



City of Groton, Connecticut

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

**Committee of the Whole
Minutes**

Council Chambers

6:00 PM

Monday, November 25, 2019

Mayor Hedrick called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Keith Hedrick, Deputy Mayor Jamal Beckford, Councilors Lisa McCabe, Reginald Stanford, Gweneviere Depot, Minerva Ortiz (arrived at 6:08), Rashaad Carter, Finance Director Ron Yuhas and City Clerk Debra Patrick

II. REFERRALS:

**REFERRAL ITEM # 655 DEPARTMENT PRESENTATIONS
POQUONNOCK ROAD RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT**

Mayor Hedrick gave the following state on the project:

The purpose of the roadway and sidewalk reconstruction project is to rectify flaws in the existing condition of the subgrade, to adjust the roadway profile so that the functionality of the Clarence B. Sharp overpass is improved and to improve pedestrian safety and access throughout the corridor. Poquonnock Road's current pavement profile was constructed overtop a rail line, much of which remained in place when the roadway was constructed. This subgrade has been failing, causing resurfacing and non-full depth reconstruction efforts to fail. Construction performed on the westerly side of Poquonnock Road, several years ago, revealed a strata of cast in place concrete, which will require heavy equipment to remove.

The Clarence B. Sharp overpass has clearance lower than that which is required for a road of this classification. Minor lowering of the roadway grade will correct this deficiency.

Sidewalks will be replaced and repaired as necessary to address differential settlement previous repair work.

It is also anticipated that there will be minor drainage improvements throughout the project. The drainage improvements are anticipated to include raising, resetting and replace some existing structures to provide for enduring infrastructure.

Mayor Hedrick noted the timeline of where they are to date.

November 21, 2016: Submitted application to SCCOG;

December 27, 2018: City received a Commitment to Fund letter from the Department of Transportation;

June 2019: Contracted with Beta Group for design and engineering of the Reconstruction project.

Heidi Comeau, Public Works Department introduced John L. Bertoli, Senior Associate and Jason Ouimet, Project Manager of BETA Group. She noted they did the construction design for the project and would be giving an overview.

Mr. Bertoli gave some background of their firm. He Complimented Ms. Comeau and Tim Umrysz, Public Works Director for all the assistance provided with walk-throughs for the project. He asked members of the public who wished to speak to sign a sheet they provided.

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Mr. Ouimet went over the slides showing the project and the improvements for the roadway, catch basins, crosswalks and the sidewalks including where upgrades for ADA compliance would be made.

Deputy mayor Beckford asked if there were speedbumps on either side of the crosswalk at the path to Brandegee Avenue.

Mr. Ouimet said they are “shark bites” more of a warning on the crosswalk due to high traffic volume.

Margaret Ryone asked if the road in front of her business, Buford’s family Restaurant, would be narrowed.

Mr. Ouimet said no, it would narrow after High Street.

Nathan Shafner asked if the yellow markings are where improvements would be made.

Mr. Ouimet said these are the areas that are not ADA compliant.

Ms. Ryone asked when this is scheduled to start.

Mr. Bertoli said they will advertise the RFP in February for the construction bids and would like it to start once the construction contract is awarded.

Mayor Hedrick said a schedule will go to the residents and businesses.

Councilor Carter asked what the projected duration of construction would be.

Mr. Bertoli said for the scope of this project he expects is estimated to be about 158 calendar days.

Councilor Carter asked if traffic would be shut down to 1 lane.

Mr. Bertoli said they would utilize either flagmen or local police for traffic control during construction.

Mayor Hedrick said they want to minimize any negative impact to residents and businesses but parking will be impacted.

Bryon Niemann asked if there is are plans for long term notification to EB or Pfizer employees and for school buses.

Mayor Hedrick said they would be reaching out regarding those issues.

Ms. Ryone wanted it on the record that she relies on on-street parking for her customers.

Mr. Bertoli said they can incorporate parking to allow businesses to remain open.

Mr. Shafner if the drainage improvements are for the full length of Poquonnock Road.

Mr. Ouimet said they are analyzing where the drainage upgrades are most needed.

Mayor Hedrick said this will improve the drainage for rain/storm water.

Mayor Hedrick called a 5 minute recess at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Hedrick called the meeting back in session at 6:36 p.m.

THAMES STREET WALL RECONSTRUCTION

Mr. Umrysz said this is to repair the retaining wall that collapsed during the storm in July. He said they shut the road down from Ledyard Avenue to Smith Street/Eastern Point Road. It will allow them to get the work done in a more cost effective manner.

Mayor Hedrick said he will meet with EB to determine the share of the costs. Once arrangements with EB are completed we will go to the Town Manager, Town Council and RTM. To prevent any additional washout the public works department put curbing and sand bags in place.

Deputy Mayor Beckford asked if the retaining wall is EB property.

