

Board of Warden and Burgesses
Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting ~ December 16, 2013

CALL TO ORDER:

- A. The regular Monthly Meeting of the Borough of Stonington Warden and Burgesses was called to order in Borough Hall at 7:30 PM by Warden Jeffrey Callahan. Present were Burgesses Michael Blair, Sibby Lynch, Amy Nicholas, Robert Scala, and Clerk- Treasurer Brian Krafjack. Burgesses Michael Adair and Howard Park were absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, acceptance of the minutes from the Board Meeting held on November 18, 2013 was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION BY AUDITOR:

- A. Marcia Marien of O'Connor Davies, LLP presented a draft of the "Borough of Stonington Exit Conference with the Board" for the financial year ended June 30, 2013.
 - 1. Ms. Marien reviewed the *Draft Short Term Balance Sheet*, explaining it was a measure of working capital, noting the total fund balances of \$828,448.
 - a. Warden Callahan asked why the Infrastructure Reserve Fund (IRF) was not included.
 - b. Ms. Marien said that at the end of 2012 the balance in the IRF had been transferred to other funds, bringing the balance of the IRF to zero, and therefore was not listed.
 - c. Warden Callahan said that he would like to see the fund listed in the report.
 - i. Ms. Marien said she would add the IRF, with a zero balance, to the final report.
 - 2. Ms. Marien reviewed a graph of the *General Fund Unreserved Fund Balance Over Time*.
 - a. The graph plots the total unreserved General Fund balance as a percentage of the total General Fund revenue.
 - b. Ms. Marien explained that the old rule of thumb was that the percentage should not be less than 8 percent, or one month's cash flow, noting that Government Finance Officers like to see 15 percent as a new rule of thumb.
 - c. Ms. Marien explained that at the end of Fiscal Year 2013, the Borough's General Fund balance was approximately \$200,000 representing a little more than 2 month's cash flow, or approximately 19% of the General Fund revenue.
 - d. Ms. Marien said that the Borough was in a very strong financial position, noting that while the 19 percent is a little high, since the Borough's overall budget is relatively small it is wise to have reserve in case of an emergency such as a hurricane or large winter storm.
 - 3. Ms. Marien reviewed the *Draft Budget vs. Actual Report*.
 - a. Ms. Marien noted that property tax collections were higher than budgeted.
 - b. Burgess Blair asked that, under the heading of Fire Protection Fees, the "Stonington Fire District" be changed to "Stonington Upper District."
 - i. Ms. Marien said she would make this change to the final report.
 - 4. Ms. Marien reviewed the *Comparison of Revenue and Long Term Debt*.
 - a. Ms. Marien noted that the Borough's long term debt to revenue ratio was 3 percent at the end of Fiscal Year 2013, noting that all of the long term debt has since been retired leaving the Borough debt-free.
 - b. Ms. Marien said that having no debt is not always good for a municipality; if there are buildings, equipment, or infrastructure in need of attention, it may be best to take care of them rather than let them deteriorate further.

5. Ms. Marien reviewed the *Long Term Balance Sheet*.
 - a. Ms. Marien explained that this report shows equity as would be measured by a business.
 - b. At the end of Fiscal Year 2013 Total Assets were \$5,112,915 and Total Liabilities were \$151,147. The Borough's Total Net Position was \$4,961,768.
6. Ms. Marien explained that at the end of Fiscal Year 2014-2015, for the purposes of benchmarking, the State of Connecticut will require town governments to use a "Uniform Chart of Accounts."
 - a. Ms. Marien said that the Borough can continue its current accounting practices, but a report will be necessary at the end of the Fiscal Year to reclassify funds corresponding to the format of the Uniform Chart of Accounts.
7. Ms. Marien concluded that the results of the audit were positive.
 - a. The Borough's Financial Statements are free from material misstatements.
 - b. No fraud or illegal acts were noted during the course of the audit.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT'S REPORT (PERRY):

- A. Received tax collections for November: \$263.
- B. Received payment from Wamphassuc Point Association per revised agreement: \$720.
- C. Audit work is complete; met with auditors to review draft report.

