

**Borough of Stonington
Board of Warden and Burgesses
Regular Monthly Meeting – April 19, 2021**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Warden Jeff Callahan called the meeting of the Borough of Stonington Board of Warden and Burgesses to order, by way of Zoom conferencing video, at 7:01 p.m. Participating were Burgesses Amy Nicholas, Kevin Rogers, Amanda Barnes, and Shaun Mastroianni. Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Coleman took minutes.

Warden Callahan reminded everybody that this is the anniversary of our 1st all-remote meeting one year ago.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On a motion by Burgess Mastroianni, seconded by Burgess Rogers, the minutes of the Special Meeting held on March 22, 2021 and the Special Meeting held on April 8, 2021, were unanimously approved as submitted.

REPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

All is going well.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Request to film in Borough on April 29.
- CRS Certification email notifying us that we've been recertified for another year under the CRS program.

REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER

Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Coleman was sworn in on Friday, April 9, 2021. Signed bank cards at Dime Bank. Met with Registrars of Voters regarding May 5 election. In touch with SOTS office via email. Seven absentee ballots have been sent out. All forms and requests for absentee ballot with SOTS office are filed. Warning of Election will be sent to The Day on April 20, 2021.

REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT

Bills for the period March 19 through April 19, 2021 totaled \$31,028.64. Net income as of April 19, 2021 is \$432,862.26. Warden Callahan projects a year-end surplus of about \$80,000.

WARDEN'S ANNUAL REPORT

April 2021

What a year! As I write this, I realize that it has indeed been one year since we began wearing masks and keeping our distance from each other. We stopped going to work and school and learned new skills (think Zoom) as a way of keeping business, school, and relationships

going. Now, with vaccinations increasing and summer approaching the possibility of life returning to something close to normal seems very real. We're getting there, but don't throw away those masks just yet. Continue observing basic precautions for a while longer to guard against a COVID-19 rebound.

Borough government has continued to function, albeit with some adjustments, over the past year. In accordance with the Governor's executive orders, Borough Hall has remained closed to the general public, and public meetings have been conducted via Zoom. It's been a bit bumpy at times, but the streets have been plowed and swept, the parks have been maintained, the Fire Department has continued to keep us safe, and the Zoning Department has been busy as many people used money they had saved for travel and entertainment to instead fix up their homes. The Borough fire department responded to a total of 142 calls, 80 of them in the Borough.

Borough elections will be held this year on Monday May 3. I have decided to run for warden one last time, and the current burgesses --- Amy Nicholas, Shaun Mastroianni, Amanda Barnes, and Kevin Rogers --- are also running again. In- person voting will be done at the fire house as usual.

We had two significant staff changes in 2020. First was the tragic accidental death in July of Roger Colello, longtime member of the Street Department and Borough resident. Phoenix Grimes was hired to fill the vacancy left by Roger's untimely death. At the end of November, Barbara Perry, who had been the Borough's administrative assistant for nearly 20 years, retired. After a competitive search, the Borough hired Ann Sylvia Fiore, whose family lived in the Borough for generations.

A number of well-known current and former Borough residents died in 2020. Among them are Tony Bailey, Roy Wyatt, Charlie Chiappone, Jim Marenakos, Bill White, Tom and Marguerite Moore, Emmy Wharton, Betsy Wade, Fred Pampel, Krystyna Celichowska, Fred Eaton, Dorsey Boatwright, Tim Bell, Diane MacFadyen, and Helen Hobbs.

The Borough passed its annual CRS recertification, which means that we will continue to receive a ten percent discount on FEMA flood insurance, which a significant number of Borough residents carry.

As was the case last year, there will not be an in-person Borough annual meeting. The Governor's executive orders regarding public meetings are still in effect, so the budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1 will be enacted by the Board of Warden & Burgesses at their April 19th monthly meeting. The proposed budget, which does not increase the mil rate, is posted on the Borough website, and residents are invited to comment before or during the April meeting.

