrastructure and control systems in accordance with DHS, EPA and CT DPH guidelines and recommendations; and

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WHEREAS, integrated Security Group is the current and preferred provider for physical security systems installation and maintenance for the City of Groton/Groton Utilities facilities; and

WHEREAS, at its regular meeting held on October 19, 2022, the Groton Utilities Commission/ Water Pollution Control Authority authorized Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to Integrated Security Group, 19 Tuttle Place, Middletown, Connecticut, a preferred vendor, not to exceed One Hundred Six Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty Dollars and No Cents (\$106,980.00) for the purchase and installation of security video cameras and physical access controls at the Wastewater Treatment Facility located at 311 Thames Street, Groton to be paid from funds available in the Sewer Division 2022 - 2023 Approved Non-Bonded Capital for Sewer Treatment Facility Technology & Security, and furthermore that the City Council be apprised of this action with the recommendation that it concur;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council authorize Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to Integrated Security Group, 19 Tuttle Place, Middletown, Connecticut, a preferred vendor, not to exceed One Hundred Six Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty Dollars and No Cents (\$106,980.00) for the purchase and installation of security video cameras and physical access controls at the Wastewater Treatment Facility located at 311 Thames Street, Groton to be paid from funds available in the Sewer Division 2022 - 2023 Approved Non-Bonded Capital for Sewer Treatment Facility Technology & Security.

Motion to approve made by Councilor Piazza, second by Councilor Sheffield.

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

R-22-10-124 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL APPROVE THE RE-APPOINTMENT OF JASON RUSK, 85 BAKER AVENUE, GROTON, CONNECTICUT, AS A REGULAR MEMBER, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, TERM TO EXPIRE ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

WHEREAS, a vacancy exists for a regular member to the Economic Development Commission; and

WHEREAS, Jason Rusk, 85 Baker Avenue, Groton, Connecticut, desires to serve on the Economic Development Commission and has been recommended for re-appointment as a regular member;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council approve the re-appointment of Jason Rusk, 85 Baker Avenue, Groton, Connecticut, as a regular member, Economic Development Commission term to expire on September 30, 2025.

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

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

R-22-10-125 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL APPROVE THE RE-APPOINTMENT OF MARGARET HIRSCH, 144 BROAD STREET, GROTON, CONNECTICUT, AS A REGULAR MEMBER, ECONOMIC

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**DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, TERM TO EXPIRE ON SEPTEMBER 30,
2025**

WHEREAS, a vacancy exists for a regular member to the Economic Development Commission; and

WHEREAS, Margaret Hirsch, 144 Broad Street, Groton, Connecticut, desires to serve on the Economic Development Commission and has been recommended for re-appointment as a regular member;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council approve the re-appointment of Margaret Hirsch, 144 Broad Street, Groton, Connecticut, as a regular member, Economic Development Commission term to expire on September 30, 2025.

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

**R-22-10-126 RESOLUTION THAT MAYOR AND COUNCIL AWARD RITCHARD
FOX, PROPERTY OWNER OF 112 NORTH STREET GROTON CT 06340,
THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MINOR FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT
GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED
DOLLARS AND ZERO CENTS (\$2500.00)**

WHEREAS, The City of Groton acknowledges the need for strategic investments to strengthen local businesses, attract private investment, and stimulate growth; and

WHEREAS, the City of Groton Economic Development Grant program is an appropriate method to incentivize qualified existing businesses, new businesses, and/or commercial property owners that attract and support private investment while also encouraging improvements that provide greater public benefits along commercial corridors; and

WHEREAS, the City of Groton Economic Development Grant Program is a reimbursement grant available for business soft costs associated with opening or expanding a business in the City of Groton and/or minor façade improvements costs associated with rehabilitating commercial facades for the purpose of improved placemaking to streetscape and store front designs, improved marketability, and positive visual impacts; and

WHEREAS, the City of Groton Economic Development Grant Program Policy provides appropriate procedures to manage the grant program and collaborate with commercial property/business owners; and

WHEREAS, Ritchard Fox, applied for a reimbursement of \$2500.00 under the minor façade improvement program for the replacement of awnings at 112-116 North Street; and

WHEREAS, the Economic Development Manager and Commission have reviewed and verified the eligibility of Ritchard Fox Minor Façade Improvement application; and

