

Board of Warden and Burgesses
Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting ~ October 21, 2013

CALL TO ORDER:

- A. The regular Monthly Meeting of the Borough of Stonington Warden and Burgesses was called to order in Borough Hall at 7:30 PM by Warden Jeffrey Callahan. Present were Burgesses Michael Adair, Michael Blair, Sibby Lynch, Amy Nicholas, Howard Park, Robert Scala, and Clerk-Treasurer Brian Krafjack.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Burgess Adair, acceptance of the minutes from the Board Meeting held on September 16, 2013 was unanimously approved.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT'S REPORT (PERRY):

- A. Received tax collections for September: \$6,113.
- B. Received payment from Wamphassuc Point Association per revised agreement: \$720.
- C. Received FEMA Blizzard Grant Reimbursement: \$7,576.
- D. Field work audit is rescheduled for November 6, 2103.
- E. Processed Quarterly Reports.

CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT (KRAFJACK):

- A. No activity to report.

REVIEW OF BILLS:

- A. The 9/16/2013 through 10/18/2013 report was reviewed and is on file in the Borough Office.
 - 1. Bills for the period totaled \$70,863.
 - a. Warden Callahan noted that with the final debt service payment for the Firehouse and Borough Hall improvements, the Borough is debt-free.

REVIEW OF PROFIT/LOSS STATEMENT:

- A. The July through October 2013 Profit and Loss Budget vs. Actual Report was reviewed and is on file in the Borough Office.
 - 1. Net income as of 10/18/2013 is \$518,813 and is tracking ahead of budgeted income.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- A. Informational:
 - 1. Town of Stonington: notice of public hearing on 11/19/2013.
- B. Requests:
 - 1. Stonington Garden Club: Special Event Application Package for June 13-14, 2014 Garden by the Sea.
 - 2. United Church: event sign request for Wadawanuck Square.
- C. Invitations/ Meetings:
 - 1. Southeastern Step Up Employer Conference: 10/3/2013 conference at Groton Municipal Building.

2. Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority (SCWA): notice of meeting and agenda for 10/17/2013.

D. Other:

1. SCWA: letter regarding representatives to Advisory Board.
2. Beth Walker: letter regarding parking south of Cannon Square.
3. Alice Fitzpatrick: letter regarding parking south of Cannon Square.
4. Betty Richards: email regarding parking south of Cannon Square.
5. Camaro Signs: email regarding Borough viaduct sign proposal.
6. Finest Kind Signs: Borough viaduct sign proposal.
7. Jim Hicks: resignation from Zoning Board of Appeals.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- A. None.

WARDEN'S REPORT:

A. Community Rating System (CRS) Audit:

1. On 1 October the Borough and Town underwent an audit of flood plain management programs as part of FEMA's Community Rating System.
 - a. These audits are done every five years and they can have an impact on federal flood insurance rates within the community.
 - b. The audit took all day and went well.
 - c. Warden Callahan is now in the process of pulling together additional information that the auditor has requested, which is due by early November.

B. Wamphassuc Point Association (WPA) Fire Protection Agreement:

1. WPA has signed the amendment to the fire protection agreement, which corrected an unanticipated problem with the original formula for calculating the annual fee.
 - a. Warden Callahan intends to make similar adjustments with the other two fire districts.

SANITATION, UTILITIES, AND STREET LIGHTS (WARDEN CALLAHAN):

A. Wadawanuck Square Light:

1. Repairs were completed September 24th.

B. Aquarion Water Company water main replacement:

1. Aquarion Water Company is developing plans to replace several sections of old (1888) 6" water mains in the Borough with larger mains next spring.
 - a. Wall Street, Church Street, and east Broad Street are on the list.

C. Borough Clock:

1. Daylight Savings Time ends on Sunday November 3rd.

STREETS (BURGESS PARK):

A. Streets and Roads:

1. Paving Schedule:

- a. A change in plans for paving, caused by Aquarion Water Company's scheduling a water main replacement down Wall Street and up Broad Street allowed for paving of Lees Court.
- b. Not without complaints, the paving of Cliff and Temple Streets was accelerated. The paving was done quickly and most residents seem happy with the new surface.
- c. A granite crosswalk was discovered at the intersection of Broad and Main Streets and was left exposed.
- d. The stop sign and a new street sign were put up on Chesebro Lane.
- e. A catch basin was cleaned out on Bayview Avenue.
- f. The wheel stops were removed from the parking lot at The Point; the parking lot will be re-graded sometime in the coming week.
- g. The Borough has been asked by a resident to put a curbing in front of their house.
 - i. Burgess Park suggests we get a written release of responsibility from the resident in case someone should trip and fall due to the curbing.
 - ii. Hastedt Brothers refused to place this curbing for liability reasons.
 - iii. The Borough placed sandbags as a stop gap measure and plans to use cold-set to build a curb.

