

**Borough of Stonington
Board of Warden and Burgesses Regular Monthly Meeting
February 21, 2023
Minutes**

Warden Jeffrey Callahan 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 the Stonington Fire House. Present at Stonington Fire House, in addition to Warden Callahan were Burgesses Amy Nicholas, Kevin Rogers, and Shaun Mastroianni; and Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Coleman. Amanda Barnes was absent. Approximately 13 members of the public were present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Rogers, the minutes of the regular meeting of January 17, 2023, were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

PHGS, application for reserved parking spaces at 26 Main Street for Lenten fish & chips.
Michele Crowley, application for annual Blessing of the Fleet 5k Race.
G & M Crowley, application for annual Blessing of the Fleet procession.
Sandra Alexander, application for Fifth Annual Art Walk on Water Street.
Tim Lebling, application for coffee sales on the Point.
St. Michael Parish, application for annual Our Lady of Fatima processions
CLA, Drainage Systems Feasibility Study.
CLA, proposal to prepare bid docs and provide project admin for new storm water drainage system.
Inovis Energy, EV charging stations proposal.
Dime Oil, Borough Hall heating oil contract for FY 2023-24
Kathryn Burchenal, email regarding keeper of the clock position

OUTGOING:

Letter to Leo Labbe regarding zelkova tree at corner of Front and Broad Streets

REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER REGARDING MAY 2023 ELECTION

All deadlines have been met so far.

Registrars of Voters of Stonington will determine order of candidates on ballot in March.

Resident Richard Easton asked about absentee voting. Absentee ballots will be available beginning March 31, and the application for an absentee ballot is on the Borough website, under "Governance".

REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT

Bills for the period January 15 through February 17, 2023 totaled \$46,982.22. Large bills of note were for the SBF. I&E through February 17, 2023 shows total revenue to date of \$1,383,761.10, which is \$31,275.10 over budget; and net income to date of \$448,425.86.

WARDEN'S REPORT

1. Signed contract with Dime Oil for 2023-24 heating season
2. Submitted annual CRS recertification package
3. Attended monthly Town Department Head meeting

4. Local Covid statistics: New London County cumulative deaths now total 769. State positivity rate about 6%; New London County positivity rate about 7%
5. Met with Leo Labbe regarding zelkova tree at corner of Front and Broad Streets
6. Attended monthly SCCOG meeting
7. Continued working on FY 2023-24 budget
8. Attended meeting with DEEP Police at SPD regarding duck hunting regulations

BOROUGH CLOCK -- Set clock after power outage on Monday 2/20/23.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Streets & Sidewalks (Callahan)

1. Conducted monthly brush pickup.
2. Checked Harbor Edge outfall
3. Painted Borough Hall lobby
4. Filled potholes

Fire & Emergency Management (Nicholas/Hoadley)

SBFD responded to 8 Alarms in January 2023, they were as follows:

- 1) 1-2-2023 11:02am Alarm sounding IFO 6 Bayview Ave. (car alarm)
- 2) 1-9-2023 10:07am Water Emergency 134 Water St. (sprinkler over furnace)
- 3) 1-17-2023 8:35am Wires down IFO 9 Church St. (truck took utility wires down)
- 4) 1-18-2023 8:58am Fire Alarm Activation 113 Water St., Noah's (accidental)
- 5) 1-19-2023 8:35am Wires arcing N. Main St. @ Rt.1 (nothing found)
- 6) 1-23-2023 3:57pm Fire Alarm Activation 28 Cutler St., COMO (child)
- 7) 1-26-2023 1:58pm Wires down IFO 190 Wamphassuc Pt. Rd. (utility wires)
- 8) 1-27-2023 5:56pm Medical assist with MRA 1 Cutler St. (lift assist)

December 2022 Police Incident Report

In December, the police responded to 71 calls in the borough including 17 Check Business/Check Building, 11 Patrol Request primarily on High Street, 11 Medical Assists, 5 Fire Related Calls, 5 Assist Citizen, 4 Parking Complaints, 3 Assist Other Agency, 3 Burglar Alarms, and 2 911 Hang ups/Misdials. There was one incident each of Alarm Not Registered, Damage Not Criminal, Motor Vehicle Stop, Alarm Panic, Larceny, Keys in Vehicle, Nuisance, Community Policing, Animal Control and one Disturbance.

