

**Borough of Stonington
Board of Warden and Burgesses Regular
Monthly Meeting
May 20, 2024 MINUTES**

RECOGNITION OF JESSE DIGGS

Warden Schefers read aloud the Warden and Burgesses Appreciation and Recognition to Jesse Diggs for 15 years of service as a member of the Stonington Harbor Management Commission. André Bumgardner, our State Rep, read aloud the official citation from the State of CT General Assembly.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On a motion by Burgess Barnes, seconded by Burgess Rogers, approval of the minutes, as amended to remove the line “In this draft budget, LOCIP is to be removed this year.” And to correct “Infrastructure Reserves Budget will be \$200,000. The Clock Fund, Wadawanuck Square Fund, LOCIP, Cannon Fund lines are being removed from Allocated Funds and added as lines under their relevant Expense Categories” of the monthly meeting of April 15, 2024, were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

RECEIVED:

Engagement letter for approval of Audit — PKF O'Connor Davies
Ocean Community, application Free Family movies at Wada Square
Email - Penny Duckham regarding tree at 33 Main Street and 10 other letters to W&B to reconsider the removing of this tulip tree.
Email - regarding Jesse Diggs leaving the SHMC Commission
application - Kelly's Place, Battle of Stonington 5K Road Race
application - SVIA – 4th of July Parade.
Request from Stonington Waterfront Commission for sign for Fisherman's Dock

REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER

None

REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT; ARPA UPDATE

Bills for the period April 16, 2024 through May 15, 2024 totaled \$65,049.40. Large bills of note were the pumping of pipe at Dog Watch, Engineering associated with Foot bridge, repair at firehouse, legal fees for P&Z and ZBA pertaining to 11 Water Street and quarterly length of service awards for fire department. I&E through May 15, 2024 shows total revenue to date of \$1,531,603.53; and net income to date of \$296,043.21. Balance of ARPA funds is \$30,538.

WARDEN'S REPORT

Met with First Selectman Danielle Chesbrough on local items of interest.
Attended April and May SSCOG Meetings.
Met with Nick Kepple and Blunt White on Fire Protection Services Agreement.
Met with Bob Snyder of Water Street Dodson parking.
Attended April First Selectman monthly staff meeting.
Appointed Stonington Town SEAT Board Member.
Meet with Lisa Konicki, Chief, Danielle, Todd Olson and Amy on Lobster tree, lessons learned.
Chaired Annual meeting with Kathryn Burchenal moderator.
Met with Borough Staff on Public Restroom Design and related security measures.

Met with Vendor Library and Kevin Bowdler on EV Charging Station.
Have received letters regarding future repaving both Northwest Street from Pearl to Cross as well as Front Street.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Streets & Sidewalks (Schefers)

Conducted monthly brush pickup.
Continued Park maintenance.
Paved Church Street.
Filled potholes at various locations, more to follow.
S. Paved Water Street at Dodson and Downtown.
Reviewed sidewalk issues with various contractors.
Discussed Parking issues with Borough Attorney.

Fire & Emergency Management (Nicholas/Hoadley)

SBFD responded to 10 Alarms in April 2024, they were as follows:

- 1) 4-1-2024 12:15pm Fire Alarm Activation 103 Main St. (accidental, alarm tech)
- 2) 4-3-2024 7:21pm Tree on wires 2 Quana Duck Rd. @ N. Water St. (EVERSOURCE enroute)
- 3) 4-4-2024 9:49am Power line down IFO 27 Harborview Terrace (cable tv wire)
- 4) 4-5-2024 11:21am Propane gas leak 17 Hancox St. (worker accidentally drilled through a propane gas line in a wall)
- 5) 4-8-2024 5:54pm C/O Alarm Activation 330 N. Main St. (faulty detector)
- 6) 4-8-2024 11:37pm C/O Alarm Activation 228 Wamphassuc Pt. Rd. (unintentional)
- 7) 4-18-2024 6:07am M/V Fire 8 Watch Hill Ave. (fire out on arrival)
- 8) 4-18-2024 10:34pm Furnace problem 28 Watch Hill Ave. (thermostat issue)
- 9) 4-27-2024 7:05am Forcible entry 5 Broad St. (resident had fallen, couldn't ambulate)
- 10) 4-29-2024 8:03am MV Fire Rt. 1 @ Cemetery Rd. (fully involved)

April Police Incident Report

Still no report from the Stonington police. Speed cushions will be added to the June agenda.

Parks, Trees & Rights of Way (Barnes)

Planted four trees in Wadawanuck Square, donated by Bill Morris. Tree at 33 Main St. was posted due to potential interference with drainage system and water main pipe. Two trees on the eastern end of Broad Street due to decay and dieback in both were posted.