Respectfully,
Jeffrey Callahan, Warden

Note: A version of this report was sent out to all Borough residents

WARDEN'S MONTHLY REPORT

Participated in Zoom COVID-19 update with SCCOG and local health districts

Participated in Town Department Head meeting

Working on Waldron-Williams Funds merger

Tracked Governor's executive orders (about 100) and local Covid statistics; New London County hospitalizations have decreased significantly since January (now around 17 compared to a high of 100 during winter), while total deaths have risen to 426. Stonington Town deaths are 27 and total cases equal 1047.

Continued working on FEMA concerns about one resident's flood map revision request.

Mailed letter to residents and property owners., text insert here.

Finalized proposed FY21-22 budget and 2021-26 Capital Improvement Program

CRS annual recertification approved.

Participated in quarterly meeting of SE CT Water Authority Advisory Board

Office computer scanned for malware – none found.

BOROUGH CLOCK – Adjusted clock for Daylight Savings Time

Burgess Rogers had a question about the telephone pole on the corner in the sidewalk of Cannon Square and Water St. When will the double polls be removed? Burgess Nicholas has taken on the role and knows there are several double polls, and it will take time for her to become up to date on the task, get a list together of all the polls, and appreciates any other input. Chief Hoadley commented that Eversource is done with the pole, waiting for Frontier Communications to finish their work. Eversource owns the polls. Once they move their wires, they are done but have no leverage over Frontier, Comcast, or other tenants on the pole.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

STREETS & SIDEWALKS (CALLAHAN)

- Conducted monthly brush pickup
- Continued spring street sweeping
- Filled potholes
- Painted curbs
- Issued 2 dumpster permits

FIRE & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (ROGERS/HOADLEY)

There were Six Alarms in March of 2021, they were as follows:

3-1-21 4:50pm Structure Fire 509 Stonington Rd. (stove fire)

3-5-21 2:23pm	Fire Alarm Activation 67 Water St., Stonington Jewelry (defective alarm head)
3-5-21 5:20pm	Fire Alarm Activation 349 Elm St., Stonington Vineyard (water found in alarm head)
3-6-21 12:37pm	Mutual Aid to Quiambaug FD (brush fire, 232 Cove Rd.)
3-18-21 6:55am	Propane tank leaking 8 Ash St. (filler valve stuck)
3-19-21 3:48pm	Fire Alarm Activation 27 Church St., Calvary Church (workers)

Burgess Rogers congratulated Chief Hoadley on becoming the Borough Open Burning Official. He will be one of the Town of Stonington’s Open Burning Officials. He has collected several copies of ordinances from other town in the state and will put together ideas on a Borough ordinance. He will be recertified in January 2022 for a four-year term.

PARKS, TREES & RIGHTS OF WAY (BARNES)

The two trees on the northwest corner of Wad Square were pruned by Bartlett. Based on an email tonight the Sculpture Park people will be in front of this body next month.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS (MASTROIANNI)

- Mulched fire house gardens
- Working on Elm St fence
- Door alarm to be instated at Borough Hall this week. It will let the office staff know someone has entered the building.

PUBLIC INFORMATION (ROGERS)

Burgess Rogers put a post on Facebook about the upcoming election and had some nice responses, so hopefully some more people will vote for all of us but it's so important I think even though we're uncontested that we still move forward and show that we're working for the Borough residents. Warden Callahan will put the same signboard that we use for the monthly meetings on Wad Square.

POLICE AND SANITATION (NICHOLAS)

During the month of March 2021 there were 43 incidents in the police report for the Borough including 7 Medical Assists, 7 Motor Vehicle/Parking Complaints, 5 Burglar Alarms 4 of which were false, 3 Fire Related calls, 2 Assist Other Agency, 2 Suspicious Vehicles and 2 Larceny calls. There was one incident each of Pistol Permit, Suspicious Activity, Barking Dog, Domestic Disturbance, Minor Traffic Service, Disabled Motor Vehicle, Business Check, Escort, Warrant Assist, Red Tag, Assist Citizen, Accident No Injury, Nuisance, Animal Control, and Harassment.

There were 2 Arrests. One related to a Medical Assist and one related to a Motor Vehicle Complaint.

Distributed several notices regarding yellow bag violations.

