



# City of Groton, Connecticut

## Mayor and Council Meeting

### Minutes

Monday, January 4, 2021

City Municipal Building  
295 Meridian Street  
Groton, CT 06340

Zoom

7:30 PM

In response to State of Connecticut Executive Order No. 7B "Protection of Public Health and Safety During Covid-19 Pandemic and Response – Further Suspension or Modification of Statutes", dated March 14, 2020, suspending in-person open meeting requirements, all public meetings will be closed to the public at this time. Public Meetings will be available on Groton Municipal Television Channel 2 in real time or via Zoom at: <https://zoom.us/j/93436576393?pwd=ci9lRHRGOEhXcyttWktkaUZrakxNUT09> or with the Meeting ID 934 3657 6393 and Passcode: 939333

Mayor Hedrick called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

#### **I. ROLL CALL**

Present: Mayor Keith Hedrick, Deputy Mayor Gweneviere Depot, Councilors Lisa McCabe, Reginald Stanford, Stephen Sheffield and Rashaad Carter

Also in attendance: Chief Michael Spellman, City Clerk Deb Patrick, Economic Development Specialist Cierra Patrick and Mayor's Admin Jill Rusk

Excused: Finance Director Ron Yuhas and Councilor Ortiz

#### **II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

Led by Mayor Hedrick

Mayor Hedrick asked for a motion to suspend the rules to move resolution R-21-1-1 up on the agenda to follow Recognition, Awards and Memorials.

Deputy Mayor Depot moved Councilor Sheffield seconded a motion to suspend the rules to move resolution R-21-1-1 up on the agenda to follow Recognition, Awards and Memorials.  
Motion carried.

**R-21-1-1 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF VIDYADHAR NOWDURI AS A PROBATIONARY POLICE OFFICER GRADE "D", IN THE CITY OF GROTON POLICE DEPARTMENT, WAIVE THE RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT AND THAT THE APPOINTMENT BE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 4, 2021**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Groton Police Department has patrol officer vacancies in the Police Department; and

**WHEREAS**, Vidyadhar Nowduri was selected as an applicant from a Police Officer candidacy list established by the Law Enforcement Council of Southeastern Connecticut; and

**WHEREAS**, Vidyadhar Nowduri has passed an oral interview panel, the background investigation, polygraph, physical agility, psychological and medical testing; and

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**WHEREAS**, Vidyadhar Nowduri has met the required entry standards established by the Police Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) Council, for admission to the Police Academy, and it would be beneficial for the City of Groton to hire him; and

**WHEREAS**, Vidyadhar Nowduri desires to serve as a patrol officer with the City of Groton Police Department;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Mayor and Council approve the appointment of Vidyadhar Nowduri as a probationary Police Officer Grade "D", in the City of Groton Police Department, waive the residency requirement and that the appointment be effective January 4, 2021.

Councilor McCabe moved Deputy Mayor Depot seconded a motion to approve R-21-1-1.

Chief Spellman reported that Mr. Nowduri is a 27 year old Waterford resident. He is a Corporal in the US Marine Corp and served in Okinawa Japan. He is proficient in numerous weapons systems from his time in the Marine Corp. He was born in the Uktar Pradesh of India. He graduated from Victoria Park School in Toronto and earned his Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Temple University. Mr. Nowduri is fluent in English and Hindu and speaks the Telugu dialect.

Deputy Mayor Depot welcomed Mr. Nowduri and thanked him for his serve. Deputy Mayor Depot asked when Mr. Nowduri would return from the Police Academy and more information regarding the waiving of the residency requirement. Chief Spellman reported that the academy typically is 3 months and that Mr. Nowduri lives in Waterford so there would be no extensive travel requirements.

Councilor McCabe questioned the time between the effective date of January 4, 2021 and when Mr. Nowduri would be attending the academy. Chief Spellman reported that Mr. Nowduri would go to the academy on January 8, 2021 and would do administrative work until then.

Motion carried.

City Clerk Deb Patrick administered the oath to Officer Nowduri.  
Alicia presented him with his badge and patches.