Mayor Hedrick noted there is fencing that is in the retaining wall and additional fencing imbedded in the ground.

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There was discussion on where the retaining wall is located and the benefit of rerouting traffic for a period of time during construction.

Councilor Depot said that with other routes being available it would be a cost savings to detour the traffic.

Ms. Comeau said the contracts for the design engineering and the RFP will be due prior to the full Contract being awarded.

Mayor Hedrick asked for a motion to move this and per his discussion with the Town Manager they will figure out the payment..

Councilor Depot moved Deputy Mayor Beckford seconded a motion to move Referral Item # 655, Thames Street Wall Construction to the December 2, 2019 Mayor and Council meeting.

Motion carried.

**REFERRAL ITEM # 1 APPOINTMENTS
CHASE FOSTER (PLANNING AND ZONING)**

Mayor Hedrick said mr. Foster was here if the council had any questions for him.

Deputy Mayor Beckford thanked mr. Foster for volunteering. He said it is difficult to fill the positions.

Councilor Depot concurred.

Councilor Depot moved Deputy Mayor Beckford seconded a motion to move Referral Item #1 to the December 2, 2019 Mayor and Council meeting. Motion carried.

**REFERRAL ITEM # 758 POLICE
BULLETPROOF VEST GRANT AWARD**

Mayor Hedrick said this is a yearly grant.

Councilor depot thanked Chief Spellman for finding creative ways to fund necessary equipment to cut down the costs to taxpayers.

There was a discussion on the need to accept and approve grants and donations by the Council.

Councilor Depot moved Councilor McCabe seconded a motion to move Referral Item #758 Bullet Proof Vest Grant Award to the December 2, 2019 Mayor and Council meeting. Motion carried.

**REFERRAL ITEM # 742 GROTON UTILITIES
MEDICI LOBBYING SERVICES**

Ron Gaudet, Groton Utilities Director said Medici has been working with GU for a number of years and has built relationships in the legislature that has allowed them to work on legislation impacting utilities and CMEEC. He said it is the same price as last year.

Mayor Hedrick noted a letter from Mr. DiBella regarding legislation they worked on to keep harm from coming to GU and CMEEC.

Councilor Depot said we don't have an employee capable of doing this and hiring someone would be less cost effective that contracting with Medici.

Councilor Depot moved Councilor Stanford seconded a motion to move Referral Item #742 Medici Lobbying Services to the December 2, 2019 Mayor and Council meeting. Motion carried.

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HARRIS / NORTHSTAR ANNUAL MAINTENANCE

Director Gaudet said this is for the module Customer Service uses and is a yearly agreement. Deputy Mayor asked if this is for the online billing. Director Gaudet said he wasn't sure but he would find out.

Councilor Depot moved Councilor McCabe seconded a motion to move Referral Item #742 Harris/Northstar Annual Maintenance to the December 2, 2019 Mayor and Council meeting. Motion carried.

DEEP CONTRACT MARINE SEWAGE DISPOSAL

Director Gaudet said this a yearly contract they have had for the pump-out station, the dock has sustained some wave damage and they will not renew after this year. He said they will not hire the part time attendant this year and DEEP will have keys to take care of what needs to be done.

Councilor Depot moved Councilor McCabe seconded a motion to move Referral Item #742 DEEP Contract Marine Sewage Disposal to the December 2, 2019 Mayor and Council meeting. Motion carried.

POLLUTION ABATEMENT FACILITY BURNER

Director Gaudet said this is a waste gas burner with an auto ignition that has not worked properly for some time. It burns the methane and is vented out. Mayor Hedrick said there have been some complaints about the smell from neighbors on Thames Street and they expect this will alleviate the problem.

Councilor Depot moved Deputy Mayor Beckford seconded a motion to move Referral Item #742 Pollution Abatement Facility Burner to the December 2, 2019 Mayor and Council meeting. Motion carried.

CHANGE ORDER #13

Director Gaudet said this is to encapsulate the PCB areas and the cost is more than anticipated. Mayor Hedrick said he had concerns about the change orders going up and down and had directed staff to have all the figures prior to bringing to the GUC and Council.

Councilor Depot moved Councilor McCabe seconded a motion to move Referral Item #742 Change Order #13 to the December 2, 2019 Mayor and Council meeting. Motion carried.

REFERRAL ITEM # 561 GROTON UTILITIES FINANCIALS

Finance Director Yuhas went over the YTD figures for October including operating expenses, budgeted expenses, revenues and net earnings for the electric, water and sewer divisions. Deputy Mayor Beckford asked if these are seasonalized. Mr. Yuhas said for the budget yes, but not for expenses.

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REFERRAL ITEM # 690 CITY BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Yuhas said that all department expenditures are in line through October. He said they are looking at insurance allocations to see if changes should be made.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor McCabe moved Councilor Stanford seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried.

Mayor Hedrick adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

**Debra Patrick
City Clerk**