CLERK-TREASURER'S REPORT (KRAFJACK):

- A. Discussing with Dime Bank direct deposit of payroll checks for Borough employees who wish to participate
 1. The fee would be \$25 per month.
 - a. The Board was in favor of implementing direct deposit for employees wishing to participate.
 - b. Internal controls for direct deposit will have to be added to the Borough Accounting Manual.

REVIEW OF BILLS:

- A. The 11/18/2013 through 12/13/2013 report was reviewed and is on file in the Borough Office.
 1. Bills for the period totaled \$19,647.

REVIEW OF PROFIT/LOSS STATEMENT:

- A. The July through December 2013 Profit and Loss Budget vs. Actual Report was reviewed and is on file in the Borough Office.
 1. Net income as of 12/13/2013 is \$436,928.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- A. Informational:
 1. None.
- B. Requests:
 1. None.

C. Invitations/ Meetings:

1. None.

D. Other:

1. Tobin Carberry O'Malley Riley Sellinger, P.C. letter: copy of notice of action for 3 Wheeler Court.
 - a. The Borough is not a defendant in case.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- A. None.

WARDEN'S REPORT:

- A. Conducted meeting with financial auditor:
- B. Worked with Borough attorney on legal matters:

SANITATION, UTILITIES, AND STREET LIGHTS (WARDEN CALLAHAN):

- A. Attended quarterly meeting with Aquarion advisory group.

BOROUGH CLOCK (WARDEN CALLAHAN):

- A. The Borough Clock was reset after small electrical fire in United Church.

STREETS (BURGESS PARK):

- A. Streets and Roads:
 1. The roads were pretreated for ice and snow several times.
 - a. The Borough has been asked to shovel the ramp at the library and will comply.
 - b. Burgess Park has asked that the highway crew pay special attention to the foot bridge, making sure the drains are clear and the pathway is cleared.
 - i. The crew acknowledged this responsibility.
 2. Parks:
 - a. La Grua Park was cleaned up and it looks good.
 - b. Wadawanuck Square was cleaned up.
 3. Brush Pickup:
 - a. Five loads of brush were taken to the dump.
 - b. Pick-up of leaves throughout the Borough has been difficult because many of the piles of leaves have frozen together.
 4. Equipment:
 - a. Repaired leaf vac.
 - b. The Borough is purchasing a smaller salt/sander which will affix on the smaller tractor to pretreat sidewalks, notably on the Viaduct and the sidewalks in Wadawanuck Square.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (BURGESS BLAIR):

- A. Fire Department Reorganization:
 1. Burgess Blair reported that the Companies will vote on the new bylaws in January 2014.

B. Fire Department Alarms Report:

1. There were 11 alarms in November 2013:
 - a. 11/01/13 Propane leak at 99 Main Street.
 - b. 11/03/13 Alarm activation at 252 North Water Street.
 - c. 11/09/13 Motor vehicle accident on North Water Street at Route 1.
 - d. 11/14/13 Structure Fire at 4 Stanton Lane.
 - e. 11/16/13 Alarm activation at 8 High Street.
 - f. 11/17/13 Low hanging wire at 1 Cutler Street.
 - g. 11/18/13 Alarm activation at 84 Water Street.
 - h. 11/20/13 Alarm activation at 84 Water Street.
 - i. 11/24/13 Structure fire at 228 Wamphassuc Point Road.
 - j. 11/26/13 Alarm activation at 84 Water Street.
 - k. 11/28/13 Alarm activation at 310 Elm Street.
2. Burgess Blair said that the three false alarms at 84 Water Street were due to a contractor not covering smoke detectors during construction activities.
 - a. Burgess Blair said that chronic false alarms are a concern because the volunteers have to respond to each and every alarm, often pulling volunteers out of work.
 - b. Burgess Blair suggested that contractors should be made to take responsibility for false alarms that are a result of not following proper procedures for protecting alarm devices, perhaps by being required to post a bond.
 - c. Warden Callahan suggested Burgess Blair draft an ordinance addressing this problem.
3. Burgess Blair said that new residents should be given a copy of the Borough Charter and the Borough Ordinances.
 - a. Warden Callahan suggested that the Stonington Town Clerk could notify the Borough Clerk monthly of new real estate transactions so that the Borough Clerk could send copies to new residents.

