

Borough of Stonington
Board of Warden and Burgesses
Regular Monthly Meeting November 18, 2024
MEETING MINUTES

Warden Michael Schefers 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 the Borough Firehouse. Present, in addition to Warden Schefers were Burgesses Kevin Rogers, Amy Nicholas, Amanda Barnes, Kevin Bowdler, and Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Coleman. Approximately 20 members of the public were present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On a motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, the minutes of the monthly meeting of October 21, 2024 as amended to add "Burgess Nicholas noted that tax collections were \$43,500 less than budgeted", were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE

RECEIVED:

Steve Horvath dated 10/27/2024 – Flooding at Maple Lane and Hyde Street

REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER

Announcement that the Borough elections will be held on May 5, 2025, interested parties should contact Clerk-Treasurer for dates received from SOTS office. First paperwork ED-102 was submitted.

REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT; ARPA UPDATE

Bills for the period October 19, 2024 through November 15, 2024 totaled \$76,127.28. Large bills of note were the payment for paving of Cannon Square. I&E for July 2024 through November 15, 2024 shows total income to date of \$1,384,849.92; and net income to date of \$653,564.29. Balance of ARPA funds is \$77,242.00.

Burgess Bowdler asked if the \$133,531 in Infrastructure Account is for both Sidewalks and Wayland's Wharf and Warden Schefers said yes.

Burgess Nicholas asked about the work being done on sidewalks at Wad. Square. The work is to get rid of tripping hazards and make entrances to sidewalks crossing the Square be ADA compliant.

WARDEN'S REPORT

Met with First Selectman Danielle Chesbrough on shared local items of interest.

Attended SCCOG Legislature Committee Meeting.

Attended First Selectman October staff meeting.

Met with Main Street and SBMA on Borough Economic & Borough Development matters.

Met with Kathryn Burchenal on Climate Resilience Issues

Met with Maplewood and Orchard Street residents and Highway Foreman on Stormwater Drain and Flooding Issues.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Streets & Sidewalks (Schefers)

Conducted monthly brush pickup.

Continued Park maintenance.

Initiated Leaf cleaning

Met with Michael Shortman on Wad Square sidewalks and handicap cutouts.

Met with Bartlett to review sidewalk tree interferences

Reviewed two off-street cut applications

Fire & Emergency Management (Nicholas/Hoadley)

SBF D responded to 12 Alarms, 8 were in the borough and 1 was nautical. In October 2024, they were as follows :

- 1) 10-4-24 9:53pm Boat ran up on Bartlett reef, East Breakwater (Watch Hill FD & Stonington PD responded, no injuries reported)
- 2) 10-7-24 8:27am Fire Alarm Activation 194 Water St., Dog Watch Rest. (faulty detector)
- 3) 10-7-24 8:01pm Fire Alarm Activation 23 High St. (burnt filet mignon in oven)
- 4) 10-9-24 12:23pm Wires down IFO 146 Water St. (EVERSOURCE enroute)
- 5) 10-9-24 2:36pm Strange odor (poisonous?) 123 Water St. 2nd floor Apt. (nothing found)
- 6) 10-13-24 1:11pm Fire Alarm Activation 66 Water St. Breakwater Rest. (burnt food)
- 7) 10-17-24 12:00pm Fire Alarm Activation 26 Church St., Boro Hall (workers)
- 8) 10-19-24 12:09am Odor of chemicals 123 Water St. 2nd floor Apt. (nothing found)
- 9) 10-19-24 1:36pm Sprinkler head activation 134 Water St. (furnace room, no fire)
- 10) 10-19-24 7:34pm CO detector activation 228 Wamphassuc Pt. Rd. (accidental)
- 11) 10-19-24 9:50pm Fuel spill IFO 212 N. Main St. (oil truck leaking engine fuel)
- 12) 10-31-24 5:20pm Possible illegal burn 88 Flanders Rd. (excessive smoke from a lawnmower starting up)

Chief Hoadley is on vacation.

August Police Incident Report (Nicholas)

Attended Board of Police Commission. We will be issuing tickets for Commercial Vehicles in violation of our overnight parking ordinance. We continue to discuss speed cushions and review with attorney and insurance company. They will be placed at Bayview and at Water Street and Pearl. We are also looking into buying a speed indicator to be put on Bayview initially. Also, the police will give us a price for a camera for the viaduct.

Parks, Trees & Rights of Way (Barnes)

I met with Kevin Mucha who has replaced Megan Kacenski as Bartlett's representative for the Borough to go over the long list of projects, including the following:

Pruning, Sycamore, 53 Main Street
Pruning, Sycamore, 51 Main Street
Pruning, 2 Sycamores, 84 Water Street
Removal, stump grinding, Maple, Grand/Cliff Street
Pruning, Zelkova, 46 Main Street

These projects are underway and should be completed this week.

Also, I'm very sorry to report an enormous error on my part. When I last met with Megan Kacenski, she had recommended the removal of the tree on the corner of Main Street and Temple Street. My memory is that I told her we'd revisit that in the spring; but somehow it made its way onto the proposal, and the tree was removed today without having been posted or approved by the Board. As you might imagine, I feel terrible about this. Kevin assured me that the tree really should have come down. He shared a photo of the tree trunk post-removal, which I can share with all of you, and it was completely hollow.

