

**Borough of Stonington
Board of Warden and Burgesses
Regular Monthly Meeting – March 21, 2022
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

Warden Jeffrey Callahan called the monthly meeting of the Borough of Stonington Board of Warden and Burgesses to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at Borough Hall and also by way of Zoom conferencing video. Present in Borough Hall in addition to Warden Callahan were Burgesses Kevin Rogers, Shaun Mastroianni, Amy Nicholas, Amanda Barnes and Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Coleman.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On a motion by Burgess Mastroianni, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, the minutes of the regular meeting of February 22, 2022, were unanimously approved.

Borough Mask Policy

On a motion by Warden Callahan, seconded by Burgess Rogers, the Board voted unanimously to discontinue requiring persons entering Borough Hall and/or Borough Fire Station to wear masks. The Warden, in consultation with the Burgesses, has the authority to reinstitute the mask mandate if conditions warrant doing so.

PRESENTATION OF TRAFFIC AND PARKING REPORT BY JOHN BURKE

Mr. Burke walked the Board through his report via Zoom. (The full report is on the Borough website under “Departments” > “Highway Department.”) Following the presentation, Jesse Diggs spoke, first to congratulate Mr. Burke on the thoroughness of his report and then to offer some suggestions. Mr. Diggs primary suggestion was that the Board put together a citizens’ traffic advisory committee that take the Burke report and their own experiences from living in the Borough to develop recommended actions to address the Borough’s parking problems.

CORRESPONDENCE

BOROUGH PROPERTY USE REQUESTS:

- a. Stonington Free Library (1) Wadawanuck Square for open mic event on April 8; (2) Long term use of small area (625 SF) on west side of Library for seating area funded by ARPA grant.
- b. Noah’s Restaurant – use of portion of Church Street for outdoor dining for five years. (For discussion only.)

MEETINGS/HEARINGS: None

OTHER:

- a. S.E. CT Cultural Coalition: Request for support.

OUTGOING: None.

REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER: NONE

REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT

Bills for the period February 18, 2022 through March 18, 2022 totalled \$37,279.11. Large bill was for CLA Engineers. Net income as of March 18, 2022 is \$358,391.89.

WARDEN'S REPORT

1. Attended Town Hall monthly staff meeting and SCCOG monthly meeting.
2. Continued drafting FY 2022-23 budget. Input welcome.
3. Met with paving contractor to discuss future projects. Price of asphalt is increasing significantly and will impact budget.
4. Local Covid statistics: New London County hospitalizations have dropped dramatically and remained below 15 for the past month, while total deaths now total 637. Stonington Town deaths are 52 and total cases equal 2914.
5. Submitted 2022 CRS recertification report to FEMA and received response indicating that the Borough remains a Class 8 member of CRS, with 10% discount on NFIP flood policies of Borough property owners. Next recertification deadline is February 2023.
6. CLA Engineers completed inspection of storm water infrastructure.
7. Annual MS4 (Storm Water) report completed.

BOROUGH CLOCK – Adjusted clock for daylight saving time.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Streets & Sidewalks (Callahan)

1. Conducted monthly brush pickup.
2. Cleaned outfall at Harbor Edge
3. Plowed and sanded for February 25 and March 12th snow+sleet+ice storms.
4. Patched potholes
5. Issued 1 dumpster permit
6. Began spring streets cleanup.

Fire & Emergency Management (Nicholas/Hoadley)

SBFD responded to 11 alarms in February 2022 (6 of which were in the Borough), they were as follows:

- 1)2-1-22 5:42pm Fire Alarm Activation 68 Main St. (no heat in house, 20 degrees)
- 2)2-3-22 2:55am CO Alarm Activation 337 Elm St. (20ppm vented house)
- 3)2-3-22 10:58am Fire Alarm Activation 21 Main St. (workers, accidental)
- 4)2-8-22 5:59pm Fire Alarm Activation 27 Church St. Calvary Church (furnace)
- 5)2-8-22 8:09pm Fire Alarm Activation 27 Church St. (furnace technician)
- 6)2-11-22 11:41am Man overboard Stonington Town dock (fell off dock ladder)
- 7)2-14-22 1:23pm Fire Alarm Activation 168 Water St. (workers, accidental)
- 8)2-20-22 9:32am Generator explosion 22 Shawondassee Dr. (generator doing weekly test exploded & caught fire, no damage to house)
- 9)2-21-22 5:36pm Mutual aid to Weq. FD for a Structure Fire 53 Stanton Lane (garage burned down, house caught fire, extinguished with moderate damage)
- 10)2-22-22 6:48pm Fire Alarm Activation 29 Quarry Path Lord's Pt. (burned hamburgers)
- 11)2-27-22 6:26pm Cat stuck on roof of United Church Chapel 65 Main St. (family of raccoons living in the attic, Church notified)