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WHEREAS, the Economic Development Commission presented their recommendation to City Council on October 24th 2022 to award Ritchard Fox, property owner of 112 North Street, the Minor Façade Improvement grant in the amount of \$2500.00.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOVLED, that the Mayor and Council award Ritchard Fox, property owner of 112 North Street Groton CT 06340, the Economic Development Minor Façade Improvement Grant in the amount of two thousand five hundred dollars and zero cents (\$2500.00)

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

R-22-10-127 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL AUTHORIZE AND APPROVE THE REPAIR OF THE TRANSMISSION ON THE FIRE DEPARTMENTS 2009 PIERCE PUMPER FROM STEWART AND STEVENSON POWER PRODUCTIONS LLC 300 SMITH STREET MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT FOR A COST OF THIRTEEN THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED EIGHTY NINE DOLLARS AND THIRTY ONE CENTS (\$13,289.31) TO BE PAID FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGET.

WHEREAS, the Fire Department has identified the need to replace the transmission in the 2009 Pierce pumper; and

WHEREAS, the pumper is a front line truck used daily; and

WHEREAS, the vender used is the official Allison transmission dealer;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council Authorize and Approve the repair of the transmission on the Fire Department 2009 Pierce pumper from Stewart and Stevenson Power Productions LLC 300 Smith Street Middletown, Connecticut for a cost of thirteen thousand two hundred eighty nine dollars and thirty one cents (\$13,289.31) to be paid from the Fire Department budget.

Motion to approve made by Councilor Carter, second by Deputy Mayor Depot.
All in favor. Motion carried. 5-0-0

X. ADJOURNMENT

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

Mayor Hedrick adjourned the meeting at 9:32 p.m.

11/7/22

I would request the Council vote to approve the resolution to hold City elections in May 2023 & add a question to the November 2023 ballot, in order to get the opinion of City voters as to their preference. Per the state public act, this option is available to municipalities, although the process is skewed against retaining May election by requiring a 3/4 vote by the council to approve rather than a simple majority. This is an issue that should be decided by the voters. If the change to November is allowed to occur simply by default, not only would it make the public hearing of 24 October meaningless, it would also send the message to the voters of the City that their opinions on the matter are irrelevant. This would not be a good precedent to set.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bryon S. Niemann
76 Allen St.
Groton, CT

11/7/22

November 7, 2022

City of Groton Mayor and Council meeting comments

Elizabeth Duarte

54 Cottage St., Groton

The Council knows how I feel about the change of election date for the City. I am not here to discuss that. What we are now needing to deal with is whether City residents have the right or not to vote on an issue affecting their community. Whether you want the election in May or November is ok. But not allowing people to vote on that is not ok. Out of the 369 people who signed the petition stating that they wanted the decision to be made by a vote of the electors, there were some who were new to voting. They took the time and interest to sign a petition about voting and now it appears that several councilors will deny them the right to vote. What do I say to Curtis who is 20 years old and has only voted in one election? I don't want to have to tell him that his elected officials are denying him the right to vote on an issue that was important enough for him to sign a petition. What do I tell Tamara who votes in Presidential elections but not in the midterm or municipal? She has shown an interest in civic government in her community and should be encouraged to participate by voting. I don't want to have to tell her that her elected officials are denying her the right to vote on an issue that was important enough for her to sign a petition. There is still time to do the right thing to allow this question to be put on the ballot in the next election. Please vote tonight to allow for the electors to vote on this issue. Thank you.

Dear City council

Michael Kane 51 Jupiter Point rd.

The Connecticut State legislature has chosen to have election day for the City of Groton in November. I strongly support this move. This makes sense for multiple reasons, including making voting more convenient, efficient, and fairer for all residents but especially for people who find getting to the polls difficult. This also makes City voting consistent with State, Town, and Federal elections. Please support this endeavor.

Thank You- Michael Kane

11/17/22

Dear City of Groton Councilors,

I am writing to strongly urge you to support shifting the date of City elections from May to the actual date of elections in the United States as specified federal law: that is the first Tuesday after the first Monday in the month of November.

Democracy depends on the participation of the people – *the demos* – literally “the common people” in Greek and the root word of our “democracy”. By holding municipal elections on a day in May apart from ALL other elections in Groton, the participation in that election by Groton’s citizens is reduced – thereby eroding the bedrock principles on which our democratic government rests and upon which its legitimacy is embedded.

