

Borough of Stonington
Board of Warden and Burgesses
Regular Monthly Meeting October 21, 2024
MEETING 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 Firehouse. Present, in addition to Warden Schefers were Burgesses Kevin Rogers, Amy Nicholas, Amanda Barnes, and Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Coleman. Burgess Bowdler was absent. Approximately 20 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 16, 2024, were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

RECEIVED:

SVIA Application for Holiday Stroll.

Emails from Bentz, Olson and O'Brien on P&Z and ZBA appointments.

Emails from Kevin Bowdler on EV Charging Stations.

REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER

Announcement that the Borough elections will be held on May 5, 2025.

REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT; ARPA UPDATE

Bills for the period September 14, 2024 through October 18, 2024 totaled \$44,717.59. Large bills of note the payment for the audit and The Day legal notices. I&E for July 2024 through October 18, 2024 shows total income to date of \$1,340,295.17; and net income to date of \$674,919.77. Balance of ARPA funds is \$77,242.00.

Warden Schefers will look into pricing of the Westerly Sun and Norwich Bulletin for legal notices. Burgess Nicholas noted the income shortfall from property taxes will be coming from late payments. Warden said he will look into this. And the fire fees from Wamphassuc will be coming in.

WARDEN'S REPORT

Met with First Selectman Danielle Chesebrough on shared local items of interest

Attended SCCOG and SEAT Board Meeting

Attended First Selectman monthly staff meeting

Attended Town/State/New York/FEMA Emergency Drill

Attended Webinars on CT Mapping and CT DOT Bus Shelters

Moved Borough Offices to Fire Department during Restroom Construction

Attended Gail Woodrow Memorial Dedication

Superior Sewer blew out the lines at Cross St and Northwest and sent an email to the Warden that the pipes are much clearer now after seaweed, ocean debris, stones and shells were removed. Things are better now that we are keeping up with the removal quarterly. As well, we invited the individual

of the proposed work at Whalen's Wharf to attend tonight's meeting. It appears the person is not here at the meeting.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Streets & Sidewalks (Schefers)

Conducted monthly brush pickup

Continued Park maintenance

Initiated Leaf cleaning

Completed repair to Cliff Street Paving and Curbing and Trumbull

Completed Cannon Square Paving Project

Completed initial Omega Street ROW repairs

Fire & Emergency Management (Nicholas/Hoadley)

SBFD responded to 8 Alarms in September 2024, they were as follows:

- 1) 9-2-24 6:04pm Fire Alarm Activation 66 Water St., Breakwater Rest. (Burnt food)
- 2) 9-6-24 11:53am MVA Rt. 1 @ North Main St., (1 injury to hospital)
- 3) 9-6-24 4:34pm Fire Alarm Activation 63 Langworthy Ave., L.P. (low batteries)
- 4) 9-15-24 12:08pm Fire on Sandy Point, Watch Hill FD responded (large fire pit)
- 5) 9-26-24 1:41pm Fire Alarm Activation 252 N. Water St., (faulty smoke detector)
- 6) 9-28-24 9:05am Fire Alarm Activation 16 Church St., (faulty detectors)
- 7) 9-29-24 7:08pm Medical Assist with SAC 40 Quana Duck Rd., (forcible entry)
- 8) 9-30-24 10:04am Mutual Aid for QFD to Deans Mill School (odor of burning)

I have a couple of financial requests: We need to clean up the bay after the work done on the floor repair. Service Master has quoted us a price of \$2,570 to clean up the truck bay. It will come out of the fire department and/or building budgets. There were truck repairs which the chief did not make a claim on. The board stressed that in the future that accidents be reported to the board and determination made on claims.

On a motion by Warden Schefers, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to allocate \$13,915 from fire department major expense fund, for the repairs to firetrucks, contingent on auditors' advice on which year to take the amount of repairs from, was approved.

August Police Incident Report (Nicholas)

None

Next month the speed bumps (cushions) presentation will be made to the Stonington Police Dept. Before I came to tonight's meeting, I got the data on the speed sign on Main Street, and it appears the sign does slow down cars and we don't seem to have a speeding problem except an occasional vehicle traveling too fast. The average is 17-20 miles per hour, with the average high being 20 mph.

Parks, Trees & Rights of Way (Barnes)

Rights of Way were walked by me, Amy Nicholas and Lisa Coleman. We found it interesting and noted some signs that need to be replaced. We will report those in a future meeting.

I have talked with Chris Curran about the cannons, there is a lot of wooden damage on the carriages. Curran to do some patch work.

I have a laundry list of pruning and planting requests. Megan from Bartlett has taken another job within Bartlett and we are holding off until the new representative is up to date on what we need done, we do have estimates.

Public Buildings (Rogers)

Fire House and Borough Hall –

Firehouse

Curran Construction has repaired the floor in bay 1 of the firehouse. Thankfully, right in time for voting and the Halloween party.

We have a verbal estimate for two condensers with 5 units each. The cost is \$40,000 less than the number quotes when the firehouse was first being built. The new estimate is \$80,000. Chief is working with us to determine if 10 units are needed. We will begin discussions. A second heating and cooling company is coming this week for a second quote.

Moving forward, ALL meetings and business that were done in Borough Hall will be carried out in the Firehouse.

Borough Hall

Bathrooms are moving forward.

Borough offices have moved to the Philip Johnson Firehouse.