2. Street Signage:

- a. The Borough continues to get requests for stop signs and each request must be addressed individually.
 - i. The most recent request came from Borough resident Peyton Horne who requested a stop sign on the corner of High and Main Streets, corresponding with a school bus stop.
 - ii. Burgess Park noted that, in the past, a temporary stop sign installed during the school months was effective.
 - iii. Burgess Park expressed concern that putting a permanent stop sign in this location might set a precedent that could lead to stop signs requests for the majority of intersections throughout the Borough since the majority of the intersections require caution while transiting.
 - iv. Burgess Nicholas asked why there was a stop sign at the intersection of Church and Main Streets, noting that perhaps this stop sign might be relocated to the High and Main Street intersection.
 - v. Burgess Adair said that he walks with a group every morning, and the timing of their walk generally coincides with the arrival of the school bus, noting that he has never seen an incident where a motorist didn't stop for the school crossing.
 - vi. Burgess Blair asked if there was any statistical information such as traffic incident reports that might suggest whether a stop sign is appropriate for a particular location.
 - vii. Burgess Nicholas will talk to the Chief of Police Desmond to see if any such information is available.
 - viii. Burgess Blair said that years ago a 3M reflective tape product was installed at crosswalks and it was an effective device for slowing traffic at night.
 - ix. Burgess Lynch suggested a moveable stop sign be placed in the center of the road.
 - x. Burgess Park noted that this type of sign, when placed on Water Street near the Post Office, was repeatedly stolen.
 - xi. Warden Callahan said that the paint on crosswalks needs to be refreshed and suggested that they be repainted in the spring rather than adding stop signs.
 - xii. Burgess Park said that he would prefer to install a temporary stop sign rather than wait for spring.
 - xiii. Burgess Nicholas suggested that she speak with Chief of Police Desmond first, to see if any incidents have occurred at this intersection.

- xiv. Warden Callahan concurred that Chief of Police Desmond should be consulted before a temporary stop sign is installed.
3. Brush Pickup:
 - a. Roger cleared Brush on Lees Court and mowed lawns while Sue was away.
 - b. Roger and Sue request that residents only put leaves out in the gutters; no twigs nor branches as these get caught up in the vacuum.
 4. Street Sweeper:
 - a. Roger and Sue replaced the fuel pump on the street sweeper.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (BURGESS BLAIR):

- A. Fire Department Reorganization:
 1. Burgess Blair reported that he and Warden Callahan have continued to meet with Chief Hoadley and Attorney Block on consolidation of the Companies within the Department.
 - a. Burgess Blair said that the Borough should have a revised ordinance drafted so that we are ready for the outcome from the Fire Department.
 - b. Burgess Blair presented a timeline of activities for the coming months:
 - i. 10/15/2013: Fire Department reviews draft of new by-laws.
 - ii. 11/13/2013: Warden and Burgesses meeting with informational session on consolidation.
 - iii. 11/18/2013: New Company formed by Block Janney, by-laws approved, Borough and new Fire Company agreement.
 - iv. 12/02/2013 through 12/11/2013: Existing Fire Companies meet and vote on consolidation.
 - v. 12/12/2013: Borough posts notice of agenda and proposed changes to ordinance.
 - vi. 12/16/2013: Warden and Burgesses meet to review consolidation agreement and vote on revised ordinance.
 - vii. 01/04/2013: Subject to approvals, new Borough Fire Department consolidation is in effect.
 2. Warden Callahan pointed out that the Borough Charter empowered the Borough to form a fire department in which the Borough owns the building and equipment, noting that the Borough does not own or control the companies within the department since they were chartered by the State of Connecticut in the 19th Century.
 - a. Warden Callahan added that if the consolidation goes into effect, the Borough will then have a formal agreement with the new Fire Company.
 3. Burgess Blair explained that an exciting aspect of the proposed consolidation is that a chain of command is forming and there are opportunities for members of the department within that chain of command.
 4. Burgess Scala asked if consolidation is being well received by the members of the companies.
 - a. Burgess Blair said that the discussion has generally been positive, adding that the Fire Department used to have about 40 members per company, now there are 40-45 members in the entire Fire Department.
 - b. Burgess Blair explained that consolidation of the Companies is consistent with what is taking place in other fire departments.
 - c. Warden Callahan said that Chief Hoadley keeps stressing that the result of consolidation will be a single line of command with the very best people serving as officers.
 5. Burgess Blair noted that the loss of the traditions of the different Companies has been the main stumbling block.
 - a. Burgess Lynch asked if there was a way to keep some of the traditions alive.

