

**Borough of Stonington  
Board of Warden and Burgesses  
Special Monthly Meeting – April 14, 2020**

**MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Warden Jeff Callahan called the special meeting of the Borough of Stonington Board of Warden and Burgesses to order, by way of Zoom video conferencing at 7:08 p.m. Participating were Burgesses Amy Nicholas, Kevin Rogers, Amanda Barnes, Bergin O'Malley, Karen von Ruffer-Hills, and Shaun Mastroianni. Also present was Tiffany Cook, serving as Clerk-Treasurer. The warden noted that the meeting was being conducted using remote access under the authority of governor's executive order 7B, which suspends in-person open meeting requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On a motion by Burgess Mastroianni and seconded by Burgess Rogers, the minutes of the regular meeting held on March 16, 2020 were approved.

**3. REPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

Nothing to Report

**3. CORRESPONDENCE**

Requests: None; Meetings: None; Other: Email from Martha Mitchell expressing a number of concerns; Outgoing: None

**5. REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER**

In an effort to offer financial assistance to Borough residents in need during the Covid 19 pandemic, the Borough is collaborating with Stonington Human Services to communicate to Stonington Borough residents that financial assistance is available through the Waldron & Williams Funds. Application form is posted on the Borough website and available at Tom's News.

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

Bills for the period March 17 through April 9, 2020 totaled \$29,984. The Income & Expense YTD shows net income of \$300,155. Actual revenue thus far has exceeded budget projection by about \$16,000. Reserve stands at about \$348,000.

**7. WARDEN'S REPORT**

1. Participated in weekly COVID-19 updates from SCCOG and local health districts
2. Mailed letters to residents affected by lower Water Street project

3. Mailed letters to all residents about new meeting and budget approval procedures
4. Posted final MS4 Annual Report for 2019
5. Prepared budget options
6. Tracked Governor's executive orders (23 and counting)
7. Arranged for weekly disinfecting of fire house and Borough Hall

**BOROUGH CLOCK** – No new information

## **8. COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

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

1. Filled potholes in streets
2. Monthly brush pickup
3. Continued spring street sweeping
4. Installed "Betty's Way" sign
5. Raked Wadawanuck Square
6. Issued 3 dumpster permits
7. Prepared for lower Water Street project

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

- 1) 2-1-20 8:28pm Fire Alarm Activation 5 Water St. (strong oil odor in residence)
- 2) 2-3-20 6:04pm Chimney Fire 86 Collins Rd. (excessive creosote buildup)
- 3) 2-7-20 2:54pm Tree & Wires down IFO 259 Flanders Rd. (high winds)
- 4) 2-7-20 3:00pm Chimney pulling away from building, 22 Bayview Ave. Velvet Mill (nothing found)
- 5) 2-7-20 3:03pm Tree & Wires down IFO 91 Flanders Rd. (high winds)
- 6) 2-7-20 3:21pm Wires down in area of Main & Wall St. (high winds)
- 7) 2-7-20 4:09pm Wires down Hopkins & Langworthy, Lords Pt. (high winds)
- 8) 2-7-20 4:20pm Wires down Pole on Fire IFO 191 Wampassuc Pt. Rd. (high winds)
- 9) 2-7-20 4:30pm Wires down Pole on Fire IFO 200 Wampassuc Pt. Rd. (high winds)
- 10) 2-7-20 4:59pm Wires down corner of Gold & Cross St. (high winds)
- 11) 2-7-20 4:59pm Wires down, arcing IFO 268 Flanders Rd. (high winds)
- 12) 2-7-20 5:13pm Wires down, arcing Main & High St. (high winds)
- 13) 2-7-20 5:20pm Tree & Wires down Hopkins & Langworthy, Lords Pt. (high winds)
- 14) 2-10-20 5:02am Medical assist with SAC, 32 Water St. (fall victim)
- 15) 2-10-20 3:58pm Wire down 53 Main & Grand St. (called EVERSOURCE)
- 16) 2-11-20 7:06am Wires arcing Main & High St. (called EVERSOURCE)
- 17) 2-13-20 5:51am Wires arcing IFO 165 Elm St. (called EVERSOURCE)
- 18) 2-13-20 12:14pm Fire Alarm Activation 22 Bayview Ave. Velvet Mill (water flow)
- 19) 2-15-20 5:50pm Toddler Rescue 41 Flanders Rd. (toddler's head stuck in a training potty seat)
- 20) 2-19-20 8:00am Fire Alarm Activation 72 Water St., NESS (accidental, worker)
- 21) 2-29-20 1:17pm Medical assist with SAC, Dog Watch Cafe (cancelled enroute)

