

**Board of Warden and Burgesses
Annual Meeting~ April 21, 2012**

The Annual Borough and Budget Meeting of the Borough of Stonington was called to order in the Firehouse at 9:00 AM by Warden Paul Burgess. Present were Burgesses Michael Adair, Edward McCreary, Amy Nicholas, Howard Park, Robert Scala, and Clerk- Treasurer Brian Krafjack. Burgess Kathryn Burchenal was absent. Approximately 20 Borough residents were present.

Appointment of Moderator:

On a motion by Warden Burgess, seconded by Burgess Park, appointment of Scott Bates as moderator of the Annual Meeting was unanimously approved.

Approval of Minutes:

On a motion by Burgess McCreary, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, acceptance of the minutes from the April 16, 2011 Annual Borough and Budget Meeting was unanimously approved.

Warden's Report- Highlights of the Activities of the Board of Warden and Burgesses:

1. Water Street and Omega Street Drainage Improvements.
2. Chesebro Lane Pavement Improvements.
 - a. Residents have requested, for a number of years, that the Borough make necessary road repairs and facilitate Fire Department vehicular access.
3. Omega Street and Cliff Street Road Re-pavement.
 - a. Noted as the most significant street project in terms of scope.
4. Hyde Street and Maplewood Lane Road Re-pavement.
 - a. Currently out to bid; work to be accomplished this summer under fiscal year 2011-2012 Budget.
5. Ash Street Beach Seaweed Removal.
 - a. Odor of decomposing seaweed was very unpleasant and removal was necessary to avoid a potential public health issue.
6. Borough Hall Renovations and Accessibility Improvements.
 - a. Project was bonded under the Firehouse Project.
 - b. Under the leadership of Burgess Adair, Subcommittee members Warden Burgess and Clerk- Treasurer Krafjack are working on this project with Architect Peter Springsteel.
 - c. Project will be advertised for public bid next week.
7. Tropical Storm Irene.
 - a. Thanks to the hard work of the Borough Highway Department, streets were cleared of tree limbs and storm debris.
 - b. Burgess Park thanked Warden Burgess, the Highway Department, and arborist Nick Reardon for their diligence and hard work keeping the Borough clear.
8. Great Hope Springs Movie Filming.

- a. Coordination with residents, businesses, the movie production company, the Fire Department, and the Police Department.
9. Wayland's Wharf Improvements.
 - a. Fencing, landscaping, and grass seeding.
10. Park Improvements.
 - a. Wadawanuck Square, in conjunction with Friends of Wadawanuck Square, the Highway Department, and Burgess Park.
 - b. LaGrua Park grass seeding.
11. CTDEEP Maplewood Lane and Summit Street Marsh Improvements.
 - a. Mosquito trenches were cut through the marshes in the 1930's in an attempt to drain the marshes.
 - b. This project will clear the trenches to improve drainage flow.
 - c. While flooding cannot be stopped in the Maplewood and Summit area due to the low elevations, improved drainage of the mosquito trenches should alleviate flooding.
 - d. Clearing the trenches should also improve the ecosystem of the tidal marsh.
12. Cooperation with Robinson Burial Ground Committee.
 - a. Approximately \$26,000 has been raised by the Committee.
 - b. Removal of damaged trees, repair of the stone wall, and headstone repairs are among the projects undertaken and planned.
13. Sidewalk Repairs by Borough Residents.
 - a. Under the leadership of Burgess Scala, many sidewalks within the Borough have been repaired or are scheduled for repair.
14. Review of Fire Department Volunteer Fire Department Insurance Services- Length of Service Awards Program (VFIS-LOSAP).
 - a. This program is paid for by the Borough as a benefit for volunteer fire fighters.
 - b. Under the Leadership of Burgess Nicholas, in cooperation with Chief Hoadley, this program has undergone review.
15. Review of Borough Bank Accounts.
 - a. Under the leadership of Clerk- Treasurer Krafjack, subcommittee members Warden Burgess and Burgess Adair solicited proposals from local banks so that the Borough could partner with a bank offering competitive rates and community based services.
 - b. Based on the results of the proposals, Dime Bank in the Borough was selected for servicing the majority of the Borough's accounts.
16. Street Department Winter Projects.
 - a. Wood bench restoration.
 - b. Interior painting of Borough Hall Meeting Room.
 - c. Interior painting of Firehouse stairwells.
17. Borough resident Betty Richards noted that she would like to thank Warden Burgess for all that he's done in the past year; a job well done.

Budget Presentation and Discussion- Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2013:

Income

1. Warden Burgess noted that line item #1 on the income side has been reduced by approximately \$14,000 to reflect the reduction in income received from the Town for road repairs based on a formula approved and negotiated several years ago. The formula is based on the number of miles of Town roads vs. Borough roads and other capital expenditures; if the Town spends less money on these items, the Borough receives less funding from the Town.
2. Warden Burgess noted a \$4,000 reduction in Property Tax income as a result of the Stonington Harbor Yacht Club's Sailing Foundation, a non-profit entity, acquiring the building housing their organization.
3. Warden Burgess noted that last fiscal year the Board had allocated \$47,000 from the reserve account to income. The Borough's Reserve Account is currently approximately 8% of the budget, a number with which the Borough's Accountant is comfortable. No allocations from the reserve fund are proposed in this Budget.