All over the US, voting rights are threatened. This is at least in part why the state of Connecticut Legislature chose to move forward with this mandate. This will move forward without any action on behalf of the City Council. Please uphold our democracy by supporting a November election date. Doing this will allow the voice of more Groton residents to be heard and in addition, decrease the costs of administration.

Respectfully,

Dr. Syma A. Ebbin

51 Jupiter Pt Rd

Groton CT 06340

Theroux, Suzanne

From: Jacome, Edward
Sent: Monday, November 7, 2022 3:25 PM
To: Theroux, Suzanne
Subject: FW: Citizen Comments

Respectfully,
Edward Jacome
City of Groton Clerk

From: J.C. Ambroise <jcambroise@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 7, 2022 3:05 PM
To: Jacome, Edward <jacomee@cityofgroton-ct.gov>; Mayor <mayor@cityofgroton-ct.gov>
Subject: Citizen Comments

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] CAUTION: This email originated from an outside source. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you trust the sender and expected this message. Report all suspicious emails to GU – IT ServiceDesk immediately.

Good evening Mr. Mayor and Clerk,

I respectfully request these comments be read into the record at tonight's meeting. Also, please forward these comments to the city council. Thank you.

JC

Good evening Groton Town Councilors,

Transparency and accountability have been a consistent war cry by several members of this community. I am emailing you today to address some items that are lacking full transparency and accountability in our community that our residents should be aware of.

I support the decision made by both the city and town to hold Related Affordable in default. The residents of Branford should not be living in such deplorable conditions. It is my hope that the property management company solves the major issues in the housing complex with the support of city, town, state and federal advocacy.

The first item for clarification on is this. Since late May early June, councilors Bordelon and Bumgardner, both city residents, have communicated that they were an integral to supporting a group of Branford Manor residents in trying to form a "tenants union". My question is has this happened yet? To my knowledge it has not and I would like to ask what progress has been made to get this group

properly assembled. These residents are looking to them to do their part and follow through on your commitment.

Secondly, I would like to ask why there has been no disclosure statement made of the close connection that Councilor Bordelon has with the lawyer for some residents of Branford Manor? After a brief search of the Noank Community Services webpage it identifies both the lawyer Amity Arscott and Councilor Bordelon as board members. This is critical information that has been withheld from all of us.

I would also like to include Councilor Bordelon's spouse and RTM District 3 Ian Thomas on this theme of transparency and accountability. At last September's City Council meeting I witnessed him speaking at length with the attorney for some of the residents at Branford Manor. As the Mayor stated at the meeting to hold Related in default, we are seeing some town elected representatives actively working behind the scenes to cause possible financial harm to both town and most importantly the city. We all have a right to know what is going on behind closed doors.

I have also discovered that a local state legislator, that represents a portion of the city of Groton, works for the same law firm as the Branford residents counsel as well. I do not know if this information has been discussed or disclosed to Groton residents or the city or town council. I did pass along what I visually witnessed to Mayor Hedrick. Attached to my remarks are links to both websites. It is my hope this Mayor and city council begin to ask tough questions about this directly who it involves. Please give us the transparency we all deserve and ask them to please clarify what they are doing and does that conflict with the sworn oath they all took.

Board – Noank Community Support Services

Our Team | Embry, Neusner, Arscott & Shafner LLC | Groton, CT

JC Ambroise

169 Shennecossett Parkway

2022.11.07

GROTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

IAN THOMAS PUBLIC COMMENTS

1- SB 1202 is the bill that became the laws mandating this change or, at least, mandating that such municipalities have this conversation explicitly about when the elections should be held. It was passed in June of 2021. Any concerns about “secrecy” or “not being advised” or “only having 90 days” to consider this issue should be brought to the lap of the people most responsible for relaying legislative updates back to their constituent Municipalities. In this case, those two people would be State Senator Heather Somers and State Representative Joe De La Cruz. They were, ostensibly, part of these deliberations and, at some point, should have been aware that this change was being made and been sensitive enough to the concerns of this district that they would have brought awareness to the city government as soon as they heard of it being considered, and for sure should have done so after it passed.

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2- The 370-signature petition that was presented to the city council was an informal, unverified petition. While it is worthy of consideration, it should not be misconstrued to carry the same weight as a vetted and verified voter petition as required by municipal and state law to compel any sort of legislative action or referendum. Also, I have not seen the petition’s proposition, so it’s a little hard to decipher what people thought they were signing. Were they signing to encourage their councilors to retain the vote in May? Were they signing in support of putting the question to a ballot? The presenters of this petition seem to assert both propositions at the same time – yet, technically, the two propositions should have been presented to city electors as mutually exclusive options to avoid confusion for the signer.