Discussion followed on the possible stop sign at High and Main Sts. The Police Chief and the Captain said that it was a resounding no to put a stop sign there since there's no evidence of any accidents and some unintended consequences of a stop sign like it becoming very noisy for the people that live there.

We have been looking at purchasing a speed monitor which we can move around wherever we want. It is easy to install and move around and comes with one year of free data.

Burgess Barnes noted that people speed on Main Street at High St. and don't stop at the crosswalk. The crosswalk will be repainted, and a Pedestrian Crosswalk sign will be purchased.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Doug Mola questioned if we have two or three feet of snow in winter can the Chief get the fire truck around the tree on Denison Ave if the snow is plowed up? Burgess Barnes stated that she did witness the chief get the truck between the tree on the west end and a car parked on the side of the road and did have height clearance under it. Denison Ave is going to be paved this year and at that time the tree will be considered as part of the project.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Status of Covid-19 in area and state; reopening plans

We should discuss when we're going to start having in person meetings. It could be a hybrid sort of thing or a continuation of remote. Discussion will continue at the May meeting.

b. Consider adopting Proposed FY 21-22 budget.

A motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to adopt the proposed FY 21-22 budget, was unanimously approved.

There is no increase in the mill rate, it is a lower total expense than in last year's budget, and there are no dramatic changes in the budget from the previous year. The budget will be posted soon.

c. Update on possible ordinance on Open Burning.

Chief has received Open Burning Official certification and will begin working on an ordinance.

d. Lower Water Street traffic and parking

Burgess Rogers was really pleased to meet with Damian Sorento who Chief Stuart put him in touch with. He came down and did a walking tour with me from Cannon Square down to about 22 Water St. We watched traffic, looked at the existing yellow lines and the fire hydrants. He used his knowledge base and GIS mapping system. He concluded this is a simple job. If hired, his company would do a total pictorial map and he would just run it by the fire and police chiefs and Warden Callahan and Burgess Nicholas. He is going to submit a proposal to us or are we can be on our own. He is talking about \$1500.

Warden Callahan asked Burgess Rogers to put the plan in writing and distribute to the board including how many parking places would be created, whether the Borough does the work or his company. Burgess Rogers will include a GIS map on that location. Changing traffic directions will not be part of his plan.

e. Update on public restrooms

Warden Callahan has signed a contract with architect Julia Leeming to do an initial design which is conceptual and a schematic design of what this would look like. It doesn't have to be specific to the backside of the library on Wad Square. We're waiting for the surveyors to complete their survey which will be a useful thing for us to have to identify all the utilities and underground stuff and the Wad Hotel which is probably buried under there somewhere. Once we have the survey and the initial design, we will have something to present to the public and really think about seriously if we're going to do this.

Burgess Rogers visited the bathrooms at the docks and found the location shocking and fascinating, although not handicapped compliant. He has more photos for anyone interested in viewing. Chief Hoadley thinks the bathrooms have not been open for over 25 years.

f. Consider appointing a member of the Board to be a Trustee of the combined Waldron-Williams fund when established

Tabled

NEW BUSINESS

a. Consider requests to use Borough property

None

b. Consider reappointing Edward Smith to Harbor Management Commission

A motion by Warden Callahan, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to reappoint Edward Smith to a three-year term on the joint Stonington Harbor Management Commission was unanimously approved.

c. Consider request by One Off Productions to film in Borough on April 29

On a motion by Burgess Mastroianni, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, the request by *One Off* productions to film in the Borough on April 29, contingent on receipt of a certificate of insurance, was unanimously approved.

d. Consider reappointing members of Waldron Fund Board for one year

A motion by Warden Callahan, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to reappoint current trustees of the Waldron Fund Caroline Muller, Michael Schefers, and Gillian Patrick to one-year terms, pending the merger of the Williams and Waldron Funds, was unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION

We have money in the budget to purchase the traffic monitoring sign for roughly \$3000.

Discussion of the Borough being designated a Cultural District. Warden Callahan will be meeting with Town Department heads and will ask many questions of them pertaining to this.

Chief Hoadley thanked Antonio and Shaun for the planting and mulching at the Firehouse.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, adjournment of the meeting at 8:07 p.m. was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa M. Coleman
April 27, 2021