

Board of Warden and Burgesses

Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting~ June 20, 2011

The regular monthly meeting of the Borough Warden & Burgesses was called to order in Borough Hall at 7:30 PM by Warden Paul Burgess. Present were Burgesses Michael Adair, Kathryn Burchenal, Edward McCreary, Amy Nicholas, Howard Park, Robert Scala, and Clerk- Treasurer Brian Krafjack.

Public Comment:

1. Mr. and Mrs. Sauers of 14 Chesebro Lane noted that the end of this road is in poor condition, and that a letter had been sent to the Borough about this situation in 2008. The response from the Borough indicated that necessary repairs would be addressed in 2008. Since the condition of the road is still in poor condition, the residents recently contacted the Fire Department to see if a fire truck could negotiate the corner, an operation which took 20 minutes. The residents requested that the condition of Chesebro Lane be addressed as soon as possible. Warden Burgess noted that he is aware of the situation and has been in contact with the adjacent property owners about pending repairs since any corrective work would impact their property.

Appointments to Planning and Zoning Commission:

1. A resume from Carol Martin and an Application for Board/Commission/Authority from Christopher Errichetti were submitted to the Board of Warden and Burgesses for review, in order to fill vacant positions on the Planning and Zoning Commission.
 - a. Burgess McCreary questioned Mr. Errichetti, since his application indicated that he was actively involved in a family real estate development company, whether conflicts of interest could be avoided if Mr. Errichetti was appointed to the Commission.
 - b. Mr. Errichetti indicated that the real estate development company had been liquidated 12 years ago and that he is not currently involved with any real estate transactions in the State of Connecticut. Mr. Errichetti assured the Board that conflicts of interest, with respect to real estate holdings or transactions, would not be an issue.
 - c. Mr. Errichetti indicated that he recently purchased a condominium in the Borough is currently a half time resident. When questioned by Burgess McCreary whether this would hinder meeting attendance, Mr. Errichetti indicated that it would not.
2. On a motion by Warden Burgess, seconded by Burgess Scala, appointment of Carol Martin to the Borough Planning and Zoning Commission was unanimously approved.
3. On a motion by Burgess McCreary, seconded by Burgess Adair, appointment of Christopher Errichetti to the Borough Planning and Zoning Commission was unanimously approved.

Leamon Curb Cut:

1. An application for a new curb cut proposed for 22 Diving Street was submitted in accordance with Borough Ordinance SBO-04, Off Street Parking. Dave Atkinson, Borough Zoning Officer, submitted an email indicating "no comment" on the application.
2. Burgess McCreary, as an adjacent neighbor, recused himself from Board deliberations and from the vote.

3. Burgess McCreary, in his capacity as a neighbor, submitted a letter to the Board dated 6/20/11, in which his support is voiced for the proposed application, barring one very practical consideration and courtesy, the depth of the newly created parking area as follows:
 - a. The newly created parking area shall be for one vehicle only.
 - b. The newly created parking area shall not extend north on the lot more than 21 feet from the inner sidewalk edge into the property.
 - c. The newly created parking area shall have a structural blockage at the 21 foot depth.
4. The full text of the letter, which is available on file in the Borough office, was read by Mr. McCreary in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Leamon, the property owners, who verbally agreed to their compliance with Mr. McCreary's request for depth constraints placed on the newly created parking area.
5. On a motion by Warden Burgess, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, granting a curb cut at 22 Diving Street was unanimously approved by voting Burgesses; Burgess McCreary did not vote.

Approval of Minutes:

1. On a motion by Burgess Adair, seconded by Burgess Park, acceptance of the minutes from the Board Meeting held on May 16, 2011 was unanimously approved.

Administrative Assistant's Report (Perry):

1. Received tax collections for May: \$2,086.06
2. Received \$1,180.00 in donations for Wadawanuck Square Fund.
3. Requested payment from SVIA for Wadawanuck Square Fund matching fund grant to pay bill.
4. Received 4th quarter payment of \$14,357.50 from the Stonington Fire District.
5. Sent request to Town for \$20,000 reimbursement for seawall work.