3- To be clear: I am in favor of allowing the elections to shift to November, and the news of this law compelling the city to have this conversation was a pleasant surprise to me when I first learned of it this past summer. However, I can understand the concerns of those who are not in favor of the change or who are just not sure of the unintended effects it would have. However, I would advise caution at using terms such as “indifference”, “contempt” or other such similar terms when describing councilors who are considering allowing this change, as it disparages their character AND it willfully disregards the fact that those councilors are, in fact, listening to the many residents and voters who are in favor of the November date. Which, during the October 24th public hearing on the matter, was roughly an even split in between pro & con: 11-14, respectively.

4- While I am in favor of allowing the change to November to happen now, I also acknowledge the fact that it would be more comprehensive to hold a city-wide vote with this issue as a ballot question. However, as it stands, there is no guarantee that any particular future council will abide by any such vote, since the law will only honor whatever the municipal legislature votes to do, not the residents. I can appreciate the intent of the resolution on the floor tonight, as it is attempting to make that guarantee.

However, it is my understanding that resolutions simply do not carry the same legal weight as an ordinance or charter change. An ordinance or charter change would be the correct mechanism by which we could compel any future council to honor the intent of this resolution with corresponding action. However, an ordinance or charter change takes more time and effort to draft, review, revise, present for a public hearing and then vote to pass or reject.

These are the only two options are the only ones that could require a council to adhere to the outcome of a referendum vote on this matter AND could require a referendum vote in order to direct any possible change by any future council. Furthermore, to be blunt, even an ordinance is a little weak, as it could be undone with only a public hearing and council vote. The only mechanism that could NOT be easily undone by any future council would be a charter change.

5- This non-binding draft resolution can only require that the city council elected in May 2023 to *consider* putting the May v. November question on the ballot in

November of 2023. Even if this did occur as intended, this would mean the voters would be asked to decide on an issue where there is incomplete information. All the data we have on voters' participation in May vs November, along with the process of running city-specific ballots in districts 2 & 3 during a town-wide election, is largely theoretical and fraught with statistical issues.

There is no simple way to account for city voters that ONLY vote in Groton City Elections in May, not bothering to show up for Groton Town Elections in November because they either don't know that they can participate or simply don't care to. Conversely, there are city voters who are not firmly steeped in local politics and don't realize that there are elections in May, so they ONLY show up in November, perhaps thinking all those signs they saw in the spring was some kind of primary.

Also, we've NOT heard any nightmare experiential accounts from poll workers or the registrar of voters regarding the logistics of handling city-specific ballots any time a city concern had to be inserted into ballots for D2 or D3 during a town-wide election. Has there been city-specific ballots run in D2 & D3 during a town-wide election in November? If so, how was it done and how did it go?

If the November change is allowed to occur, it would guarantee that ALL city voters would show up for ALL municipal elections, for both the city AND town representatives. And, it would ensure that we gain the experiential, logistical data regarding the handling of city-specific ballots during a town-wide election. This is the ONLY way we could compile real comparative, experiential and logistical data, with which we could make a better-informed decision on a future ballot question or referendum.

6- As per the latest attorney's opinion, which was discussed during the October City Council Committee of the Whole that followed the public hearing, the election date is reversible. Similar to the thresholds that have been established by the law, the current understanding is that, even after a change to November is instituted, any future council could hold a vote amongst themselves to move back to May, if they so choose to do so. This would require 5-1 in favor required to stay/shift to May and, to stay/shift to November, only a simple majority is required: a 4-2 vote -- or 4-3, if the council vote is tied and the mayor has to break it. That means, between now and August 1, 2023 (allowing for the 90-day deadline to assign ballot items for a November), there is time for the mayor and city council

to draft an ordinance or, preferably, a charter change that would be legally binding. Ideally, such a document would require any future council to adhere to the outcome of the referendum vote AND require a referendum vote in order to direct the mayor and council regarding any possible election date change by any future council.

