

**Borough of Stonington  
Board of Warden and Burgesses  
Regular Monthly Meeting – September 21, 2020**

**MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Warden Jeff Callahan called the regular meeting of the Borough of Stonington Board of Warden and Burgesses to order, by way of Zoom conferencing video at 7:02p.m. Present were Burgesses Kevin Rogers, Amanda Barnes, Shaun Mastroianni, Amy Nicholas, and Bergin O’Malley, who arrived after meeting had commenced due to a technical issue. Also present was Tiffany Cook, serving as Clerk-Treasurer.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On a motion by Burgess Barnes and seconded by Burgess Nicholas, the minutes of the regular meeting held on August 17, 2020, by way of Zoom conferencing, were approved.

**3. REPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

- Received from State; \$7,588.98 for Town Road Aid Grant
- Received Fire Protection Fees:
- Lord’s PT: \$27,532.00
- Ston. Fire District: \$67,203.10
- Wamphassuc Pt: \$29,360.00
- Received Dumpster Fees: \$500.00

**4. CORRESPONDENCE**

**Property Use Application:**

- Milagro: request to extend sidewalk seating through December
- Water St. Café: request to extend sidewalk seating through December
- Noah’s: request to extend sidewalk seating through December

**Meetings:** None

**Other:**

- Ann G. Moore: letter regarding concern about recent and proposed construction on Salt Acres causeway
- Anne-Marie van der Velde: letter expressing concern about Salt Acres Project
- Martha Mitchell: request for removal of 2 trees

**Outgoing:** None

**5. REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER** – One resident request for financial relief from Williams Fund

## **6. REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT**

Bills for month ending September 17<sup>th</sup> totaled \$137,449. CIRMA & VFIS bills accounted for two thirds of total. Revenue to date is \$32k over budget.

## **7. WARDEN'S REPORT**

1. Participated in Zoom COVID-19 updates with SCCOG and local health districts
2. Attended Town Hall department head monthly meeting
3. Received fire protection fees from Wamphassuc, Lord's Pt, and Stonington FD
4. Tracked Governor's executive orders (70 and counting) and local covid statistics; New London County hospitalizations remain low (3-4), but total deaths have risen to 111 from 104 last month.
5. Continued working on FEMA concerns about one resident's flood map revision request. The other map revision request has been resolved.
6. Contacted Amtrak AGAIN about keys to Water Street crossing gates; still working on it.

**BOROUGH CLOCK** – CT Appeals Court ordered new trial in United Church parsonage contamination case.

## **8. COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

### **a. STREET & SIDEWALKS COMMISSIONER REPORT**

1. New temp employee Phoenix Grimes continues to work out well
2. Summit/Elm water main project nearing completion. Finish paving late September
3. Continued refreshing yellow curb paint and white cross walks
4. Monthly brush pickup
5. Issued 2 dumpster permits

### **b. Fire & Emergency Management**

We responded to 19 Alarms in August 2020, they were as follows:

- 1) 8-1-20 8:35pm Fire Alarm Activation 105 Elm St. (burnt food)
- 2) 8-4-20 5:21pm Wires down 65 Boulder Ave. L.P. (storm,wind)
- 3) 8-4-20 5:28pm Wires down Flanders & Briar Patch Rd. (storm,wind)
- 4) 8-4-20 5:30pm Wires down 25 Palmer St. (storm,wind)
- 5) 8-4-20 5:40pm Wires down 216 North Main St. (storm,wind)
- 6) 8-4-20 7:32pm Light pole blew off Viaduct (storm,wind)
- 7) 8-5-20 7:32pm Tree,Wires down Hampton & Langworthy L.P. (storm)
- 8) 8-9-20 7:01pm Fire Alarm Activation 142 Water St., Milagro's (burnt chicken tacos)
- 9) 8-10-20 3:18am Fire Alarm Activation 2 School St. (humidity?)
- 10) 8-10-20 5:28pm Fire Alarm Activation 117 Water St. (faulty detector,Switz agency)
- 11) 8-13-20 1:31pm Wires down 7 Open Way L.P. (main service down called EVERSOURCE)

- 12) 8-13-20 2:17pm Tree limb on wires 216 North Main St. (called EVERSOURCE)
- 13) 8-16-20 3:02am Fire Alarm Activation 117 Water St. (Switz agency,again)
- 14) 8-18-20 7:36pm Lockout @ 123 Water St. 2nd floor (accessed screen window)
- 15) 8-21-20 1:15pm Fire Alarm Activation 39 Main St. (OLD MYSTIC)
- 16) 8-26-20 11:29am Fire Alarm Activation 23 Gold St. (faulty smoke detectors)
- 17) 8-27-20 10:28pm Fire Alarm Activation 194 Water St. Dodson BY (pull station)
- 18) 8-28-20 8:56pm Fire Alarm Activation 19 Collins Rd. (faulty smoke detector)
- 19) 8-29-20 10:53pm Medical assist with SAC Dodson Boat Yard (person fell on dock)

Chief Hoadley also explained the process for design and implementation of a fire pit ordinance, according to State of Connecticut. Chief Hoadley will be required to take an on line class in order to become a certified Open Burning Official. This permit would allow Chief to inspect fire pits of residents in the Boro and also allows him to enforce a Fire Pit Ordinance if the Borough or Town adopts one.