Clerk-Treasurer's Report (Krafjack):

1. Notified Mystic River Press regarding a correction required to their local government column; name and contact information for Warden Burgess.

Review of Bills:

1. The May 15 through June 16, 2011 report was reviewed and is on file in the Borough Office.
2. Larger expenses were reviewed.
 - a. \$4,935- Uplands Construction- engineering services.
 - b. \$3,900- R. Bruce Briggs- catch basin cleaning.
 - c. \$7,200- Hastedt Brothers- paving portions of Water Street.

Profit/Loss Statement:

1. The June 1, 2010 through 15 July 16, 2011 Profit and Loss Budget vs. Actual report was reviewed and is on file in the Borough Office.

2. The Borough is in a positive position, and in good shape.

Correspondence:

1. Correspondence received since the May meeting was reviewed and is on file in the Borough Office.
 - a. FEMA- reminder about floodplain management measures- addressed by P&Z.
 - b. Town of Stonington- notice of public hearing on zoning regulations text amendment.
 - c. Leamon curb cut request- discussion and vote recorded in these minutes.
 - d. United Church sign requests- discussion and vote recorded under new business.
 - e. Tree work proposal from Larlham Landscape Construction, Allied Tree Experts, and Bartlett Tree Experts. The proposal from Larlham seems most favorable and is discussed under Burgess Park's report.
 - f. Jane A. Martley letter re: memorial tree on Main Street.
 - g. Portuguese Holy Ghost Society request for permission to hold annual Festival of the Holy Ghost; vote recorded under this heading.

2. On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Burgess McCreary, permission for the Portuguese Holy Ghost Society to conduct the annual Festival of the Holy Ghost at its property on September 3-4, 201, pending submission of the completed Events Form, was unanimously approved.

Warden's Report:

1. Streets:
 - a. Street sweeping continued. Target completion date July 15th.
 - b. Wayland's Wharf - The Highway Department repaired erosion at northwest corner and conducted general spring-cleaning. Planting planned discussed under Burgess Park's report.
 - c. Pothole repairs completed. Burgess Scala noted there are still a few potholes that need to be addressed; he will follow up with Warden Burgess.
 - d. Re-graded Lees Court which is a dirt road.
 - e. Catch Basins cleaning completed.
 - f. Storm drain on Harmony Street, between Water and Main, cleaned and blockage removed.
 - g. Roadway repaved and concrete apron replaced at 16 Water Street to correct drainage problem.
 - h. Church Street Seawall project completed.
 - i. Coordinating with CTDEP regarding marsh channel retrenching at Maplewood/Orchard and Summit Streets wetlands. Property owner permission letters obtained; further negotiation required with Mr. and Mrs. Eyles regarding a second ditch requested through part of their property. CTDEP will do permitting over the summer with work potentially completed this fall. The goal of this project is wetlands enhancement and drainage improvements. Hyde Street repavement project on hold until marsh work completed and drainage issue rectified.
 - j. Design will begin on Omega Street repavement and limited sidewalk work.
 - k. Initial spring cleaning of Robinson Cemetery conducted. Inspected wall damage with Burgess Park and mason Robert Murphy who provided an estimate of approximately \$15,000. Exploring private fundraising for cemetery wall repairs. Burgess Scala inquired if removal of the wall was an option, Warden Burgess indicated only as a last resort due to the historical nature of the wall.

Fire and Emergency Management: (Burgess Nicholas/ Chief Hoadley):

1. During the month of May 2011 there were 11 incidences reported by the Borough Fire Department including a smoldering tree on Lords Point, downed utility wires, fire alarm activations including those from food burning, a kitchen fire, a water emergency, a CO detector activation, and a report of an oil spill in Stonington Harbor which revealed no traces of oil upon investigation.
2. The air conditioner is being repaired in T-17.
3. The annual Lobster Dinner will be held in the firehouse on Saturday August 13th, tickets are \$20.
4. No activity regarding Emergency Management.
5. Warden Burgess and Burgess Nicholas received a tour of the Borough Fire Building. At the quarterly Fire Department meeting, Chief Hoadley explained that the new gear had been obtained and is working/fitting appropriately.
6. Four of the firemen will be undergoing drivers' training to obtain their fire truck license. Additionally, the department's insurance company has requested that all firemen go through Emergency Vehicle Operations Class (EVOC) on a yearly basis.