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7- Between now and August 1, 2023, there would also be every opportunity for those so inclined to circulate a verified voter petition with a clearly established proposition to put the question to a ballot then. As it stands, now, we have the council that ran unopposed last cycle and it is up to them to vote their conscience on the matter. One way or the other, this will be an active political issue for the next couple of election cycles, for sure. Perhaps now, we will see some competing candidacies beyond just the mayor's office.

For all the aforementioned reasons and rationale, I encourage the city council to vote NO tonight.

If the council is genuinely interested in having the will of city electorate fully and officially considered as the driving force on this issue, then this resolution needs to be voted and fundamentally reconsidered.

If we, as a city, are serious about having the electorate determine the election date, then we must reconsider the whole situation and present the issue to the public with the full weight and binding legal force of a charter change.

To allow for all due diligence, due process, public hearings and procedural votes, the charter change should be on the ballot in November of 2023, along with all city and relevant town candidates, and written such that the corresponding binding referendum vote to determine future elections dates would be on the ballot in November of 2025. It should also include a provision that the referendum could be revisited, as per the established process of a verified and vetted voter petition that successfully acquires the signatures of the established threshold of registered voters.

Phone Calls Received regarding the November/May Election:

11/1/22 Joyce Hedrick – She asked the council to allow electors to vote for when the election will be held.

11/3/22 Bill and Annie Scarano – Asked that the Election stay in May

Theroux, Suzanne

From: Theroux, Suzanne
Sent: Friday, November 4, 2022 2:18 PM
To: Hedrick, Keith
Subject: Support for the May Elections

Mayor,

I received a call from Fritz (Hubert) Poppe from 21 Westwood Drive on behalf of himself and his family, Martha, James, and Mark stating that they support keeping the elections in May.

I will bring this email to the councilors on Monday.

Sue

Suzanne Theroux
Executive Administrator

MAYOR'S OFFICE

295 Meridian Street

Groton, CT 06340

Office: 860.446.4103

Cell: 860.287.4464

therouxs@cityofgroton-ct.gov

CITY OF GROTON
C O N N E C T I C U T

Theroux, Suzanne

From: sinkowskisa@gmail.com
Sent: Friday, November 4, 2022 11:26 AM
To: Mayor; Depot, Gweneviere; Carter, Rashaad; McCabe, Lisa; Norris, Paul; Piazza, Christine; Sheffield, Stephen
Cc: James Sinkowski
Subject: City of Groton Election Date

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To the Mayor of Groton City and Groton City Councilors,

We strongly support retaining the May City of Groton election date and hope you will consider this in your actions going forward.

We are longtime City of Groton residents who care deeply about our home and city.

We sincerely appreciate your efforts in representing us.

Thank you,

James & Sandra Sinkowski
802 Shennecossett Road
Groton, CT 06340

Theroux, Suzanne

From: Lauren Santacroce - Lyon <ljlyon1@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 3, 2022 7:58 PM
To: Mayor
Subject: May Voting

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Good Evening Mayor Hendrick,

My name is Lauren Santacroce - Lyon and I reside at 36 Chapman St .

I am reaching out to you to express my support to keep the elections in the City of Groton in the month of May.

As a life long resident of the City , I hope that you support my voice and vote in favor of keeping our elections May .

Respectfully,
Lauren Santacroce- Lyon
36 Chapman St
Groton, CT 06340

Theroux, Suzanne

From: Carol Hessler <chummie11@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 4, 2022 3:36 PM
To: Mayor
Subject: Please forward to CitynCouncilors

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We strongly believe that the City of Groton election date should remain in May. The date should not be changed to Nov.

Please vote on Nov 7/to allow the citizens of the City of Groton to have their voices heard regarding their voting day.

Ken and Carol Hessler 25 Shennecossett Parkway Groton, Ct 06340

Sent from Outlook

Theroux, Suzanne

From: Stephen Artale <s.e.artale@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 6, 2022 12:19 PM
To: Mayor
Subject: Keep May Elections Please!

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Mr. Mayor,

I've heard increased nonsense of bucking our traditional city election in May and consolidating in November with the town. I also have heard that nearly 370 people's voices are being ignored on this matter, one of which was mine when I signed the petition to keep the election in November. We in the city should be doing everything in our power to distance ourselves from the Town, including that election.

Please keep our city election in May and separate from the town. This allows more focus on the city candidates themselves, instead of lumping this in with those "top vote getters" who go door to door with their false promises and lies. Moving the election no doubt plays into one of the the latest schemes from the so called "grass roots" group who in all actuality are spineless cowards with ulterior motives.