**III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS AND MEMORIALS**

None

**IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZEN'S PETITIONS/COMMENTS**

None

**V. RESPOND TO CITIZEN'S PETITIONS/COMMENTS**

None

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VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Deputy Mayor Depot moved and Councilor McCabe seconded a motion to approve the December 7, 2020 Mayor and Council Meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Deputy Mayor Depot moved and Councilor Sheffield seconded a motion to approve the December 28, 2020 Committee of the Whole Meeting minutes. Motion carried.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Councilor McCabe: Attended the Pfizer Holiday Lights Event. Thanked Pfizer and reported that they did a phenomenal job.

Councilor Stanford: No report

Deputy Mayor Depot: No report

Councilor Sheffield: Recognized Councilor Carter with the recent article highlighting his life and career in The Day and for all Councilor Carter has accomplished over the years.

Councilor Carter: Thanked Councilor Sheffield for the recognition.

Mayor Hedrick: Shared Councilor's McCabe's sentiment regarding Pfizer's Holiday Lights Event. The City has worked to build community focused relationships with Pfizer and EB. Groton Utilities hosted a public hearing earlier today regarding electric rate changes. The Farmer's Market is this Saturday, January 9 from 10am-1pm. COVID vaccines have started in the area. Mayor Hedrick reminded all to not let their guard down – wear a mask, maintain social distance and wash your hands.

VIII. COMMITTEE REFERRALS

Mural – The City of Groton received an email recommending a mural on the train bridge on Fairview Avenue. This was referred to the Economic Development and Community Development Committees.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

**R-21-1-2 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF ERIC JAY, 30 HILLSIDE AVENUE, GROTON, CONNECTICUT, AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER, EASTERN POINT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION, TERM TO EXPIRE ON FEBRUARY 1, 2022**

**WHEREAS,** a vacancy exists for an alternate member, Eastern Point Historic District Commission; and

**WHEREAS,** Ordinance #75, Section 3(e) states, "Appointments shall be made by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council"; and

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**WHEREAS**, Eric Jay, 30 Hillside Avenue, Groton, Connecticut, desires to serve as an alternate member, Eastern Point Historic Commission;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Mayor and Council approve the appointment of Eric Jay, 30 Hillside Avenue, Groton, Connecticut as an alternate member, Eastern Point Historic District Commission, term to expire on February 1, 2022.

Councilor Stanford moved Deputy Mayor Depot seconded a motion to approve R-21-1-2.  
Motion carried.

**R-21-1-3 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL ACCEPT AND APPROVE THE RETIREMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS FOREMAN TIM UMRYSZ FROM THE CITY OF GROTON PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 11, 2021**

**WHEREAS**, Public Works Foreman Tim Umrysz has informed the Mayor of his intent to leave his position with the City of Groton Public Works Department by reason of retirement effective February 11, 2021;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Mayor and Council accept and approve the retirement of Public Works Foreman Tim Umrysz from the City of Groton Public Works Department effective February 11, 2021.

Deputy Mayor Depot moved Councilor Sheffield seconded a motion to approve R-21-1-3.  
Motion carried.

**R-21-1-4 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL APPROVE THE PLACEMENT OF A MEMORIAL BENCH AT EASTERN POINT BEACH IN HONOR OF RUTH AND ALLEN B. SLONSKI SR IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCEDURES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF BEACH AND PARKS MEMORIALS, AS APPROVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

**WHEREAS**, Nancy Slonski Howard has requested that a memorial bench be placed at Eastern Point Beach to honor her parent's memory; and

**WHEREAS**, Allen B. Slonski Sr was a sailor stationed in Groton for 19 of his 20 years of service and many fond memories were made as Ruth would bring their seven children out to Eastern Point Beach to watch the submarines go past; and

**WHEREAS**, the request was made to the Director of Parks and Recreation and has received the approval of the Beach and Parks Committee;

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**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Mayor and Council approve the request for a memorial bench at Eastern Point Beach in honor of Ruth and Allen B. Slonski Sr in accordance with the Procedures for Consideration of Beach and Parks Memorials, as approved by the Mayor and Council.

Councilor Sheffield moved Deputy Mayor Depot seconded a motion to approve R-21-1-4. Motion carried.