Parks, Trees & Rights of Way (Burgess Park):

1. Two trees have been posted in Wadawanuck Square. We have also received another proposal for pruning the trees in the Square, and are hoping for one more.
2. Warden Burgess and Burgess Park are reviewing a plan to plant indigenous roses along the fence bordering the north side of Waylands Wharf. The Highway crew has filled-in sink holes and they have done a good job of it. Fencing along the sea wall walkway still remains to be addressed.
3. LaGrua Park may not get Granite curbing along Dennison Avenue as there would be a problem getting the mowers over it. However, Burgess Park still hopes to do some filling, some planting, and grass seeding, just to spruce things up a bit. Burgess Park noted that he may have a source will to donate granite curbing for this project.
 - a. Public comment from friends of Wadawanuck Square, as advocates of all Borough parks, noted that perhaps LaGrua Park should not be curbed due to drainage and ponding issues that kill the grass.
 - b. Friends of Wadawanuck Square noted that perhaps planting along the wall might be Grape Hyacinths. Burgess Park requested they send a letter with planting suggestions.
 - c. Friends of Wadawanuck Square noted that they were pleased that the grass in the parks is being cut on a higher setting, noting average grass depths in the Square of a little better than 2". The ideal height was expressed as 3"; Burgess Park indicated that the mowers will be set higher, and grass cut once a week in order to maintain grass height as close to 3" as possible.
4. Ash Street beach is a public Right of Way and the problems related to decomposing seaweed are being addressed by Warden Burgess. We will find funds in the Parks, Trees and Rights of Way budget to remove the offending odor by removing the rotting seaweed and eel grass. Discussion and vote recorded under New Business. Funding discussion and vote recorded under Adjustment of Account Balances.

5. Burgess Park is concerned about a boat which appears to be abandoned near the west abutment of the viaduct. This should be addressed as a danger issue since Burgess Park's recollection is that no flammable materials can be placed within 1000 yards (or possibly within 30') of the viaduct. Burgess Park is not clear as to whether the boat is on a Borough Right of Way, however it clearly could pose a danger to the only means of egress to the Borough should it catch fire. It is also an eyesore and must be removed. Burgess Nicholas will investigate.
6. Shawn Donahue has volunteered to seed Cannon Square. He proposes to lay down mulch and seed, which he will water. This work is in progress.
7. Numerous requests for signs have been approved for placement under the "sign tree" in Wadawanuck Square. Further discussion and vote concerning banners and signs is recorded under New Business.
8. Branches have been pruned back at the base of the viaduct so vehicles leaving North Water Street will have better visibility of the traffic coming down the Viaduct.
9. Burgess Park noted that he would like to see an individual appointed as the keeper of the guns in Cannon Square. Burgess Park noted that Bob Abramson would make an exceptional candidate, citing his continued involvement with the Canon Square project. Mr. Abramson, present in the audience, indicated he would be in favor of accepting this position if nominated.
10. On a motion by Burgess Park, seconded by Warden Burgess, appointment of Bob Abramson to a new position of "Borough Gunner", in charge of maintaining the guns in Cannon Square, was unanimously approved.

Sanitation, Utilities and Street Lights (Burgess McCreary):

1. Sanitation:
 - a. Uncovered or "bagged only garbage" on sidewalks in midnight skunk, raccoon, and dog patrolled territory is becoming a problem. Burgess Burchenal noted that there is a Borough ordinance prohibiting trash from being placed on the curb earlier than 6AM on trash pick-up days.
 - b. With agreement/assistance from vigilant Board members we plan to spot, photo-verify and treat with violations early in the summer season.
2. Utilities:
 - a. All is comfortably quiet on this front.
3. Street Lights:
 - a. At request of residents on Hancock Street, Burgess McCreary is inquiring with CL&P about lights on poles 2834 and 2826. Noticeably they now bring direct, harsh glare into some residents living and bedroom areas. Burgess McCreary will discuss, with CL&P, how these street lights might be altered. CL&P is responding slowly.