Thank you,

Steve Artale
Groton City

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"How dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge, and how much happier that man is who believes his native town to be the world, than he who aspires to become greater than his nature will allow."

Theroux, Suzanne

From: jimstreetr@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, November 6, 2022 5:54 PM
To: Depot, Gweneviere; Carter, Rashaad; McCabe, Lisa; Norris, Paul; Piazza, Christine; Sheffield, Stephen
Cc: Mayor; Jacome, Edward
Subject: Changing the City of Groton's Election Date

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To All City of Groton Councilors:

Unfortunately, I will be out of state beginning tomorrow and will be unable to attend the City of Groton's Council meeting tomorrow night, during which I wanted to express the following to you, the Councilors, during Citizens Petition portion of your agenda.

On October 24, I made comments during a public hearing concerning changing the date of the City of Groton's elections from the month of May to the month of November.

The Council members were presented a petition, signed by close to 370 residents and voters of the City, who requested and recommended that the City Council vote to keep the voting date in the month of May and not change it to November. These residents and voters also recommended, if you were to further consider changing the voting date to November, that the question be placed on a voting ballot at a future election so they, the electors, could have the opportunity to make the decision on changing the date.

After the public hearing, the Council discussed the matter and during that discussion it was obvious that two or three Councilors were completely *ignoring the requests made by those signing the petition*. In doing so, those Councilors reflected a complete disregard toward not only the residents and voters who has signed the petition, but all other City voters and residents who desire to have a say in this matter. Those two or three Councilors displayed a great deal of arrogance toward those that elected them and tried to justify their decision through their own personal, self-opinionated reasoning. That is unacceptable and a complete slap in the face to the residents and voters in the City of Groton.

I highly recommend that you *let us, the electors*, make the decision on such an extremely important and long impacting issue.

Keep in mind – the electors of our great City not ignorant and will hold you accountable for your actions.

Respectfully

James L. Streeter

64 Pleasant Street

Groton, CT 06340

Theroux, Suzanne

From: Irma Streeter <istreeter@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 6, 2022 6:41 PM
To: Depot, Gweneviere; Carter, Rashaad; McCabe, Lisa; Norris, Paul; Piazza, Christine; Sheffield, Stephen
Cc: Mayor; Jacome, Edward
Subject: Change in City of Groton election schedule

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I am writing this letter in response to the action of moving City of Groton elections from May to November.

My verbal request made to the Council at the public hearing held on October 27th appeared to be ignored, along with the majority of other City residents who attended and spoke against the move.

Please reconsider and allow residents to have a say in this matter. This final determination should not be made by just a few Councilors, as will be required for a super-majority vote.

In recent years voters and candidates have promoted open government. It certainly appears that some of the Councilors are basing their decisions on preconceived and personal opinions. The need to be more open minded and listen to the City residents and act in their best interests.

Please vote NOT to accept the legislation by the State and keep our May elections intact.

Irma Streeter
City of Groton resident and voter

Theroux, Suzanne

From: Melody Nadeau <melnadeau5@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 6, 2022 8:28 PM
To: Mayor
Subject: May voting

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Good Evening Keith,

This is Melody Nadeau, and I reside at 129 Blueberry Hill Rd.

I am reaching out to you to express my support to keep our elections in the City of Groton in May.

As a long time resident, I hope that you support my voice and vote in favor of keeping our elections in May.

Respectfully,

Melody Nadeau 129 Blueberry Hill Rd.

Dear Mayor Hedrick and Members of the City Council,

I'm not a City resident. I'm writing because at your public hearing someone said, "Maybe we should ask the TOWN Democratic and Republican committees what they think about changing the date of the City elections." That person understood that changing the date would impact town elections as well.

I'm vice- chair of the Groton Town Democratic Committee. I've been Chair, and Campaign Chair and have been involved for twenty some years now in municipal elections in Groton.

Why ask or listen to the Town and City committees? The political parties? Because, if you know how local elections are conducted you know that "we", the local residents who volunteer our time, to recruit candidates and organize campaigns are the people who make local elections happen. We do the legwork.

The simple fact that you had the leadership of both "parties" in the City advocate for keeping City elections in May should speak volumes to you. How often do the two parties collaborate on anything?

These are the people who make your elections happen. They know the nitty gritty, detail work, the many months of dedicated effort it takes, to have vibrant elections.

