

Borough of Stonington  
Board of Warden and Burgesses  
Regular Monthly Meeting June 17, 2024  
DRAFT 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, Kevin Bowdler, Amy Nicholas, and Amanda Barnes, and Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Coleman. Approximately 18 members of the public were present.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On a motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Bowdler, the minutes of the monthly meeting of May 20, 2024, were approved.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

RECEIVED:

Amanda Barnes email concerning sculptures in parks.

Email from Frances Ashley regarding noise form the AC Units at The Commons.

Email from Sherman Crites requesting reappointment to SHMC.

Fred Nicholas email regarding joining SHMC.

Application for outside dining at Noah's.

Email from Brooks Bentz regarding Lawn Blowers.

Email from Jay Spalding re: SHMC.

Email from Burgess Amy Nicholas requesting Tree Maintenance Plan Discussion

**REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER**

None

**REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT; ARPA UPDATE**

Bills for the period May 15 through June 12, 2024 totaled \$211,209.10. Large bills of note were the street repair in front of Dodson's and lower Water Street at Water Street Café, a custom compressor system installed at the Fire Station and the Church St. repaving. I&E through June 12, 2024 shows total revenue to date of \$186,980.73; and net income to date of \$186,980.73. Balance of ARPA funds is \$78,519.

**WARDEN'S REPORT**

Met with First Selectman Danielle Chesbrough on local items of interest.

Attended SSCOG Meeting and Seat Board Meeting

Met with Nick Kepple and Blunt White on Fire Protection Services Agreement.

Attended May First Selectman monthly staff meeting.

Met with Architect and Contractors on Public Restroom project.

Met with State Officials on Borough Storm Management Flooding issues

**COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

**Streets & Sidewalks** (Schefers)

Conducted monthly brush pickup.  
Continued Park maintenance.  
Started Street painting.  
Filled potholes at various locations

**Fire & Emergency Management (Nicholas/Hoadley)**

SBFD responded to 9 Alarms, of which three were in the Borough, in May 2024, they were as follows:

- 5-6-24 8:21am MVA Rt. 1 @ Elm St. (2 injuries to hospital)
- 5-7-24 10:37am Dumpster Fire 242 Elm St. (fully involved)
- 5-16-24 9:11am Fire Alarm Activation 103 Main St. (water leaking into horn strobe)
- 5-21-24 9:58am Medical assist with SAC 28 Watch Hill Ave. (lifting assistance)
- 5-21-24 12:02pm Medical assist with SAC 1 Meadowlark Lane (CPR assist)
- 5-21-24 6:26pm Explosion & smoke seen from Town Dock (nothing found)
- 5-22-24 9:25pm CO Detector Activation 27 Elm St. (faulty CO detector)
- 5-24-24 11:11am Medical assist with SAC 28 Watch Hill Ave. (lifting assistance)
- 5-30-24 6:59pm CO Detector Activation 8 Meadowlark Lane (faulty CO detector)

There will be an emergency drill for Fisher’s Island on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ferries will come into the Stonington Town Dock. Busses will transfer them to parts unknown.

**April Police Incident Report**

Still no report from the Stonington police. The SPD has hired 2 CSOs that will start over the next two weeks. These CSOs will be shared with Pawcatuck and Mystic. Last year there was only one for the 3 areas. A speed sign will be installed near the corner of High and Main Street at some point over the next two weeks. Warden Schefers and I went to the Police Commission regarding the speed humps. The Police Commission is more receptive now and want to see photos in other towns; Jesse Diggs has already sent them. A complete package has to be presented next month to Town of Stonington.

**Parks, Trees & Rights of Way (Barnes)**

Removed the two trees that were posted on Broad St. Looking into smaller replacement trees for 2 Broad St. Looking at smaller trees. Another dying tree is being posted on a tree at Cliff St and Grand. Met with Fontanas at the corner of Main and Church and they would like to replace trees that were removed years ago.

Amy Nicholas spoke to the subject that the age of our Borough trees and life expectancy of the trees be added to the tree inventory binder. Amanda Barnes will ask Megan from Bartlett to come to a meeting in July or September. Burgess Barnes will find out where the tree tags came from. Perhaps hire someone like Georgia Hunt or Megan from Bartlett to analyze each tree again.

Burgess Rogers asked that we not plant trees that would grow into power lines. Burgess Bowdler asked that we have a master plan of tree maintenance, removal, replacement over a short time period (5-10 years).

**Public Buildings (Rogers)**

**Cannons** – The granite has arrived. A tentative date for Thursday, June 20th has been set for the granite to be installed and the wheels to be out back. Painting of the chain that surrounds the site, as well as the actual cannons and carriages, will happen soon after.

**Bathroom** – We are awaiting the returns for the quotes. The quotes from the Security firms are in. Asbestos tiles have been indicated and a safe plan for removal has been made. Once the quotes are returned, we will move forward. Everything is going well. Small bumps, but that is expected. Work cannot be done until the fall.

**Firehouse** – status quo, a summer clean up including weeding will happen when school is out for the summer.

**Utilities & Sanitation (Bowdler)**

**Sanitation** – I issued two warning citations and two \$100 fines for yellow bags placed by the curb before the day of collection and not being enclosed in a bin with a lid.