Public Buildings (Rogers)

I have met with three Alarm System companies this month. I am awaiting the return of 2 more responses. Once the three reports are in, I will present them to the Warden and together we will choose the company.

Chief Hoadley is meeting with the building's fire alarm system to assist with my request of a magnetic, door release mechanism for the hallway door leading to the entry of the ADA bathroom. This will ensure a safe sightline for the hallway.

Cannon repair is status quo. Completion date is June 30th.

Burgess Nicholas asked about the plumbing in Borough Hall and whether it had been modified to accommodate the future usage of the restrooms. The part of the outside has none of the inside yet.

Utilities & Sanitation (Bowdler)

Sanitation – I issued four warning citations for yellow bags placed by the curb before the day of collection and not being enclosed in a bin with a lid.

Portaloo Beautification at Town Dock – The project continues as proposed but with many parties involved in the process. The Stonington Small Boat Association would like their sign moved to the opposite side of the entrance because the new fence enclosure will cover the sign in its current location. A letter outlining the project has been sent to the Stonington Waterfront Commission. The Town of Stonington Public Works department has offered to level the site and dig down 1 foot below grade and fill it with stones. Once that work is done, we will get quotes for the landscaping job that will include crushed shells on the surface and a garden bed. We have submitted a grant application to the Stonington Garden Club for the landscaping work. I have been seeking quotes for the fence enclosure. 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 – Street Lighting I have been speaking with a lighting company that makes historic streetlamps (see attached) that can be either electrified or have solar panels incorporated into the posts. Using a google map of suggested locations (see attached) they have concerns that many of our darkest places will not get enough sunlight for the solar powered options to work properly. They would like to come to one of our meetings with a plug-in example of the light. With the longer days, it is not a great time of year to best assess these lights. While I have not been given any pricing, I was told that the solar lights run about 10K, and the electric lights are around 5K. They do offer a low voltage electric light that requires minimal trenching. E.g. 6". Maybe we could do a deal with homeowners in dark areas where we split the cost of the posts (or pay for them) and the resident connects the post to their electric box. I suggest we hold off on the lighting while we work on the sidewalk tripping hazards.

EV Charging – Please see attached proposal for two, level two EV charging stations that would be connected to the library’s electrical box and located on Broad Street closer to St. Mary’s Church than the PO. The proposal is contingent on a \$20,000 credit on the installation fees from Eversource which has been put on hold while Eversource and PURA agree if this credit will continue to be offered. If we do receive the credit, then the proposal is that the Borough pays for the net upfront costs of \$14,072 and the library will be responsible for everything going forward. This will continue on the June agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Penny Duckham of 33 Main St. addressed the tulip tree at the corner of Harmony and Main. Shocked that the tree was posted. Disagrees that the roots on the sidewalk are the issue. Encourages everyone to look at the storm drainage report but does not think the one tree is the problem. She asked the W&B remove the notice. There was applause.

Resident Tony Inzeroll of 24 Northwest concurred with Penny Duckham.

Resident Mike Fontana of 43 Main St. said the pipes are 6 inch and three catch drains are feeding into this 6-inch pipe.

Resident Jean Fiore of Cannon Square concurred with what has been said before.

Resident Peter Perenyi of 53 Main St. mentioned that all of our trees are an asset to the Borough. Also, when a tree company advises a tree to come down, they do have an interest in it. He asked if there are technical means to remove the roots in the pipe, then why is this a big deal?

Resident of Sandy Murray of 12 Union St. expressed her sadness that the tree on Main in front of the Beall House was removed without a notice. It was explained by the Tree Warden that the tree was posted, and the tree was diseased and there was a split down the center. Burgess Bowdler expressed that W&B have the responsibility to residents that the risk of having that tree fall down was too great.

Resident Sharon Lynch of 53 Main St. asked if there will be more exploration about the pipes.

Resident Henri Cole of 12 High Street said he had read the engineer's report and that the tree is just part of the problem with drainage problems In the Borough, there is also a problem with the grating.

Resident Jane Keener of 7 Harmony Street asked that everything we can do should be done to save this important member of our community

Resident Alice Huston of 24 Main has never seen a diagram of the sewers and drainage of the Borough. Hopes street crew will be more attentive to the leaves on the gratings.

Resident Jesse Diggs of School Street thanked the W&B for paving the depression at corner of Trumbull at Main Street. He mentioned collars being put in by Aquarion. Warden Schefers was told by Aquarion that size of the piping collars and covers are no longer made. Warden will provide a critique back to Aquarion. I sat through a replacement of the Groton Long Point bridge, it is very similar to the viaduct bridge. However, it is not on our agenda this month. Mentioned Watch Hill speed cushions. EV chargers, why are they not at the dock? Burgess Rogers explained it is not the Borough's, it is in a flood zone, and it will need wires to support it. Make sure the lamp posts we are considering shine down.