The same is true in the Town. And while I can't speak for the GDTC, I can speak as one very active leader, and implore you, "Please don't change City elections to November!" Why? You will make our job so much harder, if not impossible.

Many of the volunteers in the City also volunteer for Town elections, and vice versa. There aren't enough volunteers to organize two elections/campaigns at the same time.

As it is, it's challenging to recruit enough candidates to run. In the Town election we need to recruit 50 candidates to run a full slate for RTM, Town Council and Board of Education. FIFTY!!! Every year we struggle to find enough qualified candidates. For the last two elections, the Republicans did not run full slates. And previously, we Democrats often didn't run full slates.

One approach both parties have used is: if someone ran for office in the City, but wasn't elected, they might be asked if they wanted to run for a Town office. Or if a City resident ran for a Town office and wasn't elected, they might become a candidate for a City election. If you conduct both elections on the same day, that option is eliminated, unless you want someone to run for City Council and Town Council on the same day! That scenario would be so confusing! And since the person can't serve in both offices, creates a domino effect of how to fill the resulting vacancy.

Please don't complicate what is already very difficult and complicated. Please don't make it even harder.

Some people say having the City election in November would increase "accessibility". I don't understand. What I heard was: City voters turn out in higher numbers for the May election than they do for the November town election. To me that says: May elections work! You get more voter participation. Moving it to November won't increase voter participation/access.

Then I heard arguments about convenience. Having one election might be more convenient if there was something "inconvenient " about local elections like long lines or delays. But, we don't have that. For local elections, people are able to get in and out in just a few minutes. If a son has to drive mom or

grandpa, probably they (or someone) has to take mom to the grocery store or to doctors appointments. They can add a quick trip to vote. It will take 5 minutes. It's not inconvenient.

And someone mentioned having to take a day off from work each time they have to vote. Why? The polls are open 6am-8pm. And since there's no line, no wait, they can scoot in and out and be on their way before or after work. They can also vote absentee, or "absentee in person" if they're not able to get to the polls on election day.

I don't live in the City. You could say the change won't affect me. But as someone who devotes hours a month, and many months of the year, to the work of ensuring we have vibrant elections in Groton, with maximum choices for voters (full slates) and robust election related activity to ensure high voter participation and minimize voter confusion---having two elections on the same day offers no benefit I can see and adds layers of difficulties.

Though I don't live and vote in the City, I see no advantage to City voters in moving the election to November. You have high voter turnout. Your own citizens, volunteers, from both "parties", who are the backbone of municipal election activity agree!!! Please listen to them. If you change the City election to November I predict increased confusion, lower voter turnout, and a negative impact on Town elections, which are City elections too!

Respectfully,

Natalie Burfoot Billing

Theroux, Suzanne

From: Stacy Popp <stacy_popp@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 7, 2022 10:43 AM
To: Mayor
Subject: Pleas pass on to all councilors/Voting change

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Dear Councilors,

I would like to encourage your to vote to keep the election in May. I believe that the question of changing the date of our elections can be put on the ballot for a City wide vote.. This gives the opportunity for the residents of the City of Groton to have a voice on this important matter. Please do not ignore the city residents who signed the petition.

Thank you for you time,
Stacy Popp
41 Cottage Street

Good evening!

My name is Jackie Massett, I live at 78 Brandegee Ave. I cannot be with you in person, so I have asked City Clerk Jacome to read this into the permanent record.

As someone who worked at the polls in various positions over the years, as someone who took the exam for election moderator, passed and was a certified moderator and finally, I was married to a registrar here in Groton, I feel confident that I am reasonably qualified to speak to the issue of changing our city election to November, at the same time as the Town election.

Unfortunately, I feel that some of the people who spoke at the public hearing obviously did not do their due diligence. They used the word "disenfranchised" as their main argument for changing the date for the City election to November. Being "inconvenienced" is not the same as being "disenfranchised". The statutes that govern our election process in the state of Connecticut ensure that anyone who wants to vote can vote. While I cannot speak for other municipalities, in Groton, town and city, one disenfranchises themselves by choosing not to vote. To instill needless fear in folks, to get your way, is wrong. The lady who stated that she doesn't like taking two days off to vote, obviously does not realize that she can vote by absentee ballot, sitting at her kitchen table and she can drop the completed ballot in the drop box at the municipal building, for a city election or in the drop box at town hall for a town election. Folks who need a ride to their polling place can just call either party's headquarters and someone will come to give you a ride. An un-official petition signed by 370 residents, over 10% of the city population, who you represent, asking that you allow this to go before the citizens of the city, through a referendum. I suggest that in the time before the referendum that you arrange some information sessions in order that citizens can make an informed decision.

