

**Borough of Stonington
Board of Warden and Burgesses
Regular Monthly Meeting – May 18, 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 7:00 p.m. Present 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.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On a motion by Burgess Rogers and seconded by Burgess Mastroianni, the minutes of the special meeting held on April 14, 2020, by way of Zoom conferencing, were approved.

3. REPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Received from State: \$15,187.18 for town aid roads grant; Processed quarterly reports

3. CORRESPONDENCE

Requests: requests from Water St. Café and Noah’s Restaurant; Meetings: None; Other: Email from Jessica Morrissey with requested action items; Outgoing: None

5. REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER

One Borough resident applied for assistance from the Williams Fund last month, which was approved.

6. REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT

Bills for the period April 14 through May 14, 2020 totaled \$145,640. The main expense was the annual lease for firetrucks, which totaled \$30,000; The Income & Expense YTD shows net income of \$222,000. Reserve stands at about \$376,000.

7. WARDEN’S REPORT

1. Participated in weekly COVID-19 updates with SCCOG and local health districts
2. Assisted restaurant owners on Water Street with preparations to reopen
3. Arranged for higher speed internet service (Thames Valley) in Borough Hall
4. Posted signs reminding residents to social distance and wear masks
5. Tracked Governor’s executive orders (40 and counting)
6. Weekly disinfecting of fire house and Borough Hall continues; both remain closed to public

BOROUGH CLOCK – No new information

8. COMMISSIONER REPORTS

a. STREET & SIDEWALKS COMMISSIONER REPORT

1. Completed Water Street project and extended scope to include segment from Omega to Point
2. Aquarion began Summit/Elm water main replacement project
3. Installed additional trash baskets and dog signs
4. Monthly brush pickup
5. Repaired street signs
6. Issued 3 dumpster permits

b. Fire & Emergency Management

There were 8 Alarms in April 2020, They were as follows:

- 1) 4-5-20 9:15pm Fire Alarm Activation 13 East Grand St. (hot shower steam)
- 2) 4-7-20 4:00pm Fire Alarm Activation 2 Coveside Lane (burglar alarm)
- 3) 4-13-20 4:30pm Fire Alarm Activation 84 Water St. (power outage?)
- 4) 4-13-20 6:31pm Remove Hazardous Sign 107 Water St. (high winds)
- 5) 4-13-20 9:15pm MVA IFO 17 Bayview Ave. (no injuries, took hydrant out)
- 6) 4-15-20 4:02am Fire Alarm Activation 84 Water St. (power outage?)
- 7) 4-21-20 8:35am Wires down Boulder & Hampton St. Lord's Pt. (delivery truck)
- 8) 4-28-20 7:33am Medical assist with SAC 32 Water St. Unit #15 (lift assist)

c. Parks, Trees, Rights-of-Way: Zelkova pruned on Wheeler Court.

d. Public Buildings – Landscaping at the Firehouse has been completed.

e. Public Information – Nothing to report.

f. Police

During the month of April 2020 there were 37 incidents in the police report for the Borough including 6 Medical Assists, 5 Check Buildings, 4 Fire Related calls, 3 Burglar Alarms one of which was false, 3 Parking Complaints, 3 Accidents none of which resulted in injury, 2 Assist Citizens, 2 Welfare Checks, and 2 Minor Traffic Services. There was one incident each of Identity Theft, Suspicious Activity, Trespass, Alarm Not Registered, Suspicious Motor Vehicle, Animal Control and 911 Misdialed. There were no arrests recorded.