**R-21-1-5 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL AUTHORIZE GROTON UTILITIES MANAGEMENT TO ENTER INTO A MASTER SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH WRIGHT - PIERCE ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING FIRM, 169 MAIN STREET, 700 PLAZA MIDDLESEX, MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT FOR A FIVE (5) YEAR CONTRACT, AND THAT THIS COMPANY BE RECOGNIZED AS A PREFERRED VENDOR TO AVOID FUTURE BID PROCESS AT AGREED ON PRICES FOR SERVICES, WITH CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO APPROVAL OF FUTURE PURCHASE ORDER AMOUNTS PER POLICY AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE PURCHASING PRACTICES OF GROTON UTILITIES AND THE DIRECTOR OF UTILITIES BE AUTHORIZED TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT**

**WHEREAS**, Management solicited bids for the Master Service Agreement and four (4) bids were received; and recommends entering into agreement with Wright – Pierce as this firm offers the best price with full scope capability; and

**WHEREAS**, entering into a Master Service Agreement for mostly Water and Wastewater services allows for a long term contract engineering services to do projects cost effectively; and

**WHEREAS**, entering into a Master Service Agreement gives Management the ability to receive consulting services just in time; and

**WHEREAS**, at its regular meeting on December 16,2020, The Groton Utility Commission / Water Pollution Control Authority authorized Groton Utilities Management to enter into a Master Service Agreement with Wright - Pierce, 169 Main Street, 700 Plaza Middlesex, Middletown, Connecticut for a for a five (5) year contract, and that this company be recognized as a preferred vendor to avoid future bid process at agreed on prices for services, with consideration given to approval of future purchase order amounts per Policy No. 1004 Policy and Procedures Governing the Purchasing Practices of Groton Utilities, and furthermore that the City Council be apprised of this action with the recommendation that it concur and the Director of Utilities be authorized to execute the agreement

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Mayor and Council authorize Groton Utilities Management to enter into a Master Service Agreement with Wright - Pierce, 169 Main Street, 700 Plaza Middlesex, Middletown, Connecticut for a five (5) year contract, and that this company be recognized as a preferred vendor to avoid future bid process at agreed on prices for

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services, with consideration given to approval of future purchase order amounts per Policy No. 1004 Policy and Procedures Governing the Purchasing Practices of Groton Utilities, and the Director of Utilities be authorized to execute the agreement.

Councilor Carter moved Deputy Mayor Depot seconded a motion to approve R-21-1-5. Deputy Mayor Depot clarified that this resolution, recognizing Wright - Pierce as a preferred vendor, does not approve waiving the requirement of Groton Utilities to seek approval from the Council for spending over the allotted amount. This allows Groton Utilities the ability to agree on prices with this company, so that the City can possibly get lower standardized prices and have a committed vendor for certain things. Mayor Hedrick reported that this is correct. It doesn't circumvent the requirement to approve all spending over \$10,000 on unbudgeted items and \$50,000 on budgeted. Motion carried.

**R-21-1-6 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL AUTHORIZE GROTON UTILITIES MANAGEMENT TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER TO WOODARD & CURRAN, 35 BROAD STREET, ONE WEYBOSSET HILL, FLOOR 7, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED SIXTY NINE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$69,000.00) FOR THE SCADA SYSTEM UPGRADES AT THE WATER TREATMENT PLANT TO BE PAID FROM FUNDS AVAILABLE IN THE 2020-2021 WATER DIVISION APPROVED NON-BONDED CAPITAL BUDGET, AND THAT THE CITY COUNCIL BE APPRISED OF THIS ACTION WITH THE RECOMMENDATION THAT IT CONCUR**