The Asbestos company has given the State notification for removal. The process has been completed. Construction has begun. The estimated end date is towards the end of November.

Utilities & Sanitation (Bowdler)

Sanitation – I have issued 2 citations and 1 fine for yellow bags being placed on the curb the night before collection and not in a closed bin. Many of the issues occur in multi-family homes where it is not clear which tenant might be at fault. I have mailed a copy to the landlords address with the hope of resolving the issue.

Trash at the point. We are updating the signage at the Point. The Stonington Department of Public Works have created two new ‘Take your Trash with You Signs’ and one ‘No parking overnight 11pm to 6 am’ sign. We are awaiting feedback from the SVIA as to thoughts on the best locations for these signs.

Utilities – Street lighting

I have spoken to Mike Eving at Eving Electric about the possibility of installing electric streetlamps on Main Street and Water Street. His recommendation is that we try to avoid installing meters on the sidewalks because Eversource is very difficult to work with. We have a meter at Cannon Square which could possibly be leveraged. We could ask the library or other civic-minded organizations if they would be prepared to install a sub-meter on their electric panel to provide power for the lights. The Borough could then pay for the electricity used by the lights. I have sent Mike a map of where we would like the streetlamps. I have not followed up with Mike to see how we could proceed with the first section of sidewalk repairs on Water Street between Broad Street and High Street.

EV Charging

The Eversource credit for \$20,000 has been approved for the location on Broad Street at the back of the library. While the price is very cheap at \$14,000, there was not much support for this

location. We have about 45 days to say if we want to proceed with this location. If not, the 20K credit will be given to the next recipient in the queue. Please let me know if there is any interest in this option.

We also received the proposal for the EV charging stations at Town Dock. Town Dock does require an additional electrical box to be installed within the existing stainless-steel box. It is expensive at \$75,500.

There are no Eversource, or other Federal Credits applied to this quote. The only credit that is available at the moment is a Workplace Credit. I have enquired what is involved and how much that credit is worth. We would build a case that Town Dock is a workplace.

I think that this is too expensive from the Borough's perspective without a government credit being available. Even if we split the cost 50/50 with the Town of Stonington, I think it would be a stretch.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Jesse Diggs of 8 School St. thanked Burgess Rogers on the public restrooms. He questioned if they will be ready for the Stroll. And great job (to the Town) for the repair at Mathew's and Dodson pothole. He thought the EV charging stations were dead but the email from Kevin Bowdler makes it seem the EV charging stations is still alive. Mentioned that he had seen during hurricane coverage in Florida EV charging stations are put in flood zones. He thinks the location of the basketball courts is not good. There was a Fishers' Island Evacuation drill in October. Did the Borough have representatives there? Chief said they were involved. As well, the Warden and Amy were involved.

Resident Jean Fiore of 2 Cannon Square was curious about the basketball court and does not want green space removed. She has spoken with Eversource people about the tree on her driveway not being trimmed. Burgess Barnes will speak with Eversource.

Resident Nancy Donahue of 144 Water St questioned where the basketball court will be. It will be discussed by the Parks and Recreation department. She also asked about the EV charging station and the Warden said he will update that later in the meeting.

Resident Jennifer Olson of 9 Northwest St. feels there is very little green space near the water and encourages us to not give up green space to the basketball area and suggested other possible spaces. The recreation committee will meet this upcoming Monday. There are other options that should be discussed.

Resident Gene Pfeifer of 5 Diving Street thanked the board on behalf of the Town's Waterfront Commission for the Fisherman's Dock sign on the corner of Pearl and Water.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Comfort Station Update

See Public Buildings Report

Cliff Street Tree Removal

On a motion by Burgess Barnes, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to approve the removal of the dead Cliff Street tree, was approved.

EV Charging Station Update

Will not be on Wad Square.

Burgess Bowdler did have a conversation with Danielle Chesebrough and the town dock location is the Town's, not the Borough's.

Storm resilience and mitigation; Wayland's Wharf and Omega

One proposal for the first phase of repairs to the sidewalks at Wayland's Wharf was received. We hoped they would be in attendance tonight to explain the procedure. We are looking to move forward as soon as possible. The repairs to Omega Street have been done.

NEW BUSINESS

SVIA Application for Annual Borough Holiday Stroll

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to approve the application from SVIA to use Wadawanuck Square/SFL (High Street) & Water Street (High St. to Cannon Square) which will require Water Street closure (will work with town and SPD) during the event to allow citizens to "stroll" and visit shops for the Annual Borough Holiday Stroll to be held on Dec. 6, 2024 from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm (including caroling on SFL, tree lighting at Wad Square, Santa appearance, and Stroll down Water Street to Cannon Square), was approved.

P&Z Alternate Appointment

On a motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, the recommendation to appoint Brooks Bentz to Borough Planning and Zoning, was approved.

Borough ZBA Alternate Appointments

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Barnes, the recommendation to appoint Tim Olson as an alternate to the Borough Zoning Board of Appeals, was approved.

On a motion by Burgess Barnes, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, the recommendation to appoint Jennifer O'Brien as an alternate to Borough Zoning Board of Appeals, was approved.

FEMA CRS Update – Hazard Mitigation Plan

We were re-certified for the 10% reduction in flood insurance for residents. This meeting tonight suffices for a public meeting, and the newspaper is in attendance.

OTHER BUSINESS and Discussion

None

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Rogers, adjournment of the meeting at 8:07 pm, was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa M. Coleman
October 29, 2024

