

**Borough of Stonington
Board of Warden and Burgesses Regular Monthly Meeting
October 16, 2023
MINUTES**

Warden Michael Schefers called the monthly meeting of the Borough of Stonington Board of Warden and Burgesses to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at Borough Hall. Present, in addition to Warden Schefers were Burgesses Kevin Rogers and Amanda Barnes, and Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Coleman. Burgesses Amy Nicholas and Kevin Bowdler were absent. Approximately 12 members of the public were present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On a motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Barnes, the minutes of the monthly meeting of September 18, 2023, were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

RECEIVED:

- a. Application: Child & Family Agency Run/Walk, 09/28/24
- b. Application: SVIA, Annual Borough Holiday Stroll, 12/01/23
- c. Stonington Free Library Eastern Side Landscaping
- d. 39 Church Street Road Cut

REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER

None

REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT; ARPA UPDATE

Bills for the period September 15, 2023 through October 16, 2023 totaled \$57,228.69. Large bills of note were \$4,500 for CLA for continuing engineering study of Church and Water St. drainage, Fire Hydrant rental in the amount of \$4,365.38, \$7,500 To Hastedt Brothers for the drain on Water Street, and \$6,559 to Suisman Shapiro for invoices for Professional services for Y/E 2023. I&E through October 16, 2023 shows total revenue to date of \$1,000,978.07; and net income to date of \$368,409.18. Balance of ARPA funds is \$30,538.

WARDEN'S REPORT

1. Attended September SCOG meeting
2. Met with Jeff Pessolido, Director of Public Works, Tom Curioso and Jeff Greenlaw, Town Engineer on Water Drainage Problem on Bradley St
3. Attended CT DOT Transportation Feasibility Study presentation on bus and train transportation. Shoreline East is being expanded to Groton, Stonington and Westerly.
4. Met with Danielle Chesebrough, to sign and send out letter to Amtrak on Water Street crossing
5. Met with Police Commission on consideration of speed cushions at Borough locations, Resident Jesse Diggs, Warden Schefers, and Burgess Nicholas will begin preparing a comprehensive proposal

BOROUGH CLOCK –

None

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Streets & Sidewalks (Scheffers)

1. Conducted monthly brush pickup.
2. Continued Work on painting/repainting Road Stop Signs and Cross Walks
3. Continued road-sweeping and lawn maintenance

Fire & Emergency Management (Nicholas/Hoadley)

September Police Incident Report

In September, the police responded to 47 incidents in the borough including 10 Parking/Motor Vehicle Complaints, 7 Medical Assist, 5 Burglar Alarm, 3 Assist Citizen, 3 Suspicious Activity, 3 Fire Related, 3 Motor Vehicle Stops, 2 Accidents including One Hit and Run, 2 Animal Control, and 2 Community Policing and 2 Welfare Checks. There was one incident each of Assist Other Agency, 911 Hang up, Larceny, Nuisance, Surrender Firearm/Ammunition, Missing Person, and Found Item. There was one arrest related to the Hit and Run Accident.

Speed sign will be moved from Main Street (where there were very few speed violations) to Elm Street.

September Fire Report

SBFD responded to 6 Alarms in September 2023, they were as follows:

- 1) 9-2-23 10:15am Medical assist with SAC, 32 Water St., Stonington Commons dinghy dock (lift assist)
- 2) 9-17-23 1:23am Welfare check with SPD & SAC 32 Collins Rd. (gain access)
- 3) 9-21-23 10:36am Medical assist with SAC 28 Watch Hill Ave. (lift assist)
- 4) 9-23-23 9:22am Fire Alarm Activation 349 Elm St. Salt Water Farm Vineyard (bride steaming her wedding dress)
- 5) 9-25-23 11:06am Fire Alarm Activation 33 Main St. (nothing found)
- 6) 9-28-23 7:56am Fire Alarm Activation 65 Cutler St. (steam from furnace)

Parks, Trees & Rights of Way (Barnes)

I posted a tree on the northwest corner of Wadawanuck Square for removal. The tree is on its last legs and hangs over the main electricity source for the Borough.

The four trees that Bill Morris donated will, hopefully, be planted before the removal of the tree. Bill has arranged to have stones (A gift from William Morris) placed at the foot of each tree.

Ellen Wightman continues to be concerned about a large linden on Main Street across from her house. We have been watching this tree. Ellen has had it evaluated by an arborist who

submitted an alarming report. This tree should likely be posted for removal as well. Ellen will pay for a replacement.

Two trees in front of 68 Main Street need to be pruned away from the house

I have put in an order to Bartlett for grinding stumps of the tree in front of 88 Water Street and the tree on the Corner of Wall and Main.

Public Buildings (Rogers)

I met with Sue and Emerson this month to discuss the garage and any needs they need. Sue shared with me the findings that were made by the state when they came to visit. She was happy to report that their findings were very good and only needed to fix two small areas. Sue also shared with me that, although a pipe on the exterior of the building has been fixed for plumbing, that she knows there is a problem with an interior pipe on the same system. If the toilet is overused it backs up into her garage. I am proposing that this issue gets fixed in a timely manner.

Two proposals came to Anne's desk about doing an appraisal of Boro hall and the fire station to make sure everything is efficient and running smoothly. The price tags were \$3000 for Boro hall and \$3500 for the fire house. I have reached out to my contact at Eversource and asked if they had a free service to offer that would do the same job. I am waiting to hear back from her. I am planning on doing a mini fall cleanup at the firehouse before their festive holiday party on the 29th. Everything looks great there, but with all those people visiting I want to make sure it looks totally ship shape.