Public Buildings (Burgess Adair):

1. Borough Hall:
 - a. Due to past budget constraints, only immediately necessary work had been performed on recommendations made by subcommittee in 2007-2008.
 - b. Burgess Adair would like to reconvene a subcommittee to investigate possible improvements such as Borough Hall meeting room, lighting, Borough office, public access, handicap access, and Borough Hall's generator, on which the Borough's fire horn is dependent if utility power were to fail in Borough Hall.
 - c. Burgess Adair would like to involve architect Peter Springsteel, who was very helpful on the previous subcommittee.
 - d. The board was supportive of this plan.

Sidewalks (Burgess Scala):

1. Work on 17 Water Street is complete.
2. Sent letter to 165 Water Street about walk on High Street where a slate walk needs to be reset.
3. Work on 18 Pearl St. (Mrs. Snyder) is ongoing and may be complete at this time.
4. 39 Water Street may require repairs to curbing. Burgess Scala and Warden Burgess to investigate.

Police, Public Affairs & Communications (Burgess Burchenal):

1. In the month of May 2011, the Stonington Police Department reported 52 incidences in Stonington Borough including 911 misdials and parking tickets. Burgess Burchenal noted that there were no particular incidences of crime of concern. In event of an emergency, the police would employ the reverse 911 system.
2. Discussions with Warden Burgess and Chief Darren Stewart about the options for slowing traffic as it enters the borough, especially for safety reasons at the intersection of Broad Street and Water Street, led to the suggestion to try placing "STOP for Pedestrians" signs in the intersection. This option would be preferable to a 4-way stop. Although these signs were put out a few years ago by the bus stop, and disappeared within days, we'll try again. If these signs are successful, perhaps the speed sticks at the southern foot of the viaduct could be replaced with inset pavers. The "STOP for Pedestrians" sign, recently placed by the Square, appears to be effective.
3. Street markings were redone with compliant reflective paint.
4. Old granite crosswalks are being rehabilitated.
5. Website work is underway which will allow the Borough's administrative assistant to manage the site, and will make for a more attractive site.

Old Business:

1. None

New Business:

2. Ash Street Beach:
 - a. Warden Burgess received a number of complaints regarding odor in Ash and Diving Street area. Odor traced to large volume of decomposing seaweed on beach, particularly material below mean sea level. Warden Burgess communicated

with Michael Grzywinski of the CTDEP Office of Long Island Sound. Other communities, including Groton, are having similar issues.

- b. Mechanical equipment for removal of the seaweed cannot operate on the beach below mean high water without a permit, which could take possibly 6 months to obtain. A backhoe/crane located at end of Ash Street could remove seaweed from this area as long as it did not scarify the underlying sand beach. More than one-half of the beach is below mean high water.
- c. Warden Burgess measured hydrogen sulfide gas levels on June 20 just before high tide at 1:15. At the water line, Warden Burgess dug down approximately 12", resulting in an immediately present odor. At respiratory height, levels were 10-15 parts per million (ppm). Placing the probe directly adjacent to the exposed decomposing seaweed, a concentration of 350-400 ppm was present. Warden Burgess believes a long term exposure to these levels would be of concern.
- d. Several residents of Ash and Diving Streets expressed concerns over the odor and possible public health issues. Residents noted conditions of sore throats and having to keep their windows shut due to the overpowering odor. Residents expressed a desire for urgent action.
- e. The Board expressed concerns of potentially elevated levels of hydrogen sulfide gas emissions, as a result of removal operations, which are estimated to take two days. Residents indicated that if elevated levels were present, they would be willing to evacuate the area until the potential public health threat was no longer present.
- f. The Board consensus was to act swiftly on removal of the seaweed, with the understanding of the neighbors that the odor could be worse during operations. Warden Burgess indicated that he would monitor removal, and halt operations at his discretion, if elevated levels of hydrogen sulfide became a concern.
- g. Warden Burgess indicated he has received two verbal bids for the seaweed removal, a project which could reach \$12,000. Seaweed would be delivered to a Farm in North Stonington for use as fertilizer, at the recommendation of personnel at the Stonington Landfill.
- h. Warden Burgess noted that seaweed may continue to pile up on this beach at high tides and may be an ongoing maintenance concern.
- i. On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Burgess Burchenal, authorization for Warden Burgess to engage a contractor for removal of seaweed from the Ash Street Beach, at Warden Burgess's discretion with regard to the progress of the work and emissions of Hydrogen Sulfide which may be elevated by the removal work, with an expenditure of up to \$12,000, and with no objections or concerns raised by the CT DEP, was unanimously approved.

