

Board of Warden and Burgesses Minutes of Special Meeting ~ April 16, 2011

In lieu of the regular monthly meeting of the Borough Warden & Burgesses, a special meeting held at the firehouse was called to order at 10:32 AM by Warden Don Maranell. Present were Burgesses, Kathryn Burchenal, Paul Burgess, Jeffrey Callahan, Howard Park, Robert Scala and Clerk-Treasurer, Frederick Souza. Burgess McCreary was not present.

Public Comment:

Martha Mitchell negatively commented on the tax abatement that was granted to the Portuguese Holy Ghost Society last year. It was pointed out to her that the Borough did not grant any tax abatement and is not part of this discussion which is at the Town level. Borough taxes on the Portuguese Holy Ghost Society are not abated.

Approval of Minutes:

On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Burgess Park, the minutes from the regular meeting of March 21, 2010, were unanimously approved.

Administrative Assistant's Report (Perry):

- Received tax collections for March: \$2,013.00
- Received from State Town Road Aid Grant - \$4,421.59
- Received donations for Wadawanuck Square Fund - \$645.00; currently have 1 unpaid bill totaling \$4,125)
- Received \$4,421.59 from State of CT for Town Aid Roads
- Received from Telephone Property Tax - \$1,122.38
- Worked on FEMA Disaster Relief Grant for January storm
- Met with FEMA representative to prepare application
- Assisting with Absentee Ballot application/ballot distribution
- Working with Kathryn on a new website design

The warden noted that we are anticipating \$10k reimbursement from FEMA.

Clerk-Treasurer's Report (Souza):

- Met with registrars regarding the election timeline.
- Met with Town Clerk regarding regulations for absentee balloting and prepared packets of absentee ballots
- Set up absentee balloting procedures to be followed
- Received ballots and delivered everything needed for the election to the registrars.
- Responded to numerous questions from citizens regarding the election
- Mailed absentee ballot applications and ballots themselves to citizens requesting them.
- Learned that campaign financing forms have been properly filed by the committees.

Review of Bills: There were no questions arising from the review.

Correspondence:

- Several requests for signs were approved by Burgess Park.
- A letter informing and requesting permission for the Lighthouse Music series sponsored by the Historical Society was presented. There will be two concerts this year, July 3, (rain date July 4) and August 14 (rain date August 19). Permission was granted for the event. The forms required for the event still need to be completed and sent to all concerned parties and filed at the Borough office.
- A letter was received from Friends of Wadawanuck Square outlining their activities during April.

Warden's Report: (Maranell)

- Robinson's Cemetery: The cemetery property is not owned by the Stonington Historical Society. The town is now looking into repairing the wall. As an abandoned cemetery it falls to the town for maintenance.
- Utility Tractor: The tractor has been delivered and has been put to immediate good use. The Point and Wayland's Wharf have been graded, and it has been a great help for park maintenance. Repairs to the area of the SVIA green will happen soon.
- Leaves/Sweeping: In progress. La Grua Park and Wad Square have been cleaned up. We have also been cleaning up catch basins of leaves/debris from the winter in problem areas.
- Church Street Seawall repairs: The contract is signed. Work should start later this month or early May.
- La Grua Park: Howard and I will be meeting after this meeting to discuss improvements to the park.
- Potholes/Paving: Pothole repairs in progress. Main/Broad Street repairs start later this month.
- High/Main Street Crosswalk: Paul will update this.
- FEMA Grant: We have done the paperwork, waiting for determination of amount and the check.
- Budget: Once the budget passes, we need to set the mil rate. On a motion by Burgess Callahan, and second by Burgess Scala, it was unanimously voted to set the mill rate to 1.9 for FY 2011/2012.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Fire (Scala):

- There were 8 alarms during the month of March and 6 During April. The roster of current department members was received by Burgess Scala.