Ordinary Expenditures

1. Warden Burgess noted that line item #105 for Professional Services has been reduced by approximately \$5,000 based on expenditures to date.
2. Warden Burgess noted that line items #108 and #109 representing Borough Employee's Health Insurance costs have been reduced by pursuing a High Deductible Health Savings Account Insurance Plan. The plan will reduce premiums while providing the same coverage for the employees. The Borough will make a contribution to the employees' Health Savings Account for fiscal year 2012-2013 to cover the deductible. Line item #109, Health Insurance Deductible, will be eliminated. Warden Burgess explained that the Borough has historically paid all premiums as well as co-pays.
 - a. Borough resident Jeffrey Callahan asked where this contribution is allocated in the Budget.
 - b. Warden Burgess noted that the contributions are included in line #108, Health Insurance.
3. Warden Burgess noted that a line item has been added under #165 Bonuses, rather than increasing the seven Borough employees' salaries this year.
 - a. Borough resident Betty Richards asked who the seven employees are.
 - b. Warden Burgess explained that there are two Highway Department personnel, an Administrative Assistant, a Zoning Enforcement Officer, a Fire Chief, a Deputy Fire Chief, and an Assistant Fire Chief, making up the seven.
4. Warden Burgess explained that line item #168 Payroll Taxes has been consolidated into one line item for payroll taxes of all Borough Departments.
5. Borough resident Julia Roberts asked if expenditures associated with collecting delinquent taxes are charged back to the delinquent property owner.

- a. Warden Burgess explained that they are not.
6. Borough resident Betty Richards noted that the Town of Stonington has eliminated the position of Zoning Enforcement Officer due to the low number of zoning applications and permits. Ms. Richards asked why the Borough should retain its Zoning Enforcement Officer in the face of a similar situation with respect to applications and permits.
 - a. Warden Burgess explained that the Zoning Enforcement Officer maintains office hours on Tuesday evenings and is frequently visited by people seeking advice on matters of planning and zoning in the Borough. Warden Burgess added that the Board of Warden and Burgesses feels it is appropriate to maintain this position.
 - b. Borough Resident Jeffrey Callahan noted that the Zoning Enforcement Officer has been instrumental on the Planning and Zoning Commission's work on updating the Plan of Conservation and Development.
 7. Warden Burgess noted that the Fire Department budget remains consistent with last fiscal year's budget with very few changes.
 8. Warden Burgess explained that Street Department line item #602 Equipment R&M/ Upgrading had been reduced by approximately \$7,000 based on actual expenses and line item #604 Street Repairs has been increased by \$6,000 due to anticipated curb repairs.
 9. Warden Burgess explained that line item #610 Snow Removal has been reduced by \$4,000 in part due to the tractor purchased by the Borough two years ago, reducing some of the Borough's subcontracted expenses for snow removal.
 10. Warden Burgess explained that line item #802 Tree Maintenance has been reduced by \$5,300 and noted that this is not really a reduction because labor costs for the Highway Department, which had been included in this category, have been reallocated to the Street Department.
 11. In summary, Warden Burgess noted that the Proposed Budget represents, in approximate terms, an \$18,000 reduction in expenditures and a \$5,000 reduction in contingencies. \$190,000 will be allocated to other funds; \$160,000 to the Infrastructure Reserve Fund, \$10,000 to the Sidewalk Fund, and \$20,000 to the Fire Department and Highway Department Truck Fund.
 - a. Burgess McCreary questioned the status of Borough loan payments.
 - b. Warden Burgess explained that in past years the annual bond payments for the Fire House were approximately \$150,000. This year the payments will total approximately \$37,000 and will be paid off in the following year.

Employee Salaries:

1. Borough Resident Julia Roberts reiterated her concern voiced at the Budget Public Hearing held on April 2, 2012 about transparency with respect to the cost to the taxpayers of Borough employees.
 - a. Warden Burgess reviewed a spreadsheet containing the following information.
 - i. Employee Name;
 - ii. Annual Salary;
 - iii. Overtime Paid;

- iv. Payroll Taxes;
 - v. Health Insurance Costs;
 - vi. Dental Insurance Costs;
 - vii. 401K Contributions;
 - viii. Employee Years of Service to the Borough;
 - ix. Hours Worked per Week.
- b. Warden Burgess noted that this information would be distributed only by request.

Approval of Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Budget:

1. On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Borough resident Fred Nicholas, adoption of the Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, as presented, was unanimously approved.
 - a. A copy of the approved Budget is attached to these Minutes.

