



**Town of East Greenwich
Town Council Minutes
Joint Meeting with School Committee
April 9, 2012**

Location and Time: Town Hall, 125 Main Street, East Greenwich, RI 02818, 7:00pm

Council Members: Michael B. Isaacs, President
Henry V. Boezi, Vice President
Jeffrey B. Cianciolo, Councilor
Mark Watkins Gee, Councilor
Michael S. Kiernan, Councilor

Staff Members: William Sequino, Jr., Town Manager
Leigh A. Botello, Town Clerk
Col. Thomas Coyle, Chief of Police
Joseph Duarte, Public Works Director (absent)
Wendy Schmidle, IT Director (absent)
Kathy Raposa, Finance Director (absent)
Lisa Bourbonnais, Planning Director
Catherine Bradley, Parks and Recreation Director (absent)
Erin McAndrew, Human and Senior Services Director (absent)
Peter Clarkin, Town Solicitor

Others: School Committee Members: Gifford, Durant, Martin, Green, Sommer,
Winters
Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent
Maryann Crawford, Director of Administration
Carole Malaga, Stenographer

7:00pm CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

At 7:10pm, President Isaacs calls the meeting to order and leads the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Dr. Gifford calls the School Committee to order.

COMMENDATIONS/PROCLAMATIONS

2011 Employee Service Awards ~ Councilors, Mr. Sequino and Mr. Clarkin assemble in front of the dais to present the service awards to those employees who are present. Kristen Benoit is presented with an award for five years of service, John Counts is presented an award for ten years of service and Audrey Amryan is presented with an award for ten years of service. Ms. Botello reads the names of those employees who are not present but are being recognized for their years of service: Leif Anderson, five years; Titan Lemoi, ten years; James Aveyard and Christopher Rafferty, fifteen years and Shawn O'Neill, twenty years. These eight employees represent a combined total of ninety years of service to the Town of East Greenwich.



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1) TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

- a. February 13, 2012 (Regular and Executive Session)
- b. March 26, 2012 (Regular and Executive Session) check JBC MINUTES

Councilor Cianciolo has an addition to the March 26th regular session minutes which is handed to the Town Clerk for resubmission at the next meeting.

VP Boezi moves to approve the minutes except for the minutes from the regular session of March 26, 2012 which will be corrected and resubmitted, seconded by Councilor Gee. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 4-0 with Councilor Kiernan being absent at the moment.

2) REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Public Comment (15-minute time limit for items NOT on the agenda)

Janet Kenney from London Bridge Child Care Center brings to Council's attention a dispute they are having with the East Greenwich Housing Authority. Currently, 65% of the children are low income and they have recently been told by the Housing Authority that 40% have to be from public housing or Section 8. She finds this to be burdensome and a stringent requirement. They are the only child care center in Town that has THS and a sliding fee scale. She feels the actions by the Housing Authority are in retribution and requests to be added to another agenda for further discussion with the Council. President Isaacs will set up a meeting to get more details from each side.

- b. Resolution supporting Energy Conservation and Management Policy Statement

Mr. Sequino explains that several towns, including East Greenwich, received energy grants from EPA with URI as the lead agency. The Town received \$25K to work with the energy resource office at URI to help with monitoring energy usage and the ESCO project. They completed the project and worked on a proposal to redo the street lights on Main Street and convert to LED lights. The intent of the resolution does not change anything but helps to recognize URI's efforts in helping the Town save money on energy. VP Boezi moves to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilor Cianciolo. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 4-0.



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c. Discussion with School Committee on FY 2013 Budget

President Isaacs states that per the Town's charter and state law, the Town Manager has presented a budget to the Town Council for their consideration. The public hearing on the budget is this Thursday, April 12th at Swift Community Center for members of the public to come and comment on the budget. The School Committee is in attendance to discuss their budget and give their reaction to the Town Manager's presentation of the Town budget.

Dr. Deidre Gifford describes how the School Committee develops their budget and the schedule that drives it. There are usually some vagaries in state funding and retirements that become clarified after their budget is submitted to the Town Manager so revisions are expected. They presented a budget request to the Town of \$31,375,451 and were requested by the Town Manager to reduce it by \$474K. The School Committee has met twice since the request and discussed possible ways to address the reduction. They are struggling with the magnitude of the request and to keep the cuts out of the classroom.

Councilor Kiernan arrives at 7:25pm.

Dr. Mercurio briefly explains their budget process. He reiterates that they are fully engaged in Race to the Top and RIDE's strategic plan.

President Isaacs hopes to improve upon collaboration efforts each year. He suggests that the Town Manager and the School Committee look at items that resulted in a surplus and to consider using those funds for one time expenditures.

Councilor Cianciolo refers to the Ad Hoc Finance Committee's report about opportunities for collective savings to benefit taxpayers if there are substantial efforts to work together and collaborate. There is a potential for \$50K of savings in the area of building maintenance. It will take the efforts of Mr. Sequino, Dr. Mercurio and the Department Heads to make it happen. Dr. Gifford expresses that although an area of savings had been identified, the work will not be reduced. They will further instruct the administration to look for savings but the savings may not be as great as thought. Councilor Cianciolo recognizes consolidation and collaboration will take some hard work but the opportunity is still there.