Parks, Trees & Rights of Way (Park):

- **PARKS:** The heavy cleanup has been done in Wad Square, LaGrua Park and Cannon Square. Friends of Wadawanuck Square have done some tune up by way of cleaning up fallen branches, which will be an on going problem as the older trees have many dead limbs which will continue to fall. We are lucky to have FRIENDS to do this fine tuning on a volunteer basis. They do weeding, edging, weedwacking, and detailing that frees-up our highway crew for other heavy work. I would love to see a group of friends for all our parks. LaGrua Park is in great need of up-grading and this will be part of my future endeavors. Cannon Square is looking very good with it new chain fence, and neatly cut grass. Yes there are bare places and the decision to seed , feed the birds, or dig it all up and start anew is dependent on whether we will put in an automatic sprinkler system .
- The O'Brian's still need to be paid and I believe at this time we still have not received the generous donation from SVIA. After this is done I propose that the fund established for the Wad SQ lamps be on going to help raise monies for other necessary projects in the square.
- **TREES;** I have had a request from Burgess Burgess to remove two trees from the corner of Wall and Main Streets. This is to insure that the side walk repairs will not be undone by their root system. This is at the request of the Mitchell's ,25 Main St. I did try to contact Thomas Mitchell as one of the trees is dedicated to his mother but he has not come back to me. I thought of transplanting the tree but it seems too uninteresting to be worth the cost. These two trees will be posted as soon as I have permission from the board. They will not be replaced. An eight to ten foot tall tree in the North East corner of Wad SQ in not what I had in mind but the cost factor is tempting. I believe I could get a truck, and would be able to pick up that tree, in Hadley MA, perhaps getting a slightly larger tree. Pruning and trimming is definitely in the future for Wadawanuck Square.

Martha Mitchell joined the discussion and noted that if the street trees are creating the damage to sidewalks, and the cost of that must be borne by the adjacent homeowner, then the trees should be removed or the damage paid for by the Borough.

Utilities and Sanitation(McCreary): (In absentia)

- **Utilities:** All remains quiet on the utilities front. Our power and especially our water company have been informing customers and general public that they active in or instituting numerous, socially responsible "green" programs. That their rates are rising significantly is not a factor.
- **Sanitation:** As of Monday April 18, as summer and summer people begin to take hold, we shall start random late evening reviews of trash on sidewalks. This, to control non enclosed and therefore pest vulnerable garbage and litter on the streets.

Public Buildings (Callahan): Nothing to add from what was presented at the Annual Meeting this morning.

Emergency Management, Sidewalks, & Street Lights (Burgess):

Street Lights-No activity

Emergency Management- No activity

Sidewalks

- Wrote letter to Mr. & Mrs. Mitchell in response to their proposal regarding sidewalk repair
- Received April 4, 2011 letter from Mr. Dave Williams, 24 Water Street, requesting Borough
- Action regarding eleven sidewalks on lower Water Street that he states are unsafe and in disrepair.
- Unrelated to the Williams' correspondence, coordinating with homeowners/contractors for replacement of sidewalks at 20 and 91 Water Street.
- Completed restoration of granite crosswalk on Main Street at High Street. Click below to see photos:



Police, Public Affairs & Communications (Burchenal):

- The incident report was not available, but it was noted that it will be forwarded from the Police Department when it is.
- Alternatives to the “sticks” at the foot of the viaduct are being researched, but it has been difficult to find anything that is as effective but more attractive.

Old Business: none

New Business:

- The Stonington Historical Society was unanimously granted permission for Music at the Lighthouse events. One to be held on July 3, and one to be held on August 19, as stipulations to the permission being granted, the following are in place from last year and the form required for Borough events needs to be submitted.
 1. The Stonington Borough Fire Department is not to be used to put up, take down, or maintain the banners.
 2. Permission for placement of the banners must be obtained from the homeowners from whose home the banner will be hung.
 3. Banners must come down within two working days of the completion of the event.
- The Lady of Fatima Society was unanimously granted permission to conduct two street processions—one on June 4, and one on June 5. The Borough will underwrite liability as required by the Stonington Police and has been the case in the past.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 11:10 PM – (moved by Burgesses Callahan and Scala)

Respectfully submitted,
Frederick J. Souza ~ Borough of Stonington Clerk/Treasurer