- b. Burgess Blair said that since the number of people per company is now so small, consolidation will bring about a cohesiveness under one company; the existing history and memorabilia will remain.

B. Fire Department Alarms Report:

- 1. Report not available.

C. Fire Marshal's Report:

- 1. Report not available.

PARKS, TREES, AND RIGHTS OF WAY (BURGESS LYNCH):

A. Parks:

- 1. The stump of the Pin Oak on the west side of the Library driveway, which had been taken down after being damaged by a hurricane two years ago, is scheduled to be ground out.
- 2. Grass has finally grown over the spot where the stump of Borough tree #26 was ground out in Wadawanuck Square across from the Post Office.
 - a. Many thanks to Margaret Revill for all she did preparing the soil, leveling, seeding, and watering.
- 3. The Borough Christmas tree is being handled by Kevin Bowdler, the President of the Stonington Village Improvement Association (SVIA).
 - a. This year the tree may be a cut tree because there is not much of a selection of balled trees this late in the year, but several people are keeping their eyes peeled for a suitable balled tree.

B. Trees:

- 1. Pruning:
 - a. Many trees on Elm Street from Cliff Street to the foot bridge were overhanging the street and brushing against houses. The offending trees have been trimmed and "elevated" by arborist Nick Reardon.

C. Rights of Way:

- 1. Burgess Lynch is planning the Rights of Way walk, possibly for the coming weekend.
 - a. Burgess Blair noted that a resident renting a property on Lees Court shouted at Ms. Blair while she was walking her dog, informing her incorrectly that she was trespassing on private property.
 - b. Warden Callahan noted that Lees Court is a Borough road.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS (BURGESS ADAIR):

A. Borough Hall Windows and Fascia Painting:

- 1. After talking to several contractors, Burgess Adair felt the best proposal came from the same contractor who did the flagpole a few months ago, David Barbone.
 - a. Mr. Barbone indicated, after an onsite inspection with Burgess Adair, that painting of the windows and part of the fascia (particularly on front and East side) would be \$3,000.
 - b. The gutters themselves are copper and in good shape. The problem is that to have the paint adhere to copper, it must have a special primer coat.
 - c. The gutters also need to be cleaned of plant life that has formed a somewhat porous root structure. Burgess Adair estimates that removal would add another \$500 to the total, but not doing so now would lead to much more costly water damage later.

- d. Burgess Adair directed Mr. Barbone to start work and will keep the Board informed of progress and any changes that affect the costs or outlook.

B. Fire House Overhead Doors:

- 1. Many of the windows on the South side of the firehouse on the main overhead doors have broken their vacuum seal and have clouded up.
 - a. Bill Teixeira is looking into suggestions from the Overhead Door Co. about ways to remedy this issue.
 - b. Burgess Adair will report back on this later. The situation is not critical.

SIDEWALKS (BURGESS SCALA):

A. Repairs:

- 1. Sidewalk on the southwest corner of Water and Broad Streets:
 - a. Burgess Scala said that this repair is problematic due to the substantial tree on that corner, noting that the solution may be to mound the sidewalk over the existing root structure.
 - b. The cost for removing the existing granite stones and resetting them may be about \$3,000. Once the stones are removed, an estimate can be provided for work that may be necessary on the tree roots.
 - i. Yorkshire Masonry and Arborist Nick Reardon will coordinate their efforts.
 - c. Burgess Lynch asked if the existing fence would have to be cut to mound the sidewalk.
 - i. Burgess Scala said he did not think that would be necessary.
 - d. Burgess Lynch asked if the sidewalk could be closed, and a sign put up saying “Pass at your Own Risk.”
 - i. Warden Callahan said that a sign would not cover the potential liability and that the condition has to be addressed.
 - e. Burgess Adair concurred, noting that the condition is potentially dangerous and has to be fixed.
 - f. Burgess Blair suggested that perhaps a parking space should be taken so that the sidewalk could be re-routed around the east side of the tree.

