

Borough of Stonington
Board of Warden and Burgesses
Regular Monthly Meeting December 16, 2024
MEETING MINUTES

Warden Michael Schefers called the monthly meeting of the Borough of Stonington Board of Warden and Burgesses to order at 7:02 p.m. The meeting was held at Borough Firehouse. Present, in addition to Warden Schefers were Burgesses Kevin Rogers, Amy Nicholas, Amanda Barnes, Kevin Bowdler, and Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Coleman. Approximately 10 members of the public were present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Approval of the minutes of the monthly meeting of November 18, 2024, was tabled.

CORRESPONDENCE

RECEIVED:

Wad Sq Bench request (C),
Stonington Point 12/31 use request (C),
41 Orchard St Lighting review request (C).

REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER

Announcement that the Borough elections will be held on May 5, 2025, interested parties should contact Clerk-Treasurer for dates received from SOTS office. Awaiting election calendar for SOTS Office and will hear back later this week.

REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT; ARPA UPDATE

Bills for the period November 16, 2024 through December 12, 2024 totaled \$201,236.91. Large bills of note were the payment for dump truck, next to last payment for the audit, sidewalks of Wad Square repairs, ServiceMaster for cleaning of Borough Fire House after floor installation and grinding, first and second payments to Yankee Remodeling for Borough bathrooms. I&E for July 2024 through December 12, 2024 shows total income to date of \$1,428,119.83; and net income to date of \$621,448.24. Balance of ARPA funds is \$33,921.

WARDEN'S REPORT

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

Attended SCCOG Legislature Meetings.

Attended SCCOG November Meeting.

Attended SEAT Board Meeting.

Attended 2024 CT Council of Municipalities Conference.

With SBMA, engaged "CT Main Street" in a review of our current Borough economy, commerce/ storefronts, events and cultural activities.

Completed 2023-2024 US Census Financial Report for the Borough.

March is when the viaduct conceptual design briefing will be held.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Streets & Sidewalks (Schefers)

Conducted monthly brush pickup.

Continued Park maintenance.

Continued leaf street cleaning.

Repaired two small sections of Water Street paving

Repaired Broad Street sidewalk sections at Wad Sq

Installed handicap accessible sidewalk sections at Wad Sq SE and SW corners.

Reviewed Water Street and Main Street initial slate sidewalk repairs with contractor (work to start shortly).

Fire & Emergency Management (Nicholas/Hoadley)

SBFD responded to 14 alarms in November 2024, they were as follows:

- 1) 11-1-24 3:02pm Fire Alarm Activation 33 Hopkins St. LP (faulty detector)
- 2) 11-3-24 3:40pm Medical assist with SAC 297 Flanders Rd. (forcible entry)
- 3) 11-5-24 12:29pm Fire Alarm Activation 15 Owen Dr. (burnt food)
- 4) 11-10-24 11:39am Fire Alarm Activation 26 Main St. PHGS (burnt food)
- 5) 11-11-24 2:16am CO Detector Activation 123 Water St. (needed new battery)
- 6) 11-12-24 12:51am Odor of gas 123 Water St., 2nd floor apt. (nothing found)
- 7) 11-15-24 9:12am Medical Assist with SAC, TOWN DOCK (lift assist)
- 8) 11-15-24 1:13pm Wires down IFO 15 Collin's Rd. (Utility wire)
- 9) 11-16-24 3:12pm Medical assist with SAC 83 Boulder Ave. LP (lift assist)
- 10) 11-21-24 10:25am Fire Alarm Activation 32 Water St. Ston. Commons (testing system)
- 11) 11-22-24 2:00pm Public Assistance 268 N. Main St. (flagpole)
- 12) 11-23-24 9:00am Fire Alarm Activation 21 Main St. (burnt food)
- 13) 11-24-24 4:09pm Odor of Gas 122 Elm St. (pilot on stove went out)
- 14) 11-27-24 9:15am Fire Alarm Activation 195 Wamphassuc Pt. Rd. (workers, accidental)

November Police Incident Report (Nicholas)

None

Parks, Trees & Rights of Way (Barnes)

The projects I had mentioned were underway during the last meeting are now complete.

At the request of Burgess Rogers and me, Bartlett planted a lovely arborvitae outside of Borough Hall. Warden remarked that \$11,000 of \$15,000 of the Parks, Trees and Rights of Way Budget has been spent already.

Hollycroft is switching out some statures.

Public Buildings (Rogers)

Firehouse

The broken elevator has been fixed and certified by the State of Ct. As of Wednesday December 11, 2024.

There was a leak in the community room.

Both quotes have been received for air-conditioning in the Firehouse. Dunklee quote is for all second-floor rooms minus one room. This would be Mitsubishi split system with seven ceiling units and one wall unit with three outdoor heat pumps. The quote is for \$64,773 which is for only the units, not the installation or permits. I will ask for a complete quote. After January 1st the units will be superior and therefore the price will increase. Perhaps Dunklee will still have the older units in their warehouse.