January 2023 Police Incident Report

In January, the police responded to 63 calls in the borough including 13 Check Business/Check Building, 7 Assist Citizens, 6 Burglar Alarms of which 3 were false, 5 911 Hang ups/Misdials, 4 Fire related calls, 3 Vehicle Inspection, 3 Assist Other Agency, 3 Medical Assists, 3 Accidents including one hit and run, 2 Community Policing, 2 Found Items and 2 Parking Complaints. There was one incident each of Nuisance, Found Item, Criminal Mischief, Patrol Request, Disturbance, and one Red Tag.

Parks, Trees & Rights of Way (Barnes)

No report

Public Buildings (Mastroianni)

Nothing to report

Utilities & Sanitation (Rogers)

Four notices issued. Breezeline has strung some new lines and there are additional double poles. Resident Richard Easton asked if yellow bag notices are counted as warnings or actual tickets. Burgess Rogers commented that these are friendly letters, and the numbers are going down. New residents and summer renters don't necessarily know of the ordinance on trash.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Pam Mola asked about proposed Town short-term rental ordinance. This ordinance would cover the Borough as well, unless the Borough decides to adopt its own. Under the proposed Town ordinance, short-term rentals will be allowed but the owner must register with the Town and provide a point of contact who can be at the residence within an hour. There would be an annual registration fee, and the fees collected will be used to pay a company hired by the Town to manage the program. A Town referendum is scheduled for March 13th. Chief Hoadley noted that he does not have authority to inspect single or two-family residences, but he has had complaints from people who rented a short-term rental and found there were no fire or CO detectors in the rental, along with no second egress. He feels that all short-term rentals should be inspected by the fire marshal.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Discuss draft budget

The Town conducted the state-mandated five-year revaluation in 2022. On average, appraisals increased about 50% Town-wide. As a result, both Town and Borough mil rates will drop this year. The Warden does not have an official Grand List yet, it will be received in the next week or two. So, property tax revenue and the mil rate are TBD. The current mil rate in the Borough is 3. The board will make a decision when the Grand List comes out on what the new mil rate will be.

On the expenditures side of the budget, Line 111 is a new line. It is for our new Ordinance Enforcement hearing officer.

Line 122 for equipment. The big copier in the Borough office is up for replacement.

Line 108 for Health Insurance will be increasing.

Lines 130, 162, 656 for Salary increases is significant. Our Borough employees pay was compared to Town of Stonington and they were paid significantly less than Town employees with a comparable job.

Line 207 is a new line. The Warden had been doing this himself for the last ten years. The line is to hire a consultant. There will be a five-year audit next year.

Line 257 Zoning Officer salary was increased.

Line 343 LOSAP was increased.

Lines 502 and 312 Heating Oil and Propane were increased.

Line 503 VFIS was included in Line 324.

Line 311 and 501 Generation provider for electricity was changed.

Line 802 Tree maintenance was increased.

Line 908 Maintenance of the Comfort Station is a new line item.

The expenses grand total is about a \$100,000 increase compared with last fiscal year.

This coming budget year is the final one for our firetruck payments.

There will be a budget hearing in April.

Discuss CLA drainage feasibility study

By way of background, Warden Callahan reminded everyone that the Borough has used some of its ARPA funds to assess the condition of the Borough storm water drainage system. CLA engineers have completed the system evaluation and made recommendations for repairs and upgrades to alleviate flooding at the intersection of Church and Water Streets. CLA has concluded that the most effective way to do that is to construct an additional outfall at Waylands Wharf that would take some of the storm water flowing down Water Street. Residents Pam and Doug Mola commented that they didn't have flooding problems at the corner of Church and Gold until the street was lowered and a new catch basin was installed in 2012. They also observed that the grate and screen installed at the end of the Harbor Edge outfall to prevent rocks from clogging the pipe have the negative effect of blocking flow from the outfall. They feel the Borough should not spend upwards of \$100,000 to install a new outfall, but instead have the street crew keep the pipe clear of rocks. Warden Callahan said that he did not think this is a safe or practical way to solve the flooding problem. He has requested a proposal from CLA to develop construction drawings and bid documents for the Waylands outfall project. The CLA proposal will be taken up under New Business.