Cannon Square update –

Finalizing pricing and looking to see if more monies are needed than are available in the Cannon fund. Curran Construction has offered to look over the Cannon maintenance.

The wheels should be coming back in about two months, and hopefully by then, the support systems will be ordered and almost on site. Due to the winter months, I am in no rush to put the wheels on. The spring seems like a perfect time.

Utilities & Sanitation (Bowdler)

Burgess Bowdler asked that the minutes of the comfort station meetings be approved by Warden and Burgesses. Warden responded that there is no precedent for doing this. Burgess Bowdler said Economic Development Commission of the Town have the selectmen approve their minutes. Sally Duplice, Town Clerk, was asked about FOI regulations and she advised Warden to request a determination from the state level head of FOI on whether we need to comply.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Jesse Diggs asked how does the W&B intend to use the recommendations of the Comfort Station Committee. Warden Schefers answered that they will be acted on in November when the recommendations are made. Regarding the speed cushions, was his complete email forwarded to the Police Department? The meeting was on Thursday of last week. The email was

received on Friday. But it will be forwarded for their next meeting. Shoreline East, does the ridership on Amtrak really justify new train stations? There will be public hearings on this. Regarding the viaduct bridge, the consultant's report did not suggest wires as the motivation for replacing the bridge. He suggested the State needs to spend money or lose it. What is the input from Amtrak? Option number three, repairing it, will buy another 50 years. Warden Schefers will represent Jesse's thoughts in emails to a future meeting DOT and Amtrak.

Pam Mola said Resident Pat Kennan says the same thing as Jesse Diggs that the State needs to spend money.

Resident Ellen Whitman suggests moving the speed detector back further on Main Street near Harmony. Warden will speak with Police Commissioner Amy Nicholas about relocating it.

Resident Charles Hartman encouraged everyone to read DOT report on Shoreline East. His personal opinion is encouraging low-income riders. (Mike, I would be very careful with the wording of this.) He also asked that a report of the comfort station committee be read at each meeting of W&B. Warden mentioned that the minutes are put on the Borough website.

Resident Tim Mola thanked the Warden and Burgesses that a dialogue has returned during Public Comment.

Resident Al Razzano mentioned that the website is not accessible on phone or iPad. Shoreline East is a partnership of State of CT, MTA and Amtrak. Suggests that the Shoreline East rails not be built, but rather, that Amtrak be used.

Resident Doug Mola mentioned that west side of Whalen's Wharf gazebo foundation needs work.

Resident Bill Gardner expressed his appreciation of placing the speed detector on Elm Street and will appreciate the data being reported at the next W&B meeting.

Kevin Rogers mentioned that streetlights issue is because so many people don't live here anymore and don't have their porch lights on. And, that there are more trees keeping ambient light from lighting up the sidewalks. Al Razzano mentioned bollard lights like at Watch Hill or Essex, and at Stonington Commons. Warden has asked Eversource about lighting options.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Comfort Station Update

After reviewing 24 sites, we have narrowed it down to seven possible locations, which we will be ranking and discussing in our next meeting which will be held on Thursday, October 26, in Borough Hall. The seven possible locations being ranked and discussed are: Borough Hall, the Fire Station, Boro Bodega, St. Mary's Church, the dog park area portable, the playground portable, the point portable.

Viaduct update

A letter has been sent by Warden and First Selectman Borough to Amtrak requesting they address the ingress/egress issue at the crossing.

Draft Vendor Ordinance

Tabled until Planning and Zoning have met.

Update on Water Street Flooding Project

Applied to CT DEEP for outflow permit at Whalen’s Wharf outflow. Engineers going before Stonington Harbor Commission next week to get their approval.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider requests to use Borough property

Consider request made by Child & Family Agency for Run/Walk

A motion by Burgess Barnes, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to approve the request by the Sue Fage of Child and Family Agency to use Wadawanuck Square, Main St., Mathews St., Water St., Omega St., Hancox St., Diving St., for Mental Health Awareness Run/Walk/Stroll 5K on 9/28/2024 from 8:00 am – 11:00 am, was unanimously approved.

Consider request made by SVIA for Annual Borough Holiday Stroll

A motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Barnes to approve the request by Stonington Village Improvement Association (SVIA) to use Wadawanuck Square/SFL (20 High Street) & Water Street (High Street to Cannon Square) would require Water Street closure during event for citizens to “stroll” and visit shops (will work with Town & SPD) for Annual Borough Holiday Stroll to include caroling at SFL, Christmas tree lighting at Wad Square, Santa appearance, casual stroll down Water Street to Cannon Square on December 1, 2023 from 5:30 pm – 8:00 pm, was unanimously approved.

Consider request made by Tim Cusack of 6 Bayview Ave for Street and Sidewalk Repairs

Tabled to November W&B meeting.

Consider request made by Tim O’Neill for a Road Cut at 39 Church St

A motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to approve the request by Tim O’Neill for a Road Cut at 39 Church Street (requiring consulting with Fire Chief Hoadley), was unanimously approved.

Consider request made by Micayla Hall of Stonington Free Library for landscaping

A motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to approve the request by Micayla Hall of Stonington Free Library for previously required landscaping around the ramp piers and HVAC units, subject to Burgess Barnes’ discussion and approval with Ms. Hall and if necessary, Eric of Cedar Ridge, was unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION

Burgess Kevin Rogers asked that there be a discussion with Burgess Nicholas and at next meeting regarding RVs.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Burgess Barnes, seconded by Burgess Rogers, adjournment of the meeting at 8:16 pm, was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa M. Coleman
October 25, 2023