**Porta loo Beautification at Town Dock** – The project continues as proposed but with many parties involved in the process. The Town of Stonington Public Works department has leveled the site, dug down 1 foot below grade and filled it with stones. It will be much more accessible for disabled users than our existing set-up, but I am not 100% sure that we could call it handicap accessible. The area is a bit larger than we proposed, but if the Porta loo company can get their trucks into the space and around the existing bollard, we could build the fence closer to the electric infrastructure and not have to move the SSBA sign. Eversource has been advised of our plans, as has the Stonington Waterfront Commission and the Small Boat Association. Next step is to install the fence, add a small garden bed and place crushed shells on top of the stones for a nice New England aesthetic that is also porous. We have submitted a grant application to the Stonington Garden Club for the cost of the garden area and native plants. I have spoken to four fence companies. Only one has been prepared to provide a quote. My sense is that it is too small a job to interest the vendors. The maximum cost for the fence is a little under \$2,000. We have written a grant application to the Ocean Community Foundation for the cost of the fence.

**Utilities** – Frontier has been laying fiber optic cables in the Borough. They responded to a request to clean up unsightly cables that were hanging off a pole. I expect there will be more issues with more cables.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Resident Lisa Tepper Bates of 118 Water Street thanked the Board for the attention to Wayland’s Wharf and stated that the issue is greater than the condition of the sidewalks. She views Wayland’s Wharf as an asset for all of us now and in the future. Warden Schefers updated the findings from the dye test. He has been talking with the state equivalent FEMA (both the emergency planning and hazard mitigation people) on how we can prevent further erosion.

Resident Jesse Diggs of 8 School Street. Surprised that EV charging station was discussed and not on the agenda last month; as well as a vote is on the June agenda. He read aloud his email and letter, so it is submitted to the record (attached)

Resident Al Razzano of 25 Main St commented that transparency and nothing on the May agenda regarding EV Charging Stations. At issue is also taking two or more parking spaces for level two charging stations. Questioned that the library would be making money from the use of property they don’t own.

Resident Jesse Diggs of 8 School Street thinks the EV charging stations should go at Town Dock or Main Street. Asked that it be tabled tonight.

Resident Jean Fiore of 2 Cannon Square expressed concern about EV charging station and how it would affect elderly church goers at St. Mary's. Fr. Perkins was not against the charging stations but not for the location. She feels Town Dock is a better location. Brought up the Church St. repaving and the removal of the sidewalk on one side and the areas around the poles. Warden Schefers explained that the project is not complete and permeable material will be added between the wall and the curb.

Resident Pam Mola of 2 Church St. support what Jesse Diggs and Al Razzano have said. Thinks it should be at Town Dock.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **Comfort Station Update and Budget Expenditure Requests**

On a motion by Bowdler, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to accept the quote of \$1,728 from Luther Fence for a 16-foot-long fence for Beautification of the porta-loos at Town Dock, was approved.

On a motion by Bowdler, seconded by Burgess Rogers, the request of \$1,850 for crushed shells and native plants as landscaping at the porta-loos at Town Dock, was approved.

#### **Recreational Vehicles and Motor Homes parking and Commercial Vehicle parking (Ordinance clarification)**

No update. Tabled.

#### **EV Charging Station Update and FY 2024/25 Budget Request**

Tabled

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Reapplication for Hollycroft Foundation**

On a motion by Barnes, seconded by Burgess Rogers, the application from Hollycroft Foundation for a long-term sculpture garden, subject to maintenance and safety concerns being addressed at Wimpeimer Park from July 1, 2024 – July 1, 2025, was approved.

A discussion was held regarding the Ukrainian sculpture at Wadawanuck Square. Perhaps move it to the strip of land between the firehouse and the post office. If relocation is approved by Chef Hoadley, Doug Rice will reapply next month.

#### **Budget transfers for End of Year**

On a motion by Warden Schefers, seconded by Burgess Bowdler, the transfer of \$4,192.80 from Line 1301 Contingency to Line 604 Street Repairs, Add Lines 127 Investment Fees and 806 Mutt Mitts and Dispensers and deleting the following fund accounts: Clock, Cannon Square, Robinson Burial, Wad Square and LOCIP, were approved.

#### **Frances Ashley regarding noise from the AC Units at The Commons**

Burgess Nicholas will contact the property management for The Commons.

#### **Application for Outside Dining at Noah's**

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Barnes, the application made by Andrew

Field of Noah's Restaurant to allow two four-tops on the sidewalk in front of the restaurant on Water Street from June 10 – December 20, 2024, was approved.

**Fred Nicholas email regarding joining SHMC/ J Spaulding email**

On a motion by Burgess Bowdler, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to recommend Ian Cooke to the SHMC, was approved by majority. Burgess Nicholas abstained.

**Brooks Bentz regarding the noise of Lawn Blowers**

A discussion was held, and no vote was taken. The Warden will respond to Brooks Bentz's request.

**SBO-4 changes to Off Street parking – adding curb cut application**

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Bowdler, the wording change to SBO-4 to include Off-Street Parking Application, was approved. The ordinance change will be posted in the newspaper.

**Borough storm water management and flooding issues, update, including Wayland's Wharf**

Recent storms have affected locations throughout the Borough. The parking lot at the Point has been regraded five times, Wayland's Wharf parking lot has been regraded three times along with debris removed from the Point and Wayland's Wharf. We have a collapsing right of way at the end of Omega Street due to wave action. The highway department has had to remove wood, sand, rocks, debris, and seaweed on all three streets (Omega, Diving and Ash). We are working with Avalonia regarding Dodge Paddock flooding.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Burgess Barnes, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, adjournment of the meeting at 8:56 pm, was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lisa M. Coleman  
June 30, 2024