PARKS, TREES, AND RIGHTS OF WAY (BURGESS LYNCH):

A. Trees:

1. Trimming of Trees:
 - a. There have been no big storms; no Borough trees or branches have been downed.

B. Borough Christmas Tree:

1. Thanks to the Stonington Village Improvement Association (SVIA) a Fraser Fir was planted in Wadawanuck Square in time to be lit for the Christmas Stroll.
 - a. Electricity was supplied by a cord running from the Library.

C. Trimming of 3 Poplar trees at the Cutler Street side of the base of the footbridge:

1. At the November meeting it was reported that Borough trees at the northeast side of the footbridge had been drastically cut back without permission.
 - a. The identity of person who cut this tree remains unknown.

D. Planter at the Firehouse:

1. Annabell McLanahan of the Stonington Garden Club is enthusiastic about taking on the gardening project in the neglected planter at the Firehouse that runs the length of the wall next to Main Street.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS (BURGESS ADAIR):

- A. Borough Hall Windows and Fascia Painting:
 - 1. The front windows, the front gutters, and the front door have been painted.
 - a. Burgess Adair is attending to a few drips on the door handle and mail chute.
 - b. The gutters have been cleared, but the downspouts need additional work and have been clogged for some time.
 - i. Burgess Adair is getting an estimate for the gutter work shortly from "A-1 Seamless Gutters" in Niantic.
 - ii. A recommendation will be forthcoming when the paperwork is received.
- B. Borough Hall Generator:
 - 1. A second estimate for the installation and purchase of a standby generator for Borough Hall was received and came in lower than the first estimate.
 - a. A recommendation will be made when once the two proposals are thoroughly evaluated.
- C. Windows in the overhead door at the Fire House:
 - 1. Burgess Adair is getting a second estimate on replacing the panes that have lost their seal and have fogged up in the overhead doors of the fire house.
 - a. A recommendation will be made at the January Board Meeting.
- D. Heating Controls in Garage:
 - 1. Warden Callahan said that the architect for the Borough Hall improvements project has been notified that the controls in the garage do not work and should be corrected under warranty.
- E. Borough Hall Boiler:
 - 1. Warden Callahan said that the boiler is in tough shape and may need to be replaced.
 - a. A contractor with extensive experience working on steam boilers has been contacted to evaluate the condition of the boiler.
 - b. Burgess Blair asked if something more efficient than an oil-fired steam boiler should be explored, perhaps even a geothermal system.
 - i. Warden Callahan said that since the existing boiler is leaking, the immediate need is to see if the existing boiler can be repaired to make it through the winter.

SIDEWALKS (BURGESS SCALA):

- A. Repairs:
 - 1. The Holly branches obstructing the sidewalk at 51 Main Street have been trimmed.

POLICE, PUBLIC AFFAIRS, AND COMMUNICATIONS (BURGESS NICHOLAS):

- A. Police Incident Report:
 - 1. During the month of November 2013 there were 84 incidents in the police report for the Borough including:
 - a. Medical assists: 4
 - b. Burglar alarm responses: 8
 - c. Fire Alarms: 6
 - d. Motor vehicle accidents/ motor vehicle stops/ auto and parking complaints: 5
 - e. Keys locked in vehicles: 2
 - f. Suspicious activity calls: 2
 - g. Harassment Complaints: 2

2. There were several incidents relating to checking on doors logged during this month.
 - a. The third shift patrolmen check businesses to ensure they are secure during the night/early morning.
 - b. These checks are now being recorded and represented 34 of the incidents recorded in November.
3. Captain Desmond reminds residents to be particularly aware of potential theft during the holiday season.
 - a. Please try not to leave packages in your unlocked car.
 - b. Businesses should limit cash on hand.
 - c. Residents should be aware of the parking regulations during winter weather events.