B. Cannon Square Cannons:

- 1. Burgess Scala said he met with Burgess Park and Borough Gunner Bob Abramson to discuss the condition of the cannon wheels, which are badly deteriorating.
 - a. Burgess Park said that the wheels are covered with an epoxy paint trapping moisture and making the condition worse.
 - i. Burgess Adair asked if the wheels were stained, as opposed to painted, would they stand up better.
 - ii. Burgess Park responded in the affirmative.
 - b. Burgess Park added that the wheels and spokes are made of Ash, which is not particularly rot resistant.
- 2. Burgess Park said that he believes the solution is to take the wheels off the axels, strip the wheels, and repair them.
 - a. Burgess Park said that at that time, the condition of wood swelling at the hub can be addressed, noting that this prevents the wheels from being periodically rotated, which is important for maintaining the cannons.
 - b. Burgess Blair said that it sounds as if the work should be done soon.
 - c. Warden Callahan suggested that Burgess Park submit a written report of his recommendations to the Board.

POLICE, PUBLIC AFFAIRS, AND COMMUNICATIONS (BURGESS NICHOLAS):

A. Police Incident Report:

1. During the month of September 2013 there were 51 incidents in the police report for the Borough including:
 - a. Motor vehicle accidents/ motor vehicle stops/ auto and parking complaints: 9
 - b. Medical assists: 7
 - c. Phone larceny: 1
 - d. Phone threat complaints/ disturbance complaints: 1
 - e. Vandalism: 1
 - f. No animal control issues were logged in September.
2. Warden Callahan asked why, if there were 51 incidents, only 19 are mentioned in the report.
 - a. Burgess Nicholas said that there are many responses to fire alarms, false alarms, and 911 hang-ups that are logged but not highlighted in the report.

B. Website/ Communications:

1. No activity to report.

C. Events:

1. No activity to report.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. None.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Final Payment for Firehouse/ Borough Hall Improvements Loan:

1. Warden Callahan passed around the final payment check for all Board members to sign.
 - a. With this final payment, the Borough is debt-free.

B. Parking Below Canon Square:

1. Warden Callahan summarized the three letters received from Borough residents concerning parking issues south of Cannon Square:
 - a. Beth Walker - end of Trumbull Street.
 - b. Betty Richards- cars and trucks blocking access to her driveway.
 - c. Alice Fitzpatrick- parking privileges afforded occupants of Stonington Commons.
2. Burgess Blair suggested that residents of Omega, Diving, School, Trumbull, and Hancox Streets be issued resident parking permit stickers. Residents who have off-street parking available to them on their property should not be issued parking permit stickers.
 - a. Burgess Adair asked how this would be enforced.
 - b. Burgess Nicholas said that she has spoken to the police about enforcing resident parking permits, and they have told her that it is not enforceable. Therefore, enforcing parking restrictions would become a Borough responsibility.
 - c. Burgess Adair suggested creating an ordinance that would be enforceable.
 - d. Burgess Blair said that we should challenge the police on their position that this would be unenforceable.
 - e. Burgess Park said that he believes that issuing parking permits would make the situation worse.
 - f. Burgess Blair suggested, if resident parking stickers do not become the solution, that parking spaces be lined, but not numbered. In order to preserve access to driveways, a box should be painted on the street in front of driveways.