Mr. Paul Martin, School Committee member, asks if the Town's portion of the School Resource Officer has been budgeted and yes, it has been included in the Town Manager's budget being presented to the Town Council. He also asks if the balance left in the snow budget of \$45K is part of the surplus. President Isaacs replies no and that the surplus he referred to earlier was from Fiscal Year 2011 as a result of the audited financials.



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With no further comments, Mr. Durant moves to adjourn the School Committee, seconded by Mr. Sommer. Committee members vote all in favor and the motion carries 6-0 with Ms. Records being absent.

d. Steve Lombardi – Chamber of Commerce/Main Street Merchants Funding Request

Mr. Steve Lombardi, Chamber Director, is accompanied by Jean Parillo from Scribe and Diane Villari of Hair Plus. He advises that the Chamber has merged with the Merchants on Main Street. Their initiative is to improve the beautification of Main Street and they are requesting a total of \$8,300. Of that, \$2,000 is for new banners to adorn Main Street, \$1,300 for hanging flower baskets and \$5,000 for watering to cover overtime costs on weekends. They feel it would be a good investment on the Town's behalf to draw people to East Greenwich. A suggestion was made to use a special soil to help save money on watering. Ms. Villari suggests that the new banners be designed for year round usage, not seasonal, and a replacement set be stored. They could say "Welcome to Historic East Greenwich". President Isaacs asks which budget year this request is for and Mr. Lombardi replies the need is now. It is requested that a written proposal be presented to the Town Manager from the group to describe their request in more detail. Mr. Sequino suggests splitting the proposal with the urgency being on the flowers for this fiscal year and the banners for next fiscal year. Ms. Villari notes the Merchants had a budget from the Town and since that has been cut; they are now respectfully requesting the funds. Ms. Parillo discussed the flowers and the soil with the grower and they really need to be watered daily. The expense falls on the overtime paid for the workers on the weekends. It is suggested that looking into other varieties of flowers that may not require watering on a daily basis. VP Boezi suggests reaching out to Marion Gold who is an expert.

Brad Bishop, Planning Board Chair, asks about using artificial plants. A brief discussion follows but it is agreed it does not look as good. Mr. Lombardi has talked to a few nurseries to have them maintain the watering. President Isaacs suggests a sponsor for the project. Mr. Sequino and Mr. Lombardi will meet again to develop some ideas.

3) PUBLIC HEARING

None

4) CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Application for New Victualing License



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Raycene Bentley – applicant
AUDRA'S CAFÉ OF EAST GREENWICH, LLC
315 Main Street

- b. Approval of annual Opening Day Parade for East Greenwich Little League, tentatively scheduled for April 28th with rain date of May 5th.

VP Boezi moves to approve the consent calendar, seconded by Councilor Gee. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 5-0.

5) OLD BUSINESS

- a. Ordinance in Amendment to Chapter 93 Fees, Article II Development Impact Fees of the Code of the Town of East Greenwich (as amended).
(Third Reading)

Ms. Bourbonnais explains the difference between this proposal and the current ordinance which are exemptions for affordable housing units, applying the fee to the number of bedrooms instead of the overall unit type and the addition of commercial impact fees. Commercial impact fees were recommended ten years ago but never approved. Council had previously received additional information on impact fees in other communities as well as tax levy information. Only a few communities have commercial impact fees.

Councilor Gee appreciates the comparative information. He asks what percentage of the Capital Improvement Plan are impact fees on a yearly basis. Mr. Sequino replies that historically it has not been enough to do anything with. The audit report shows the balance of the impact fees and identifies four categories: recreation, open space, public buildings and education. He further explains the use of the fees and any balances in those categories. Two grants were recently awarded by the State for entry into McHale for a trail system and a shade structure at Shovelin Park. In summary, there is no direct offset as the funds are project specific.

Councilor Cianciolo asks if some changes were adopted but not the commercial impact fee; is there any risk that the impact fee structure is invalid. Ms. Bourbonnais replies that it could be taken out without obstructing the residential fee update. He feels the commercial impact fee should be eliminated to encourage commercial development and increasing the tax base. He does not agree with adding new taxes to business and developers who want to be in East Greenwich.

Mr. Sequino explains that in this instance, commercial impact fees were designed to help provide funding for traffic improvements and the like when a commercial structure gets built



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and lessen the financial burden on all commercial businesses involved.

Mr. Brad Bishop, Planning Board Chair, notes there are still parcels available on the Route 2 corridor that could be developed.

Ms. Bourbonnais emphasizes that none of the farm zones on Route 2 are proposed for zone changes. There is the potential for traffic impacts if Bostitch was in full operation again.