Resident Paul Janssens asked about putting parking lines in the Borough. Burgess Rogers disagrees that lines don't work. Resident Jean Fiore concurred that lines don't work.

Resident Dave Wall of 18 Water Street asked how much the EV chargers will cost (the answer is \$14,000)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Comfort Station Update

see above under Public Buildings report

Revised to Draft Vendor Ordinance

Rather than having a one-by-one application there is a draft vendor ordinance SBO-10. On a motion by Burgess Bowdler, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, approval of the changes to the Draft Vendor Ordinance were approved. The ordinance is on the Borough website.

Fire District contract FY 24-25 and beyond

We have had agreements with three fire districts for the past 12 years, this includes Stonington Fire District, Lord's Point and Wamphassuc Point. All three approved a one-year agreement.

Recreational Vehicles and Motor Homes (Ordinance Clarification)

Tabled and will be on June agenda.

Lisa Tepper Bates safety concerns about Wayland's Wharf

Warden Schefers received a report from CLA Engineering. The south and west sides of the wharf have eroded and sidewalks and ground have collapsed. Because of the voids that exist, a leak dye test will be done to see if any dye goes into the harbor. If not, the recommendation to infuse slurry grout into places that have sunken in to fill in and raise the sidewalks. Warden Schefers suggest caution tape.

Report on Annual Budget

Only eight residents attended and the budget was approved. There is a slight decrease in the mil rate.

Viaduct Bridge Update

There will not be a meeting with DOT and their contractors until September.

NEW BUSINESS

Penny Duckham, regarding tree 33 Main Street

Warden Schefers said this has been an incredible learning experience for him. Thinks we should do further evaluation, to determine the status of roots, the 6" piping and larger main drain. He will arrange the root blowing out and analysis of the capacity of the piping. A report of the piping on the entire Borough be put on the website. He also recommends the posting be removed while other solutions are explored.

Budget transfers for Infrastructure Project

On a motion by Warden Schefers, seconded by Burgess Bowdler, the transfer from Line 207 - \$15,000, from Line 610 - \$15,000 and Line 658 - \$4,500 to Infrastructure, was approved.

Engagement letter for approval of Audit — PKF O'Connor

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Bowdler, to have Warden Schefers engage PKF O'Connor for the 2024-25 year audit, was approved.

Consider request by Kelly's Place, Battle of Stonington 5K Road Race

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Bowdler, to approve the use of the Town Green, Main Street, Matthews Street, Water Street, Omega Street, Hancock Street, Diving Street on Tuesday, August 20, 2024 from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm for the Battle of Stonington 5K Road Race (contingent on insurance), was approved.

Consider request by Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce to show free family movies

On a motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Warden Schefers, that the request by Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce to hold Free Family Movies on Wadawanuck Square outside Stonington Library on July 23 and August 13 from 8:00 pm until 10 pm, was approved.

Consider Ian Cooke's approval for SHMC Commission

Tabled. SHMC will hold interviews of the candidates.

Consider \$2,000 to SVIA for Fourth of July parade

On a motion of Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Bowdler, to approve SVIA to run the July 4th parade and to allocate \$2,000 to them for the Fourth of July parade, was approved. Note, the insurance form was received.

Planning and Zoning Request for Church St widening review

There is a requirement when the municipality makes any changes to the length or size of a street that the person proposing go to Planning and Zoning and request a 8-24 Review by Planning and Zoning against the Plan of Conservation and Development. This is not a law, it is a requirement that it be presented and P&Z approve or disapprove it. If it is disapproved the W&B can override the P&Z ruling. Warden meant to attend the meeting where they made their decision. Received a letter from P&Z with their disapproval, citing 5 reasons.

On a motion from Burgess Bowdler, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to override the denial of the widening of Church Street decision made by Planning and Zoning, was approved.

Broad Street trees

There are four trees along the Palmer House on Broad St. only two of them should be removed due to dropping limbs being a safety hazard and they are rotting.

On a motion from Burgess Barnes, seconded by Burgess Bowdler, to remove the two trees that are posted for removal on Broad Street, was approved.

Consider request by Emily Logan for Ice Cream Truck at the Point

On a motion from Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, to approve the request by Emily Logan (subject to verifying the application fee) to use one parking space during the 2024 season for her ice cream truck at the Point, was approved.

Consider Waterfront Commission to have a sign directing people to Fisherman's Dock

Eugene Pfeifer presented a request to put up a sign at the corner of Water St and High St. There were no objections but the concern is about another sign.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Burgess Bowdler, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, adjournment of the meeting at 8:40 pm, was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa M. Coleman
May 28, 2024