The other quote is for approximately \$74,000. Important to mention that this was cut from the firehouse plan 20 years ago and it is important to keep our volunteer firefighters cool and healthy.

Borough Hall

An arborvitae has been planted near the entrance of Borough Hall. Its location was chosen to allow plenty of room to grow.

The restroom project is complete. We are just waiting for our final inspection. A mini-grand opening of sorts will happen for next month's meeting. We were 2% over budget. We anticipated \$124,245 and we spent \$126,903. We are having Ann finish the 2024 year in the fire house and move back after the Holiday to Borough Hall.

Borough Hall has been thoroughly cleaned after the construction project.

Restroom signs will be posted in logical areas around the Borough, Firehouse

Utilities & Sanitation (Bowdler)

None

Warden mentioned the Orchard Street light complaint. There is still an outstanding Main Street light issue. I have asked for some guidance from new customer service rep from Eversource. Kevin Rogers mentioned that this is a low priority by Eversource. Warden will bring up the issue at the COGG meeting

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Chuck Hartman of 13 Elm Street mentioned the corner of Cliff and Elm Street lighting problem and he has asked for two years with no result.

Resident Sibby Lynch of 188 Water Street mentioned that their house is flooded with light.

Resident Windy Hatch of 41 Orchard St. brought up that she had talked with someone at Eversource and was advised they could install a shield at a cost. The correspondence will be shared with the Board.

Resident Dave Dyer of Main Street regarding the air-conditioning issue, that the COMO dealt with the same issue of air-conditioning. Staff and parents all expected it and needed it.

Resident Eugene Pfeifer of 5 Diving Street mentioned the water leak in the road at 1 Main Street. Warden will contact Aquarion.

Resident Tim Olsen of 9 Northwest St. asked that the Board push back on the Town of Stonington taking away green space. Wants a comprehensive plan of projects. Warden mentioned there will be a public hearing by Danielle Chesebrough. Burgess Barnes replied that children need a safe place to play basketball. Burgess Bowdler agrees that the Docks owned by the Town of Stonington is the best place to put basketball court. Warden advised the neighbors surrounding the Town Dock go to the Town regarding the future plan of development.

Resident Sibby Lynch of 188 Water Street expressed her vision that the basketball court be under the viaduct.

Resident Jesse Diggs of 8 School Street complimented the Board on listening to citizens a year ago on the bathrooms. The bathrooms look awesome.

Resident Chuck Hartman of 13 Elm Street asked about sidewalks being upended by Borough trees dealt with, speed cushions, cutting back branches on walkways, Pearl Street between Water and Main. Warden addressed these issues. Pearl Street is on schedule for next year. Speed cushions are still being worked on with Police Board, will be discussed in January. The sidewalks on Wad Square have been repaired. The next phase is sidewalks on Water Street between High and Broad. Main Street will be addressed after that. Cutting back branches (the holly trees on Main Street, she has been cited twice, the next thing to do is if she does not reply to those citations, we can take action to cut the trees, and she will be billed. Regarding streetlights, Burgess Bowdler mentioned that Main and Water will require a subpanel, trenching under the road. Electricity will not work, the low voltage lights will not work, 110-volt lights will work but meters and trenching will be necessary. Looking for quotes.

Resident Sibby Lynch of 188 Water Street feels that the real estate office lights are too bright and has been sent over to Zannarini and Planning and Zoning. The business has dimmed them and shortened the hours they are on.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Public Restroom Update

See Public Buildings Report

Storm resilience and mitigation; Wayland's Wharf and Omega

Whalen's Wharf needs to be put off until spring. Needs a second quote.

Omega St. Town of Stonington has corrected the Right of Way.

Maplewood Lane Working with Town engineer and their third-party storm water consultant.

NEW BUSINESS

Wad Square Bench request

Dave Dyer and SVIA had written a request to the Board to put a bench in memory of Polly Dyer at Wadawanuck Square. Regarding the history, several requests had been denied because Jeffrey Callahan, the former Warden, had denied them because too many benches at Wad Square was not a good idea. There could be benches at LaGrua park, bricks on walkways, trees in memory. Dave Dyer did not know of the history and the family only wanted what is best for the Borough. They found a location across from Indulge. Dave will go back to the family and SVIA with other alternatives and discuss them and be back in touch with the board.

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to approve the request by Dave Dyer for a bench in the memory of Polly Dyer at Wadawanuck Square was denied by majority, Burgess Rogers voted no.

Stonington Point request

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to approve the application from Alden Alexander for the New Year's Eve Ball Drop at the Point on 12/31/2024-01/01/2025 from 11:30 pm-12:30 am, subject to proof of insurance, was approved.

OTHER BUSINESS and Discussion

Discussion regarding air conditioning. Burgess Rogers will go back to both companies to get complete quotes.

Discussion regarding our budgets. Burgess Bowdler thinks we should not go into a deficit for this year. There are many projects going on and we should not take on new ones.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Bowdler, adjournment of the meeting at 8:27 pm, was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa M. Coleman
December 31, 2024