3. Warden Callahan suggested the following action be taken to address the three concerns voiced by Mss. Walker, Richards, and Fitzpatrick:
 - a. Beth Walker – the Board should consider resident parking permit stickers.
 - i. The concept would have to be discussed with Attorney Kepple and the Police Department; public hearings would have to be held.
 - ii. Warden Callahan asked Burgess Blair to draft an ordinance for review and discussion.
 - b. Betty Richards- paint "compact cars only" in the parking spaces in front of Ms. Richard's house.
 - c. Alice Fitzpatrick- remove the one-hour parking sign along Water Street.
- C. Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority (SCWA) Representative Advisory Board:
1. The SCWA notified the Board in a letter dated 9/30/2013 that the Borough has the responsibility to appoint two people to the Representative Advisory Board to the SCWA.
 - a. Appointments are made biennially for two-year terms.
 - b. Warden Callahan said that he has served on this Representative Advisory Board, and is currently the Chairman for the term he is serving.
 - c. Warden Callahan said he would be willing to serve another two-year term if appointed, and asked the Board to think about other Borough resident for consideration to fill the second position.
 2. On a motion by Burgess Park, seconded by Burgess Scala, the appointment of Warden Callahan to the Representative Advisory Board to the SCWA, as a representative of the Borough of Stonington, was unanimously approved.
- D. Proposal to replace Borough Viaduct sign:
1. Two proposals were reviewed to replace the aging Borough of Stonington sign located on the Viaduct.
 - a. Burgess Blair said that the sign is important and the space beneath the sign announcing arrival to the Borough could be used to hang smaller signs promoting Borough events such as the Farmer's Market.
 - b. Burgess Park asked who would have the authority to say which events are allowed to be announced with signs.
 - c. Burgess Lynch suggested guideline could be developed for the size and format of the signs allowing multiple signs to be displayed at one time, one below the other.
 2. Burgess Park asked if the existing Borough sign could be repaired in lieu of being replaced.
 - a. Burgess Blair said the sign is in pretty bad condition, with some of the wood rotted away.
 - b. Warden Callahan asked Burgess Park to take a look at the sign to see if it could be repaired.
- E. Consider Stonington Garden Club Event Application:
1. On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, the following application for use of Stonington Borough property, including streets was unanimously approved.

Stonington Garden Club Gardens by the Sea Tour:

Date/time: 6/13/2014 and 6/14/2014, 6 PM – 10 AM to 4 PM.

Location: Wadawanuck Square, Parking area at The Point, Town Dock.

OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Not for Profit Entities:

1. Burgess Blair expressed concern that the Portuguese Holy Ghost Society (PHGS) and the Stonington Historical Society Old Lighthouse Museum (SHS LM) may be engaging in activities that fall outside the original purpose of their not for profit entity.
 - a. Burgess Blair noted that the PHGS fish-fry events have become so large that Main Street becomes overcrowded on Fridays making parking impossible.
 - i. Burgess Park noted that the PHGS needs to have events like the fish-fry in order to survive.
 - ii. Burgess Blair said that he supports the PHGS’s cultural activities, but the “chatter” he hears on the street from Borough residents is that the PHGS is essentially operating a restaurant which wouldn’t be allowed by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
 - b. Burgess Blair questioned, with the planned expansion of the SHS LM, if they are not considering getting into the “wedding business.”
 - i. Burgess Blair added that he is in favor of the planned expansion, but is concerned that events such as wedding receptions with music and large crowds would change the character of The Point and would lead to more parking issues.
 - ii. Warden Callahan noted that the Board would have to grant permission for the SHS LM to use The Point for parking.
 - iii. Burgess Blair said that the SHS LM would not need permission to hold an event, and therefore the Borough might not be able to control parking if not aware of the event.
 - iv. Burgess Park said that it is one thing for an event to be held by the entity that owns the venue, but when the venue is rented out for private use it becomes a burden on the community.
 - v. Burgess Blair concurred with Burgess Park and said that the tax-free status was granted because it was a place the public could enjoy noting that private functions limit public access.
 - vi. Burgess Nicholas said that she does not appreciate the design of the SHS LM planned expansion, and said she feels non-profit entities are losing sight of their obligation to the community and to society.
 - vii. Burgess Adair said that every 503c entity has to hold special events in order to raise money to survive.
 - viii. Burgess Park asked Burgess Nicholas if she believed the purpose of the SHS LM expansion was so that they could hold wedding receptions.
 - ix. Burgess Nicholas responded in the affirmative.
 - x. Burgess Park said that he understood the expansion plans would help the SHS LM expand their existing activities and provide space to display artifacts.

B. Handicapped Parking Spaces:

1. Burgess Nicholas asked how handicapped parking spaces are awarded in the Borough.
 - a. Warden Callahan said that a recommendation must first be given by a doctor.
 - b. Warden Callahan said that handicapped spaces in the Borough are not assigned for a particular person, but are available for use by any handicapped person.

ADJOURNMENT:

- A. On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Burgess Park, adjournment of the meeting at 9:27 PM was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Krafjack

Clerk- Treasurer