**WHEREAS**, the SCADA system communicates to all pump stations; and

**WHEREAS**, the existing SCADA system is outdated and needs to be replaced; and

**WHEREAS**, Woodard & Curran is a Sole Source Provider and has provided a Memorandum of Agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, at its Regular Meeting on December 16, 2020, the GUC-WPCA authorized Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to Woodard & Curran, 35 Broad Street, One Weybosset Hill, Floor 7, Providence, Rhode Island for an amount not to exceed Sixty Nine Thousand Dollars and No Cents (\$69,000.00) for the SCADA System Upgrades at the Water Treatment Plant to be paid from funds available in the 2020-2021 Water Division Approved Non-Bonded Capital Budget, and that the City Council be apprised of this action with the recommendation that it concur;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Mayor and Council authorize Groton Utilities Management to issue a purchase order to Woodard & Curran, 35 Broad Street, One Weybosset Hill, Floor 7, Providence, Rhode Island for an amount not to exceed Sixty Nine Thousand Dollars and No Cents (\$69,000.00) for the SCADA System Upgrades at the Water Treatment Plant to be paid from funds available in the 2020-2021 Water Division Approved Non-Bonded Capital Budget.

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Councilor McCabe moved Councilor Stanford seconded a motion to approve R-21-1-6.  
Motion carried.

**R-21-1-7 RESOLUTION THAT THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL ACCEPT THE 2020 PRESERVATION CT VIBRANT COMMUNITIES GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND ZERO CENTS (\$25,000.00) TO FUND CONSULTANT SERVICES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLACEMAKING DESIGNS AN IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FOR A SUMMER-FALL 2021 INSTALLMENT IN THAMES CENTER**

**WHEREAS**, The Department of Planning and Economic Development will collaborate with community stakeholders in a series of visioning exercises designed to identify and be implemented as temporary improvements to streetscape and public space within Thames Center. Department staff is committed to developing placemaking designs and implementation plans for a Summer-Fall 2021 installment; and

**WHEREAS**, Thames Center is the span of Thames Street between Broad Street and Baker Avenue in the City of Groton. Historic, economic, and generational dynamics have caused Thames Center to suffer disinvestment. Key concerns include the number of vacant buildings, underutilized space, consideration of climate change and sea level rise, parking, through traffic safety, and walkability/ bikeability; and

**WHEREAS**, The 2019 Thames Street Promenade Report, identifies strategies to revitalize Thames Street and maintain its viability. Strategies include leveraging Thames Center by maximizing its value as a walkable historic coastal village; and enhancing the waterfront to become an amenity that will draw people to Thames Street; and

**WHEREAS**, The 2019 Plan of Conservation and Development, Section 2.3 Improve Placemaking, recommends that the City of Groton use placemaking strategies to project a memorable image. The plan emphasizes the importance of promoting community assets and activities that contribute to the overall “sense of place”; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2020 Groton Economic Development Strategy’s overarching goals include shaping Groton’s pockets of economic activity into places where people connect. The strategy looks at the relationship between people and place, encouraging the empowerment of communities to create a future that realizes the full social, economic, and cultural potential of the City; and

**WHEREAS**, the City applied for, and was awarded, a Vibrant Communities Grant from Preservation CT to undertake community visioning to revitalize the Thames Street neighborhood, part of the Groton Bank National Register District; and

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**WHEREAS**, the acceptance of the Grant requires a match of \$5,000.00 which will be attained through the Economic Development FY 2021 Operating Budget and Economic Development Special Revenue Fund; and

**WHEREAS**, the Grant Award will be utilized for consultant services to: engage community stakeholders in visioning exercises to ensure that placemaking designs are responsive to community needs; Develop placemaking designs for streetscape and underutilized space in Thames Center; Design vibrant, welcoming public spaces that complement the diversity of the areas land uses; Propose pilot projects/ pop-up events that can be executed and tested to verify criteria for placemaking goals; Develop an action plan and project budget for Summer-Fall 2021 implementation;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Mayor and Council accept the 2020 Preservation CT Vibrant Communities Grant in the amount of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars and Zero Cents (\$25,000.00) to fund consultant services in the development of placemaking designs an implementation plans for a Summer-Fall 2021 installment in Thames Center.

Councilor Stanford moved Deputy Mayor Depot seconded a motion to approve R-21-1-7.  
Motion carried.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

Council McCabe moved and Councilor Stanford seconded the motion to adjourn. Motion carried.

Mayor Hedrick adjourned the meeting.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

  
Jill Rusk  
City of Groton