ARPA update

The Historical Society has until this summer to complete their project. Ocean Community Chamber is sending in invoices, but has not spent all of its grant. Warden Callahan will get an update from Lisa Konicki. \$106,000 of Borough ARPA funds are not spent or obligated yet.

Truck traffic in the Borough

Sign is now up on the viaduct.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider request by the Portuguese Holy Ghost Society for parking spaces in front of 26 Main Street for Lenten Fish and Chips fundraiser

A motion by Burgess Mastroianni, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to approve the request made by the Portuguese Holy Ghost Society for three to four parking spaces in front of 26 Main St for Fridays during Lent (Feb 24 – April 7, 2023) from 11 am – 6 pm for take-out orders only during the Fish and Chips fundraiser for the Society and Scholarships, was unanimously approved.

Consider request by Michele Crowley for Blessing of the Fleet 5K race

A motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to approve the request made by Michelle Crowley to use Town Dock and Borough Streets for the Blessing of the Fleet 5K Race on July 27, 2023 from 4 pm – 8 pm, was unanimously approved.

Consider request by Georgia and Mike Crowley for the Blessing of the Fleet event and procession

A motion by Warden Callahan, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, to approve the request made by Georgia and Mike Crowley to use Town Dock and Borough Streets for the Blessing of the Fleet Procession on July 27, 2023 from 12 pm – 8 pm, was unanimously approved.

Consider request by Sandra Alexander for the Fifth Annual Art Walk

A motion by Warden Callahan, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to approve the request by Sandra Alexander on behalf of the SBMA, to use Water St between High St and Church St, Wadawanuck Square driveway and green with access to outlets for the purpose of approximately five food vendors and music, for the Fifth Annual Art Walk to be held on September 16, 2023 (rain date September 17) from 10

am to 4 pm, was approved 3-0. Burgess Mastroianni abstained. Water Street will be closed to traffic at 7:30 am for set up.

Consider request by Ms. Robin Grimsley to operate a hot dog cart at the Point from Memorial Day through Columbus Day

A motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to approve Robin Grimsley's request to operate a hot dog cart at the Point from Memorial Day through Columbus Day, failed on a tie vote. Nicholas and Rogers voted for, Mastroianni and Callahan voted no.

Consider request by Tim Lebling to use Stonington Point to sell Coffee and Kombucha from Memorial Day through Columbus Day

A motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to approve Tim Lebling's request to use Stonington Point on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 3 pm – 5 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 12 pm – 2 pm from Memorial Day through Columbus Day, to sell iced coffee and kombucha, failed on a tie vote. Nicholas and Rogers voted in favor, Mastroianni and Callahan voted against.

Consider request by St. Michael Parish to use Borough Streets for the Our Lady of Fatima procession

A motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Mastroianni, to approve St. Michael's Parish request to use Borough Streets on Saturday, May 13 from 8:30 – 9:30 pm and Sunday, May 14 from 11:30 – 12:30 pm, for Our Lady of Fatima processions, was unanimously approved.

Discuss EV charging station proposals

After discussion concerning cost to the Borough after grants and whether to charge users, this item was tabled.

Consider CLA proposal to prepare bid docs for new drainage project

A motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Mastroianni, to accept the proposal from CLA Engineers to do the final design and prepare bid documents for the new Wayland's Wharf outfall and drainage project, was unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION --None

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Warden Callahan, adjournment of the meeting at 9:06 pm, was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa M. Coleman
February 26, 2023