Police Incident Report (Nicholas)

During the month of February 2022 there were 27 incidents in the police report for the Borough, including 7 Medical Assists, 5 Fire Related Calls, 3 Burglar Alarms 2 of which were false, 2 Assist Citizens, 2 Suspicious Activities and 2 Welfare Checks. There was one incident each of Parking Complaint, Disturbance, Marine Incident, Lost Item, Accident with no Injury and Animal Control.

Parks, Trees & Rights of Way (Barnes)

Met with Nick from Bartlett about the tulip tree on Water Street; he has no concern that the tree would fall. He suggested pruning on the upper levels of the canopy. Looked at the tree on the corner of Denison and Cliff and he reminded us that that tree has gone through many a paving of that road. When we go ahead with paving, he would have someone there from Bartlett to guide them in the area around the tree. Burgess Nicholas suggested a mirror on the corner of Water and Broad Street. She will confer with the police captain to see what he suggests.

Public Buildings (Mastroianni)

Nothing to report. Warden Callahan had a plaque made for Borough Hall, which identifies the building year of 1948 and the architect name.

Utilities & Sanitation (Rogers)

Duct taping reminders to residents on the recycling bin. Handed out eight notices to residents who had violated the rules for putting out trash. Mr. Crandall has been notified that there was a complaint about early morning inappropriate language by one of his drivers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jesse Diggs commented on Air BnBs and VRBOs and that there should be regulations enacted that only quality, safe buildings should be allowed. These short time rentals bring more parking problems. He feels there should be resident parking stickers. Chief Hoadley can do nothing about these one and two family short term rentals unless there is a formal complaint.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Memorial plaques, trees etc.

SVIA has formed a committee.

Cannabis use on public property

Warden Callahan talked with the Borough attorney, and will have a redo of the draft in time for next month's meeting.

Consider appeal of tree commissioner's decision regarding tree on Denison Avenue

Tabled.

Ordinance enforcement

Borough Attorney Kepple is working on a draft ordinance to set up enforcement mechanisms.

Set venue for next W&B meeting

Hybrid meetings will continue

NEW BUSINESS

Consider requests to use Borough property

A motion by Burgess Barnes, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, to approve the request by the Stonington Free Library to hold an open-mic event at Wadawanuck Square on April 8, 2022 from 3:30 – 4:30 pm, was unanimously approved.

A motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, to approve the request by the Stonington Free Library to create an outdoor graveled seating area of approximately 650 SF near the west side of the middle section of the library, during spring to fall through December 31, 2026, passed unanimously. The Library may apply to extend the use when this permission expires. The Board of Warden and Burgesses retain the right to rescind permission at any time if the space is not being used appropriately.

Discuss request from Noah’s Restaurant to create long term outside dining seating area.

Andrew Field submitted drawings. The State Senate has voted to extend the outside dining options (to be exercised at the local level) through June 30, 2023. Waiting for action by State House. Andrew Field will come back to the Board at the next meeting.

Discuss draft budget

Mill rate stays the same. Revenue drops because the Town road reimbursement is based on a formula that comes out \$43,000 less than last year. On the expense side, snow removal was increased, propane was increased, 3% cost of living, increase in infrastructure budget.

Warden Callahan asked Board members to study the budget and bring their ideas to the next meeting in order to firm up the budget before the vote at the April annual meeting.

Banner request

A motion by Warden Callahan, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to approve the request by Noank Community Support Services to hang a banner on the side of the Borough fire station, to be displayed starting in late April for two weeks, passed unanimously.

Executive session

On a motion by Warden Callahan, seconded by Burgess Barnes, the Board went into executive session at 8:58 to discuss staff performance and pay. Zoom was closed.

The Board exited executive session at 9:12.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, adjournment of the meeting at 9:13 p.m., was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa M. Coleman
March 28, 2022