President Isaacs is also concerned about commercial impact fees. Businesses do reimburse the Town for studies and they are required to provide certain public improvements. There may be an opportunity where multiple businesses can come together and spread the cost when looking at the same parcel. The Town should try to develop a way to ease the tax burden on residential and encourage businesses to come to town. He wants to promote a business friendly environment and has always been opposed to new taxes on businesses and tax treaties.

Councilor Gee moves to adopt the ordinance as presented. There is no second and the motion fails.

Councilor Cianciolo moves to pass the ordinance as presented with the change that the commercial \$0.36 per square foot of net leasable area be eliminated from the ordinance, seconded by Councilor Kiernan. Council votes: Isaacs, yes; Boezi, yes; Cianciolo, yes; Kiernan, yes; Gee, no and the motion carries 4-1.

6) NEW BUSINESS

a. Approval of 2012 CDBG Application

Ms. Bourbonnais notes that CDBG stands for Community Development Block Grant and explains that this program is offered through HUD at the federal level and passes down through the state into local communities. East Greenwich is competing with 30 other communities and is eligible for \$200K. Outside agencies are solicited for projects to apply for the grant. The Council is asked to approve the program with the eight proposed items and authorize the Town Manager to sign the application which is due April 20th. Grants are awarded late summer. She welcomes any questions and adds that there are several representatives from different agencies present who requested funds.

Councilor Cianciolo asks about the allocation to the EG Human Services Department for a new bus as there is an item in the Town Manager's budget for FY 2013 for the purchase of a new vehicle. Mr. Sequino replies that the funds can be reprogrammed to another eligible activity if it is not spent on transportation. Ms. Bourbonnais adds that the award is to the Town



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so it is applied to specific activities or can be reprogrammed if necessary.

President Isaacs notices the fourth item listed for the Community Housing Land Trust has been eliminated by the Planning Board. They did not feel the item was competitive enough and had a limited number of beneficiaries. They split the amount evenly and added \$1,500 to London Bridge Learning Academy and \$1,500 to the East Greenwich Housing Authority.

Marcia Sullivan, Director of The East Greenwich Housing Authority, says this is the fourth year in a row they have applied for funding and have not gotten any. They are proposing the CDBG funds to assist in replacing six boilers within the public housing developments. Councilor Cianciolo sees this as a priority due to unfunded state mandates on affordable housing. He asks that the list be re-prioritized and resubmitted.

Janet Kenney from London Bridge states that these funds help make up for their financial loss in accepting children on state assistance. Funds also help parents with child care if they are going to school or working nights. They cannot get these types of funds from the state level.

VP Boezi moves to approve the grant application, to pass the resolution and authorize the Town Manager to sign the resolution, seconded by Councilor Gee. Councilor Cianciolo suggests to leave it to Ms. Bourbonnais' discretion to prioritize the list. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 5-0.

- b. Resolution supporting the municipal aid legislative package submitted by Governor Chafee

Councilor Kiernan moves to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilor Cianciolo. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 5-0.

- c. Resolution supporting Senate Bill 2310 entitled "AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION – SCHOOL COMMITTEES AND SUPERINTENDENTS"

Councilor Kiernan moves to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilor Cianciolo. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 5-0.

- d. Resolution opposing an amendment to RIGL 44-18-18.1 Local Meals Tax as proposed in Article 24 relating to Taxation and Revenues of House Bill 7323 entitled "AN ACT RELATING TO MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE STATE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2013."

Councilor Gee moves to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilor Cianciolo. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 5-0.



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7) TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Sequino reiterates that the Town has received two grants from DEM that were submitted by Ms. Bradley. The first is for a gazebo-style shade structure at Shovelin Park in the amount of \$37,500 to be matched by the Town and the second is \$200K to begin the process of creating an access road into McHale for the development of trails. Once the grant documents are executed, the first order of business is to do a wetlands survey for McHale.

8) COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Gee compliments Ms. Bourbonnais and the Planning Department staff on their weekly news update and summary from the Planning Department. He would like to see the same type of weekly report from Public Works and IT Departments. Anyone can sign up to receive the update on the Town's website. Councilor Cianciolo suggests syncing the update with the existing eNews list.

9) PUBLIC COMMENT (15-minute time limit)

None

10) EXECUTIVE SESSION per RIGL §42-46-5 (a) (1) and (2) to discuss personnel and collective bargaining.

At 8:42pm, VP Boezi moves to go in to Executive Session per RIGL §42-46-5 (a) (1) and (2) to discuss personnel and collective bargaining, seconded by Councilor Gee. Council takes a roll call vote all in favor and the motion carries 5-0.

Following the Executive Session, VP Boezi moves to return to Open Session, seconded by Councilor Cianciolo. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 5-0.

Councilor Kiernan moves to seal the Executive Session minutes, seconded by VP Boezi. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 5-0.

Councilor Cianciolo moves to adjourn at 9:45pm, seconded by VP Boezi. Council votes all in favor and the motion carries 5-0.

Respectfully submitted

Leigh

Leigh A. Botello
Town Clerk

APPROVED BY TOWN COUNCIL APRIL 23, 2012