

Stonington Borough Comfort Station Task Force Special Meeting

Wednesday, November 16, at 7 pm

Stonington Borough Hall

## Draft Meeting Minutes

1. Call to order: 7 pm
2. Task Force members present: Amanda Barnes, Jean Fiore, Allegra Griffiths, Ellen Wightman, Sarael Sargent, Karen Von Ruffer Hills, Al Razzano, Tim Olson, Jesse Diggs, Kevin Bowdler, Chuck Hartmann, Michael Schefers(ex officio), and about 8 members of the public
3. Review of November 9 meeting minutes: Updates: add Jean's name to the list of attendees; add Karen's name to list of those who visited Bodega and Borough Hall
4. Review DRAFT Report to Warden and Burgesses

Page 1: Will delete "31,000" as that figure was not verified/validated by this committee;

Page 3: Correct spelling of Tim Olson's, Sarael Sargent's, and Michael Schefers's names on Comfort Station Task Force Objective page;

Page 6: This is a sample analysis page.

Page 7: Al explained that this is what we did at the 10/5 meeting and what we looked at in terms of putting the rubric together. It explains why we have 1's, 2's, and 3's, and which corresponds to the green, red, and yellow. It shows what was included in the criteria.

On 10/5, we reduced from 25 to 12 locations and discussed and agreed on the rubric. There was a suggestion to have the small font language under the date displayed across the top of each page.

Page 8: On 10/11, we reduced from 12 to 7 locations

Page 9: This page displays rankings from 10/26 meeting

Page 10: This is a combination of 11/2 and 11/9. On 11/2, the committee discussed the Boro Bodega with AndrewField; first pass at numbers (initial estimate).

Page 11: These are updated numbers, but they need to be adjusted for Porta Loo Hlgh End.

Michael mentioned that work needs to be done on sewerage at Borough Hall. The 70 year old 3" sewer pipe is rusting. Al replied that this is an issue that will need to be addressed and repaired by the Borough either way; it should

therefore not impact the work of this committee. Michael mentioned it could be the difference between the cost of a sleeve or bringing it up to current code, a 4-inch pipe, which could be costly. The committee is concerned that new information is arriving at the ninth hour, and it has not had adequate time to evaluate this new information.

**Chuck made a motion to suspend the conclusion of the committee until such time that the members can evaluate the new information brought tonight to evaluate the costs of the sewage pipe and the impact of it on our recommendation. We as a committee have an opportunity to review and agree upon the final edits to be made to the document that summarizes the analysis conclusion and recommendation. The motion was seconded by Jean.**

Discussion: Kevin is voting no because he feels there is enough information for the warden and burgesses to make a decision. Jesse suggested putting in an asterisk that says tbd based on estimates from plumber; he doesn't think it will cost more than \$20k. Ellen suggested getting an estimate immediately and putting it in the financial - even though this is money that will need to be spent by the Borough either way. Al mentioned that the Borough Hall bathroom should be brought up to code.

**The motion was not approved (5 opposed, 6 in favor).**

Recommendation page: Sarael: The committee was tasked with finding a permanent solution; we should therefore recommend the two permanent options in Borough Hall: with one or two bathrooms. Jesse: The porta potty at the point is managed by SVIA and the divers; the porta potty at the playground is handled by the Town. The wording on the second bullet should be changed.

Kevin suggested that the second bathroom is needed, and if the Borough receives \$50K from the Town, we have to spend very little to make this happen.

Tim commented on the porta potties: further research revealed that ADA compliant upscale portaloos 12X6 do not exist. The smallest available is 17X6 and includes three units. It cannot be a trailer, so any thoughts of moving it around would not work. It would have to be skid mounted, and it would be hard-plumbing and tied into the sewer, rather than transportable to different sites.

The committee's recommendation is to move the existing standard porta potty to a more discreet location at the playground, possibly add an additional unit, put a fence around it, and have the units cleaned and maintained more frequently.

Jean recommends that the Borough works with the Town on this. The committee agrees that this recommendation is independent of the permanent recommendation in Borough Hall.

Page 13 - no comments.

5. Discuss correspondence received: A letter was received from (Mr. Post) who does not want to see trailer porta potties at the playground. A letter was received from Amy Nicholas who requests a comparison of the current recommendation to the Wadawanuck Square proposal.

Al responded that this was not what this committee was tasked to do.

Karen supported Amy's request for a Wad Square/Borough Hall comparison and stated that two years of effort by two task forces made up of residents/community - along with organizations that raised a substantial amount of funds for a Comfort Station at Wad Square deserve an update and that a comparison was the appropriate thing to do to honor these efforts. Karen expressed her concern that the committee was biased by removing Wad Square from even making it past the first round to the evaluation phase and Jean asked why? Amy responded that at least one member stated during the appointment process that "I am for a comfort station as long as it is not on Wad Square"

*Amy Nicholas* commented that

- Two Committees recommended Wad Square
- Over 200 people signed a petition supporting the Wad Square location
- Over \$50,000 was raised exclusively for Wad Square
- The Garden Club contributed \$10,000 to Wad Square
- Finally, many in the community need to know why it was eliminated and/or why Borough Hall is better

Allegra asked why we wouldn't want to compare and have an opportunity to explain why our current recommendation of Borough Hall is better than Wad Square.

The committee had a brief conversation comparing Borough Hall to Wad Square:

- there are fewer residents around Borough Hall than there are around Wad Square;
- the cost and ease of construction is substantially easier for Borough Hall;
- re personal safety, Borough Hall is in a supervised site; the Wadawanuck Square restroom would be unmanned. Some members thought that Church St was very quiet at times whereas Wad Square has constant traffic. It was recommended that we just use the more objective measures for comparison.
- Borough Hall is closer to the commercial district;
- with a two bathroom option, the same comforts are available for less money.
- there is no need to physically change a building or a park.

There will be a page comparing the committee's recommendation to Wad

Square.

Chuck mentioned that he thought the cost of construction for Wad Square should be increased by 30% to \$520,000 to reflect the change in construction prices since year end 2020. We did not discuss this as a group.

6. Public Comment

*Doug Mola*, 2 Church Street, was wondering if the second floor bathroom in Borough Hall could be employee only.

*Jennifer Olson*, Northwest Street, thanked the committee members for their time and for not putting a 17 foot trailer at the playground.

*Nancy Donahue* raised a point of clarification - last week, Al said porta potty isn't going anywhere? Michael mentioned that Danielle Chesebrough seems willing to work with the Borough on porta potties. Nancy asked if the units would be accessible; they are.

*Sarael* suggested that a committee member, rather than a burgess, present the proposal to the Board of Warden & Burgesses. Al will make the presentation.

*Kevin Rogers* thanked the committee.

7. Adjourn: 8:24 pm