

Groton Public Schools  
Town Council / City Council / RTM / Board of Education Liaison Committee  
Special Meeting Minutes  
June 1, 2023 @ 5:00pm

Meeting was called to order at 5:06pm

In attendance:

Town Council: Councilor Juliette Parker, Councilor Edward Jacome

City Council: Councilor Chris Piazza

Board of Education: Chair Kim Shepardson Watson, BOE Member Andrea Ackerman (arrived at 5:19)

RTM: Moderator Jill Rusk, Representative Gary Wells

Central Office: Assistant Superintendent Philip Piazza

Juliette Parker made a motion to accept the January 12, 2023 Minutes. Motion seconded by Kim Shepardson Watson. No corrections were made. Motion passed unanimously.

Board of Education Report:

Phil Piazza:

- Numerous ceremonies held in the end of May.
- IB Diploma ceremony: 6/2/23.
- Retirement ceremonies and end of year concerts coming soon.
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion: 6/8/23
- Last day for students: 6/14/23
- Graduation: 6/16/23 @ 6pm

Kim Shepardson Watson:

1. In negotiations with para union
2. Will learn soon about legislative implications – funded and unfunded mandates. K-3 reading program mandate: filed for a waiver as district is doing a more comprehensive program. Hoping to invite State Reps to a joint COW in August to discuss how new laws impact the Town. Recommendation to change age to start Kindergarten from turning 5 on December 1 to turning 5 on September 1. Passed the House; sent to the Senate.
3. Discussion of need of improvements to field, fieldhouse and bleachers at Fitch House School. Part of a larger fields project.
4. Culinary Arts Room – Kim requested Mayor Melendez initiate a committee to start work towards improving the room / look at improvements to the program.
5. Discussion on Groton being a distressed community. 49% of Groton students qualify for free or reduced lunch. What conversation do we need to have to serve a distressed community?  
Chris Piazza asked about timeframe for possible change in Kindergarten – not yet passed. Would not go into effect this school year.  
Gary Wells expressed support of improvements to the culinary program.

Town Council Report: Juliette Parker

1. Set MIL Rate
2. Property Reuse Committee
3. Neighborhood Assistance Act Hearing
4. Extended Town Manager's contract
5. Office of Development and Planning Services – update on position
6. Established an Art Commission – 1 Town Councilor and 5 residents to be appointed. Those interested should contact the Town Clerk's office.

7. Instituted 2 new rule changes.
8. TVCCA discussed issues with housing, schooling, decrease in census numbers, senior concerns, decrease in SNAP benefits, those in need can apply for energy assistance
9. Juneteenth Ceremony: June 20<sup>th</sup> at 3pm

City Council Report: Chris Piazza

1. Budget Complete – Freeman’s Meeting June 5<sup>th</sup>
2. ARPA Funding
3. Economic Development working on resiliency
4. Farmers’ Market back outside on June 13<sup>th</sup>
5. Concerts in the Park start June 16<sup>th</sup>
6. Discussion of fireworks at City Day
7. Memorial benches placed in City
8. Juneteenth Celebration – June 17 at 11am at Memorial Building
9. PRIDE event today
10. Discussion on youth involvement on Boards / Commissions, Youth Advisory Committee
11. Looking into murals

RTM Report: Jill Rusk

1. Reviewed and Passed the Town Council Budget with no changes
2. Looking at 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter transfers

New Business: Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 5 at 5pm. Hosted by Town Council.

Motion to adjourn made by Dr. Ackerman; seconded by Juliette Parker. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting ended at 5:52pm.