3. Banners and Signs:

- a. Increased permit requests, by organizations wishing to advertise their events, for banners and signs has prompted the Board to place this as an item for consideration under New Business.
- b. Burgess Burchenal noted that banners and signs are regulated by Planning and Zoning and signs for nonprofit organizations, under 12 square feet, are exempt from the permit process.
- c. Burgess Adair noted that historically, organizations have asked permission from the Board of Warden and Burgesses for temporary banners and signs, and Planning and Zoning has not controlled this process.
- d. On a motion by Warden Burgess, seconded by Burgess Park, the appointment of a subcommittee consisting of Burgesses Burchenal (chair), McCreary, and Adair, for the establishment of a policy concerning the display of banners and signs for

events, in coordination with the Planning and Zoning Commission, in order that a recommendation be made to the Board, was unanimously approved.

- e. On a motion by Burgess Park, seconded by Burgess Burchenal, a recommendation that no new approvals for the display of Banners and Signs for events be granted until the Board makes a decision based on a report of the subcommittee appointed to explore this issue was unanimously approved.

4. **Bank Accounts:**

- a. Burgess Adair suggested that a review of all the Borough bank accounts and investments should take place to see if the Borough accounts are being favorably serviced.
- b. Depending on whether the branch of Dime Bank located in the Borough is able to deliver a competitive proposal, consideration may be given for working with this local branch.
- c. Public comment from Frederick Souza, past Clerk- Treasurer, noted that it is the fiduciary responsibility of the Clerk- Treasurer to safeguard the Borough accounts and to see that the Borough is getting the best deal possible. Mr. Souza expressed his concern that these responsibilities should take precedence over working with a branch of a bank located in the Borough.
- d. On a motion by Warden Burgess, seconded by Burgess Park, the appointment of a subcommittee consisting of Clerk- Treasurer Krafjack (chair), Burgess Adair, and Warden Burgess, to interview local banks and for solicitation of proposals for servicing the Borough accounts and investments was unanimously approved.

5. **Adjustment of Account Balances:**

- a. Discussion on funding sources for the Ash Street Beach seaweed removal was discussed.
- b. On a motion by Warden Burgess, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, a recommendation to move \$9,000 from Planning and Zoning accounts 201 through 206, \$3,000 from Public Buildings accounts 501 through 509, and \$5,000 from Parks Trees, and Rights of Way accounts 801, 802, and 805 to Contingency Account 1301, in accordance with Chapter 7; section 3h of the Borough Charter, was unanimously approved.

Other Business:

1. A Proclamation was read acknowledging 30 years of faithful and dedicated service by Susan M. Cordeiro, Foreman of the Borough Street Department. The Board of Warden and Burgesses gratefully acknowledge Susan's efforts and service on their behalf.
2. Burgess Park generously volunteered his services for framing the Proclamation.

Adjournment: On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Burgess Park, adjournment of the meeting at 9:50 PM was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian S. Krafjack
Clerk- Treasurer