Draft Highway Department Capital Improvement Plan- Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2013:

1. Warden Burgess presented a Proposed Capital Improvements Plan as follows:

2012/2013	Grand Street (between Main and Northwest), Church Street (between Main and Gold), and Temple Street	\$150,000
2013/2014	Broad (east side) and Wall Street	\$150,000
2014/2015	Gold, Cross, and Orchard Streets	\$150,000
2015/2016	Front and Diving Streets	\$150,000
2016/2017	Pearl, Denison, and Cliff (north end) Streets	\$150,000

2. Borough resident Fred Nicholas asked if the Capital Improvement Plan included any money for street construction necessary for emergency evacuation from the Borough.
 - a. Warden Burgess noted that under the leadership of Burgess Burchenal, talks with Amtrak officials are ongoing in an effort to have Amtrak restore the emergency crossing by Dodson and the drive to the Wadawanuck Yacht Club, which Amtrak had previously committed to maintain. Therefore, no money is allocated for this.
 - b. Burgess McCreary encouraged members of the public to reach out to lawmakers and newspapers to help with this effort as progress with Amtrak has been difficult.
3. On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Borough resident Moira O'Malley, approval of the Highway Department Capital Improvement Plan for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, as presented, was unanimously approved.

Trustees Selection for the Waldron Fund:

1. Borough resident and current Waldron Fund Trustee Lisa Tepper Bates provided an overview of the Waldron Fund and its activities for the fiscal year 2011-2012.
 - a. The Fund, established in 1837 through a bequest from Jonathan C. Waldron to Stonington Borough, can provide modest sums of financial assistance to Borough residents who need help with the costs of food, fuel, and clothing during the winter months, October through April.
 - b. Current Waldron Fund Trustees have reached out to Borough churches, the Stonington School System, and Stonington's Human Services Department in an effort to make sure residents in need are aware of the Fund, and to seek referrals from these organizations and institutions.

- c. During the 2011-2012 winter season the fund has provided assistance to eight Borough residents. Beneficiaries were families, single adult households, and several life-long Borough residents.
 - d. Assistance to one resident was provided working through a local pastor; an example of the kind of partnership the Trustees of the fund are hoping to forge with organizations and institutions in our small community.
 - i. Burgess Park asked with which churches in the Borough the Trustees have communicated.
 - ii. Ms. Tepper Bates noted that the Trustees have reached out to all Borough churches.
 - e. This year the Trustees located a key to a safety deposit box long held in the name of the Waldron Fund. The box contained documents dating back well over one hundred years shedding light on early philanthropy in the Borough. The Trustees are in discussions with the Historical Society about the possibility of creating an archive for these documents.
 - f. The Trustees, in conjunction with the Trustees of the Williams Fund, intend to distribute a postcard with information about the two funds to every mailing address in the Borough to educate Borough residents about the existence and purposes of the two funds as a resource for neighbors in need.
 - g. Ms. Tepper Bates explained that she, as well as the other two Trustees, Kathryn Burchenal and Elizabeth Tobin Brown, are honored to serve the Borough government and the citizens of the Borough in their capacities as Trustees of the Waldron Fund.
2. The Waldron Fund nominees for fiscal year 2012-2013 are Lisa Tepper Bates, Kathryn Burchenal, and Elizabeth Tobin Brown.
 - a. Borough resident Moira O'Malley asked why Mary Maranell, who was a Trustee during fiscal year 2011-2012, was not on the list of nominees.
 - b. Warden Burgess explained that Ms. Maranell had resigned during the year and Elizabeth Tobin Brown had been appointed a temporary Trustee by the Board of Warden and Burgesses.
 3. Borough resident Betty Richards asked about the process for nomination to Trustee of the Waldron Fund. Ms. Richards noted that the Trustees don't often change and that she has never been approached, as a long-standing resident of the Borough, about serving as a Trustee.
 - a. Borough resident and Annual Meeting moderator Scott Bates noted that the Borough Warden normally solicits interest for nominees.
 - b. Borough resident Betty Richards noted that she thought it inappropriate that one or two people are making decisions about nominees and suggested that the Board of Warden and Burgesses should make the nominees known well in advance of the Annual Meeting.
 - c. Warden Burgess noted that interested residents can contact him or current Trustees to discuss potential nominations.
 - d. Borough resident Moira O'Malley commented that there has never been an open call for nominees.
 - e. Burgess McCreary suggested imposing term limits to insure Trustee turn over.
 4. On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Borough Resident Jeffrey Callahan, appointment of Lisa Tepper Bates, Kathryn Burchenal, and Elizabeth Tobin Brown as

Trustees of the Waldron Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013 was unanimously approved.

Adjournment:

1. Moderator Scott Bates expressed his thanks to the members of the Fire Department who made accommodations for the Annual Meeting in the Firehouse, to the Board of Warden and Burgesses, and to the Borough residents for participating in this democratic process.
2. On a motion by Borough Resident Sue Scala, seconded by Borough Resident Moira O'Malley, adjournment of the meeting at 9:50 AM was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian S. Krafjack
Clerk- Treasurer