B. Website/ Communications:

1. No activity to report.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Consider Renewal of Borough Ordinance SBO-05:

1. As noted during the November Board meeting, this ordinance would expire if not renewed at this time.
 - a. Warden Callahan said that there are currently three ordinances addressing parking in the Borough, noting that the Board should consider renewing the ordinance and work to consolidate them into one ordinance during 2014.
2. On a motion by Warden Callahan, seconded by Burgess Scala, renewal of Borough Ordinance SBO-05, in accordance with Section 5 of the Borough Charter, with one revision noted below, was unanimously approved.

Original text of Paragraph 3.a:

- a. No such vehicle or trailer shall be parked on any street within the Borough except as expressly allowed in subsections b, c, or d.

Revised text of Paragraph 3.a.:

- a. No such vehicle or trailer shall be parked on any street within the Borough except as expressly allowed in subsections b or c.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Schedule of Meetings for 2014:

1. On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, the 2014 Board of Warden and Burgess meeting schedule was established by unanimous approval as follows:
 - a. Regular Board Meetings will take place on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 PM.
 - b. If the third Monday is a holiday, the meeting will take place on Tuesday immediately following the Monday holiday at 7:30 PM.

B. Planning and Zoning Reappointments:

1. Burgess Blair said that party affiliations should be listed for every member on the Planning and Zoning Commission since there are rules that must be followed regarding the make-up of the commission with regard to the number of commissioners per party.

2. Warden Callahan said he is concerned that there are no alternate members on the commission, noting that it is the responsibility of the Board of Warden and Burgesses to fill these positions.
 - a. Warden Callahan encouraged Board members to seek candidates and to have them send a letter or email of interest to him.
3. On a motion by Burgess Blair, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, reappointment of Julia Roberts and Christopher Errichetti with terms expiring December 31, 2016 was unanimously approved.

C. Consider Fire Department Officer Selections:

1. On a motion by Burgess Blair, seconded by Burgess Scala, acceptance of Department Officers as elected to one 12 month term at the September 30, 2013 Annual Meeting of the Stonington Borough Fire Department was unanimously approved.

The Officers are as follows:

Department Chief	Jeffrey Hoadley
Deputy Chief	William Teixeira
Secretary	Peter-John Victoria
Treasurer	Charles Chiappone
Assistant Chief	Harold Mitchell

D. Joint Meeting with Harbor Management Commission to discuss Jetty:

1. This meeting will take place on January 7th at 7PM in Borough Hall.
 - a. Burgess Blair said he feels that the meeting is premature, suggesting the Board should first formally establish a committee to review ownership, potential sources for funding, environmental concerns, and other issues specific to the jetty.
 - i. The committee might include representatives from Stonington Commons, the Stonington Historical Society, and other interested stakeholders.
 - ii. Burgess Blair said that the Board had tasked him and Burgess Park to investigate ownership of the jetty, noting that the Harbor Management Commission is duplicating their efforts.
 - b. Warden Callahan said that forming a Jetty Committee can be a goal of this meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Accounting Procedures Manual:

1. Warden Callahan distributed copies of the manual, which was developed in 2012, to the Board.
 - a. Warden Callahan said that occasionally bills have been paid without the signoff of the pertinent commissioner, stressing that in the future no bills will be paid without the proper signoff.
 - b. Burgess Lynch noted that some of the language in the manual is a bit confusing.
 - i. Warden Callahan suggested Burgess Lynch review the manual and make suggestions for improvements.

B. Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012:

1. Burgess Blair expressed his concern about the impacts of Biggert-Waters Act.
 - a. Under this reform act, people owning houses in Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA), constructed prior to development of Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) are now faced with very steep rate increases.

- b. Burgess Blair said this will have a profound impact on residents and businesses in the Borough.
- c. Warden Callahan said First Selectman Ed Haberek will be notifying Borough residents of an upcoming meeting on the subject.

ADJOURNMENT:

- A. On a motion by Burgess Scala, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, adjournment of the meeting at 9:12 PM was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Krafjack

Clerk- Treasurer