**c. Parks, Trees, Rights-of-Way:** Nothing to report.

**d. Public Buildings –** Nothing to Report

**e. Public Information –** Nothing to report, aside from efforts to communicate to Boro public about the Covid-19 Pandemic; sculpture park dedication has been delayed due to COVID-19.

**f. Police**

During the month of March 2020 there were 33 incidents in the police report for the Borough including 5 Burglar Alarms 3 of which were false, 3 Medical Assists, 3 Suspicious Activities, 3 911 Misdiagnoses/Hang-ups, 3 Animal Control, 2 Motor Vehicle/Parking Complaints, 2 Red Tag Vehicle, 2 Found Item and 2 Fire related calls. There was one incident each of Pistol Permit, Assist Citizen, Accident Uninvestigated, Criminal Mischief, Disturbance, Juvenile, Suicidal, and Check Building.

There were no arrests recorded.

**g. Utilities & Sanitation**

There is a need for additional trash containers (baskets) in the Borough, as the number of dogs being walked has increased due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Warden Callahan stated that he would have the highway department map the current locations of baskets and signs advising dog walkers to pick up after their pets.

**9. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None. This special meeting was held via Zoom, with notice to all residents who wanted to attend via teleconference.

**10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a) The right-of-way sign in honor of Betty Croteau has been posted. The right-of-way for public access to Wayland’s Wharf from Water Street has been named “Betty’s Way”.

b) Warden Callahan presented two budget options for discussion. The first was the baseline version, which assumed the normal high property tax collection rate. The second option was the so-called “95% option”, which assumed a lower than usual tax collection rate. The rationale for the 95% case is that owing to pandemic economic disruptions property taxes may be received at a much slower and even lower rate this summer than is normally the case for the Borough. Burgess Mastroianni moved to approve the “95% option” proposed by Warden Callahan, with a second by Burgess Rogers. After some discussion, Burgess Mastroianni moved to amend his motion, restoring money to accommodate staff cost of living adjustments of 1.5%, which Callahan had eliminated in the 95% budget. Burgess O’Malley seconded the amendment. After further discussion the amended motion was approved by all, except Burgess Nicholas who abstained.

**11. NEW BUSINESS**

a) There were no requests for use of Borough property to consider. Many events that already had been approved have subsequently cancelled or rescheduled.

b) Property tax payment: Warden Callahan offered the following motion: In order to comply with the governor's Executive Order 7S, and in view of the fact that the Town of Stonington provides both property assessment and property tax collection services for the Borough of Stonington, the Borough of Stonington will adopt the method of implementing E.O. 7S that the Town selects. Burgess O'Malley seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

c) Warden Callahan discussed Governor Lamont's E.O. 7T, which contains important restrictions on short term rentals, whether motels, inns, B&B, etc. New rentals of 31 days or fewer are prohibited until the emergency is over. Persons who already are in a short term rental arrangement are allowed to remain until their stay is completed. This order was sent by Warden Callahan to all realtors in the Borough to ensure they are aware of it. Also discussed was E.O. 7X, which extends the State's shutdown and distancing orders through May 20<sup>th</sup>.

## **12. OTHER BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION ---**

The Capitol Improvement Program was discussed as part of the budget process. Burgess Mastroianni noted that the Federal Government may establish a large infrastructure program to spur the economy. Mastroianni will track the discussion; as yet, nothing has been passed or even debated in Congress. If such a program is implemented, it could provide an opportunity for the Borough to apply for infrastructure grants.

## **13. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Burgess O'Malley, seconded by Burgess Rogers, adjournment of the special meeting at 8:18 p.m. was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Tiffany Cook, Clerk-Treasurer  
April 20, 2020