Thank you

Hedrick, Keith

From: Stacey Burt <jsburt2232@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 7, 2022 10:15 AM
To: Hedrick, Keith
Subject: Timing of City Elections

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Dear Mayor Hedrick,

I am writing to add my voice to those that support keeping the City of Groton elections in May rather than November. I agree with others that feel combining the city elections with state and national elections in November would cause unnecessary confusion. Please do not vote to change a system that is working effectively just because of a small group of residents. I believe the majority of city residents do not have a problem with the May elections and as a result the change to November is a needless waist of time and energy. Please pass my comments along to the rest of the city council.

Thank you for all of your hard work,
Stacey Burt
141 Shennecossett Parkway

Theroux, Suzanne

From: Megan Peters <meg.lathrop1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 2, 2022 4:22 PM
To: Mayor; Depot, Gweneviere; Carter, Rashaad; McCabe, Lisa; Norris, Paul; Sheffield, Stephen; Piazza, Christine; Jacome, Edward
Subject: May Election Date *PLEASE READ*

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Dear City Councilors and Mayor,

A simple definition of the word democracy is "a way of governing which depends on the will of the people ". The way we determine "the will of the people" is through our elections, which in this case, the timing is what is in question. If you truly believe in democracy, then I urge you to let this decision be the will of the people by adding a question to the ballot to allow for the people to decide on what we would prefer for our election date. This would be the most fair and accurate way of knowing how your constituents, the voter's, would like to proceed with this change. I urge you to vote today to keep our election in May, and let the people decide whether we would like it moved to November, let our voices be heard. As City Councilors you are to be the voices of the people when our voices cannot be heard, but in this case they can, allow us to vote by adding the question to the ballot for us to decide. I would like to leave you with this.....if this is brought to a vote today and six City Councilors make the decision on behalf of all the people, do you feel that true democracy was demonstrated here?

Thank you,
Megan Peters

Hedrick, Keith

From: John Burt <jsburt2232@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 12:22 PM
To: Hedrick, Keith; Depot, Gweneviere; Carter, Rashaad; McCabe, Lisa; Piazza, Christine; Sheffield, Stephen; Norris, Paul
Subject: May City Election

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] CAUTION: This email originated from an outside source. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you trust the sender and expected this message. Report all suspicious emails to GU – IT ServiceDesk immediately.

To the esteemed Mayor Hedrick, Deputy-Mayor Depot, and City Councilors:

I am writing in support of keeping the City election in May rather than allowing it to move to November. I had planned on speaking at next week's public comments, but I unfortunately have a conflicting meeting.

I agree with comments that I have read and heard from the majority of other residents concerning the confusion that could be caused by changing the election to November. Further, I am concerned that by moving the election, the information deluge of ads/information about state and national candidates will drown out information about local candidates, thereby disenfranchising City residents. I also urge you to listen to the residents that have reached out to you, rather than attempting to guess what others may want who have not. I request you think carefully on the impacts of allowing the election to move to November and vote to keep it in May.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and for your service to our community.

John Burt
141 Shennecossett Parkway
Groton, CT 06340

Hedrick, Keith

From: sam spano <syclonesam@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 12:43 PM
To: Hedrick, Keith
Subject: City Elections -May

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To: Keith Hedrick- Mayor

cc Gweneviere Depot- Deputy Mayor

Dear Mayor Hedrick,

As a longtime city resident I am writing you to state that I would like to see City Elections remain in May as they have been for more than 100 years. Watching the televised public forum on 10/24/22, I have heard no good argument presented to accept the state mandated change to November.

The fact that there was a signed petition presented representing 375 voters requesting to keep the election in May speaks clearly that very many voters agree with me on this issue. This petition was signed by a sizable percentage of the registered voter population and cannot and should not be ignored.

If the decision is made to put this issue on the ballot for a referendum then the only logical recourse is to keep the 2023 election in May and put the referendum on that same May ballot. It makes no sense what so ever to vote in a change to November and then be faced with the task and confusion of moving the election back to May again.

Sincerely,

Sam Spano
300 Thames St
Groton CT 06340