**c. Parks, Trees, Rights-of-Way:**

Bartlett pruned the following trees recently:

- 2 lindens at 68 Main Street
- the river birch at the Stonington Borough Fire Department
- 1 pear and 1 linden on Elm Street
- 3 locust trees and a black cherry tree at Wimpheimer Park
- a tree in front of 35 Main Sreet

I received a request in August from the property owner at 15 Grand Street who would like to plant a small tree in front of his property.

I received a request to approve removal of a tree on Gold Street. I did not conclude that the tree is in poor condition or a public safety risk and therefore did not approve removal at this time. I did let the property owner know that an appeal to the Board can be made at the October meeting.

Tree assessment is complete and project is currently in data entry mode.

**d. Public Buildings –**

Replacement of fence in small park (Pocket Park) on Boro East side of footbridge will cost roughly \$2,700, or \$4,700 for historic design/look. Burgess Mastroianni will provide more details.

**e. Public Information –**

- Working on security walls for the Boro website
- Thoughts for event for official opening of Sculpture Park

**f. Police**

During the month of August 2020 there were 65 incidents in the police report for the Borough including 8 Parking Complaints, 7 Business Checks/Check Buildings, 7 Fire related calls, 6 Motor Vehicle/Parking Complaints, 6 Medical Assists, 5 Assist Citizens, 4 Burglar Alarms 2 of which

were false alarms, 4 Found Items, , 3 Accidents 2 of which were hit and runs, 3 911 Misdeal/Hang ups, 3 Suspicious Activities, 2 Animal Bites, 2 Animal Control and 2 Juvenile Incidents. There was one incident each of Suspicious Motor Vehicle, Elderly Scam, Stolen Vehicle, Marine Incident, Red Tag Vehicle, Larceny, Welfare Check, Disturbance and Assist Other Agency.

Traffic traveling south of Diving Street in either direction was measured. Vehicles totaled 20,074 between 8/28 and 9/08. Burgess Nicholas also offered a suggestion revising traffic proposal to have Water Street one-way to Diving Street rather than all the way to Omega. Traffic heading north on Water Street from the Point would turn right on Diving then left on Main.

#### Sanitation Report

Several garbage notifications have been given; 2<sup>nd</sup> notices regarding Trash Ordinance seems to work in most cases.

### 9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Doug and Pam Mola addressed the following: House on Elm Street that has a tree that may cause people to trip. It is the responsibility of the Boro to take care of this liability.

A tree on Temple St. is going into street and sidewalk.

When is gravel being laid in Wayland's Wharf parking lot? Warden Callahan said Fall of 2020.

It may be that NESS has 7 parking spaces as part of stipulation for zoning approval.

### 10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Regarding the status of COVID-19 in region and State reopening plans, Warden Callahan stated that New London County and the State overall are doing quite well. Deaths increased slightly since last month but hospitalizations remain low; Executive Orders are extended to November 9<sup>th</sup> and are likely to be extended until legislative session resumes in January of 2021; Warden Callahan also confirmed that Election Polling will happen at the Boro Firehouse.

b) Pesticides: No new information

c) The status of a Fire Pit Ordinance was covered in the Fire Commissioner's Report 8(b).

d) Regarding the Lighthouse restoration: the basement is finished; floors and walls are done; the temperature will now be controlled to help preserve exhibits; lighting will be compliant with consideration of neighbors. The Lighthouse is still open during restoration project.

### 11. NEW BUSINESS

a) In consideration of a motion to extend outdoor dining for Noah's Restaurant, Water Street Café, and Milagro, Warden Callahan moved to approve an extension through the end of 2020 calendar year. Motion was seconded by Burgess Rogers. Approved unanimously.

b) Highway Department Vacancy. Warden Callahan opened the discussion by noting that a temporary employee, Phoenix Grimes, has been in the position since mid July, and he is

working out well. There are two options for filling the position: offer the position to Grimes or advertise the position, interview candidates, and select one. Burgess Mastroianni asked if there is any legal requirement to advertise, to which Callahan responded no. (Since confirmed by the Borough Atty.) Mastroianni then raised the question of the benefit package, specifically healthcare, for the new employee, whoever it is. In discussion, some members of the Board felt that the new person should contribute to their healthcare insurance and others did not. Burgess Nicholas moved to post the position, but withdrew the motion after the Board decided to hold a special meeting on the topic. After a wide-ranging discussion Callahan proposed scheduling a special meeting of the Board to decide on both the future employee's benefits and the process for filling the vacancy. All agreed.

**12. OTHER BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION**

A ceremony for the Sculpture Park was discussed. Burgess O'Malley stated that this would not be a not a ribbon-cutting, since the park has been open for over a year. She will contact the Holleycroft Foundation about their interest in organizing such an event, possibly on a Saturday when the Farmer's Market is in session. Warden Callahan noted that the Boro is in support of the event, but he would prefer that we not organize it.

Regarding his idea of making Water Street one-way to Omega Street, Burgess Rogers provided feedback he received from residents who would be affected. Comments ranged from "It's been tried before" to "It's about time". Burgess Rogers also encouraged the Board to bring forth any ideas on the matter and to keep the conversation going.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Barnes, adjournment of the regular meeting at 8:59 p.m. was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Tiffany Cook, Clerk-Treasurer  
September 28, 2020