We will have some big-ticket tree work to be done in the near future in the amount of approximately \$7,000-\$8,000. We have to look at our upcoming expense and the remaining budget to see which removals, plantings can be done. Burgess Rogers asked about the tree for Borough Hall and Burgess Barnes will ask Bartlett to get us a tree to be planted this fall.

Public Buildings (Rogers)

Fire House and Borough Hall –

Firehouse

Met with Dunklee Heating and Cooling to get a second quote for the needed cooling update on floor two. We need to meet again for more details. Garden Club is taking over the firehouse plantings.

Borough Hall

The bathroom project is moving forward. We meet each Monday to discuss the progress. This month we went over security cameras, paint colors and flooring samples. Everything is moving along well. The inspections have gone well so far. The pile of dirt outside the front doors have been used to refill the channels that were dug out for the new pipes. Due to the fact that the recently poured concrete needs to be set for 27 days, which lands out timeline on the day before the Borough Stroll, we probably will not have the newly constructed bathroom open. However, we may still be able to open the original bathroom that is now ADA compliant. The floor tiles will not be down, that happens the following Monday if everything goes as planned.

The elevator inspectors came last week and checked out our elevator at the firehouse. It will be repaired. Good news, we passed with flying colors.

Asked about Borough signage, the Warden assured us the signage will go up as soon as the bathrooms are open.

Utilities & Sanitation (Bowdler)

Sanitation –

Trash at the point. I will follow up with Brandon Watson from the SVIA to see if they had any preference for location of the updated signage. If not, my recommendation is that we put one sign on East Lawn facing the parking lot that includes 'No Trash' and the 'No Parking overnight' signs. The other 'no trash' sign can be located next to the Porta Loos. Sue can do the installation. Landscaping at Town Dock around the porta loos is done.

Utilities – Street lighting

I met with Mike Evering of Evering Electric re street lighting. We started with Wad Square. The idea would be to put a sub-meter on the Libraries Electrical Box which could be charged to the Borough. It is more expensive and more difficult to trench across Water St and Main Street to the side of the road, which is darkest at night, We will look at placing two streetlamps on the Wad Square Side of Water St and Main St. Mike can give us an estimate for the electrical work and we will then need to get a quote for the trenching work. It is a lot of trenching. We need to discuss this project's feasibility further.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Resident Richard Hanratty of 103 Main St. asked the Warden about the debris under the viaduct bridge, and it is on the list of things to look into.

Resident Jesse Diggs of 8 School St. said he was impressed that the recommendations made by the citizens group that a year later the design and construction of the public restrooms is coming to a completion.

Resident Peter Dorey of 40 Gold St. verbally presented his application for a curb cut. The re-drawn drawing of the application will be given to the board under new business. A letter from James Larkin in support was read by Mr. Dorey, as well.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Public Restroom Update

See Public Buildings Report

EV Charging Station Update

Tabled

Storm resilience and mitigation; Wayland's Wharf and Omega

Burgess Bowdler reported that a contractor who had bid was invited to tonight's meeting but was unable to attend. Burgess Bowdler said the two contractors who bid on the Wayland's Wharf job had the same approach which is to dig down on the inside of the existing wall down to sea level, repair the sea wall from the side put waterproofing material, then waterproofing lining, then frame six-foot sections. The worst part of Wayland's Wharf is the south part. The west side can be done at a later time. Both contractors feel the pavilion is in good shape and will not need to be re-done. The one quote for the south facing side is \$78,000. Waiting for the second quote but not feeling hopeful at this point. The quote did not include a railing. It will be too cold to do the work during Dec/Jan., so we have a couple of months to allow for more quotes to come in.

Omega St. Town of Stonington put a cap on the outgoing sea water drain. Warden Schefers met with Town officials today, who will make recommendations to make the bottom of Omega Street more resilient and send to the Warden.

Maplewood Lane Town Public Works and Town Engineer to address flooding at Maplewood Lane. Also, Mr. Horvath took photos over time, and these were supplied to Town. Perhaps there are clogged drains.

Kathryn Burchenal, who is our town Representative, has been briefed on our Borough storm water resilience and mitigation issues.

NEW BUSINESS

Off Street Parking Applications

On a motion by Warden Schefers, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, to approve the application from Peter Dorey for a 14-foot curb cut, aligned to the left-hand side of the garage door opening at 40 Gold St., was approved by majority. Burgess Bowdler abstained.

On a motion by Burgess Rogers, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to approve the application from Joseph Bailon for a curb cut for Off Street Parking at 1 Harmony St., was approved.

Meeting Dates

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to adopt the proposed regular 2025 meeting schedule, was approved.

Audit Report Update

Everything is in great shape. We were written up for three things: Auditors would like to see account numbers on our balance sheet accounts, cannot charge anything to the contingency line, (we must vote to allocate money from the contingency line to the expense line to be paid from). anything over \$10,000 must have a unanimous vote to waive the bidding process.

OTHER BUSINESS and Discussion

None

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Barnes, adjournment of the meeting at 8:12 pm, was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa M. Coleman

November 24, 2024