g. Utilities & Sanitation

The Borough will not be funding the portable sanitation unit at Dubois Beach this summer; Dubois Beach opens Memorial Day weekend, per Governor's guidelines.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Chris Errichetti suggested that the distinction between permanent and alternate members on Planning & Zoning Commission be eliminated. Warden Callahan will look into it, noting that state statutes may require alternate members on the commission.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Warden Callahan moved the adoption of the Capital Improvement Program for 2020-25 and Burgess Mastroianni seconded. Mastroianni proposed repairing the sidewalks at Wayland's Wharf in FY 20-21 and moving Denison Avenue paving to FY 21-22. After some discussion that change was agreed, and the Board unanimously approved the revised CIP. Burgess O'Malley moved to adopt the proposed FY20-21 budget the Board passed in April. Burgess Rogers seconded. Budget was adopted with six (6) votes in favor and one (Nicholas) abstaining.

b) State and Region Phase 1 reopening plans were discussed. The most difficult issue to address is the opening of beaches, as distancing enforcement can only be done by Stonington and State Police, whose resources are already stretched thin. Burgess Nicholas noted that CSOs are proving difficult to recruit this year

11. NEW BUSINESS

- a) Requests to use Borough Property: Noah's Restaurant outside dining: Amended motion by Warden Callahan to approve up to seven tables on Water and Church Street sidewalks (with up to three additional tables in Church Street at the discretion of the Borough Street Commissioner), serving daily 8 am -8pm, seven days a week, through the end of July, with State Certification required prior to start. Burgess Nichols seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Water St. Café outside dining: Motion by Warden Callahan to approve up to four tables on Water Street sidewalk for dinner daily, 4 to 9pm, through the end of July. State certification must be posted. Burgess Mastroianni seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- b) Burgess Barnes moved to accept the proposal from TREEFOIL LLC to conduct a risk assessment of all Borough trees over 50 feet in height (approximately 78 trees) for \$2,900. Second by Callahan. Passed unanimously.
- c) As allowed by the Borough Charter, Warden Callahan moved to make a series of transfers within the FY19-20 budget and also to increase the Infrastructure Fund budget by \$12,000, which is 0.9 percent of the total budget. Burgess Rogers seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
- d) In discussing resident Jessica Morrissey's issues per her email to Warden Callahan, it was decided that: Burgess Barnes will look into chemical toxin concerns, and the issue will be discussed at the next meeting; and Warden Callahan and Burgess Nicholas would look into the possible use of golf carts in the Borough. The now-closed Water Street rail crossing has a long history. Warden Callahan noted that it is not in the Borough but rather in the Town. In 1992, the Town agreed with Amtrak that once reconstruction of the viaduct was completed, the Water Street crossing would be permanently closed to vehicles. Reversing that decision would require approval at the federal (FRA) and state (DOT) levels as well as agreement by Amtrak. There are personnel gates at the crossing that can be opened by the fire department.

- e) Warden Callahan moved that the Borough appoint PKF O'Connor Davies as auditors for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020. Burgess Nicholas seconded. Motion approved unanimously. Callahan will notify State OPM.
- f) Warden Callahan moved to appoint Betsy Carr as a full member of the Borough Planning & Zoning Commission. Burgess Nicholas seconded. Passed unanimously.
- g) Chief Hoadley briefly reviewed his concerns with use of wood-fired fire pits in the Borough, including the tight spacing of buildings, many of which are wood construction. Neither the Town nor Borough has an ordinance dealing with fire pits or more generally with open burning. He offered to draft an ordinance for the Borough, to be considered at a future meeting.

12. OTHER BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION ---

Warden Callahan noted that although the Williams and Waldron Funds have received court approval of their proposed merger, the fund's trustees have not been able to meet to work out procedures for the merger. Therefore, the funds continue to operate as separate entities, and the Waldron Fund trustees need to be reappointed for the coming year. Callahan then moved that trustees Muller, Patrick, and Schefers be reappointed, with terms ending May 31, 2021, or upon merger with the Williams Fund, whichever comes first. Burgess Nicholas seconded. Passed unanimously.

13. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Burgess O'Malley, seconded by Burgess Barnes, adjournment of the regular meeting at 8:56 p.m. was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tiffany Cook, Clerk-Treasurer
May 24, 2020