

STONINGTON BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting
May 15, 2023
Stonington Police Department

Approved
7/17/23
[Signature]

Members present: Stacy Cassata, Carole Nossek, Eric Beverly, Julie Holland, Ann Marie Castagno-Clark, Cindy Moore

Members Absent: Kit Harford

Guests: Megan Kacenski, Paul Giese, Jordan Kenyon

- 1) Call to Order
 - a. Co-Chair Stacy Cassata called meeting to order at 5:01PM.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
- 3) Approval of minutes April 17, 2023
 - a. Motion made by Stacy Cassata; seconded by Ann Marie Castagno-Clark; motion approved and carried.
- 4) New Business
 - a. Correspondence
 - i. Email to Elijah Brown (Stonington High School) Career Center representative. Holland shared she sent information regarding student volunteer opportunities for SHS committee for the summer
 - ii. Email from resident Amber Dance looking for volunteer opportunities for her and her family.
 - iii. Email from Stonington Garden Club rewarding the committee a \$2,500 grant for future trees in Spellman Park.
 - b. Introduction of New Board Member Cindy Moore
 - i. Nossek introduced New Board Member Cindy Moore to the committee. Holland announced Moore has been a community volunteer for many years and has volunteered countless hours to watering the pots downtown. Moore thanked the committee and shared her excitement of taking a more active role.
 - c. Introduction of New Volunteers
 - i. Megan Kacenski who is an ISA Certified Arborist and CT Licensed Arborist from Bartlett Tree Experts introduced herself and shared her passion to be volunteering with the committee to help educate and guide the town on future tree plantings. Carole Nossek shared how Megan was instrumental with meeting with town officials to help pick up out trees for both the Stonington Police Dept, Human Services and Spellman Park to be planted this spring.
 - ii. Resident Paul Giese who is working on his Master Gardener Certification is excited to be volunteering with the committee and shared how he has been in communication with Nursery Fast-Growing Trees from North Carolina and there could be a saving for the committee to purchase future trees from this company. Carole asked Paul to work with

committee members Kit Hartford and Ann Marie Castagno-Clark on the Community Tree Planting Initiative for Stonington. The committee discussed the possibility of giving out trees to residents next Spring 2024.

- iii. Jordan Kenyan from Peak Landscaping and Snow Removal LLC out of Mystic, CT told the committee he is an established landscaper and is excited to get involved and give back to the community. Julie Holland asked if Jordan would be interested in helping the committee care for some of the memorials in Mystic, CT. Holland told Mr. Kenyon that the committee needs more eyes in Mystic to research what memorials and town properties need potential clean ups or future landscaping.
- d. Veteran Memorial Planting
 - i. Nossek talked about the committee's involvement with the new Veterans Memorial at SPD which is going to be dedicated on June 14, 2023. Members of the committee met with Stacy Haskell who has been instrumental with bringing this beautiful memorial to Stonington. The landscape design and selection of flowers mirrored what Eric Beverly planted at the Korean Memorial in 2022. Both the tree warden Maggie Jones and Megan Kacenski from Barlett Tree Experts made recommendations on the trees to be planted at the memorial. The final decision of the selection of trees was made by Haskell, Chief DelGrosso, members of Stonington Public works, and Stonington Beautification Committee.
- e. Community Tree Planting Initiative
 - i. Ann Marie Castagno-Clark announced that she will be meeting with Kit Hartford to continue the discussion of bringing a community Tree Planting initiative to Stonington. Clark shared that this initiative would focus on giving out a small number of free trees to residents of Stonington along with giving education materials to hand out with the trees. Clark mentioned they really like the native tree Witch hazel as a possible selection. Nossek asked community volunteer Paul Geise to work with this subcommittee and possibly launch this initiative in Spring 2023. Cassata brought in education material that other communities have used. Cassata also announced that the committee could give away trees around Arbor Day 2023 along with possibility coordinating with the rain barrel pick up. Kacenski announced her company could donate at least 300 sapling trees to Stonington next year and is happy to help the sub committee as well.
- f. Stonington Tree Planting Inventory
 - i. Nossek announced she is working on a Draft document to record all current and future tree plantings in Stonington.
- g. Bridge Watering Schedule
 - i. Holland announced that Amanda Nall from Bogues Alley Restaurant reached out to her and has offered to water the flowers on the Westerly/ Pawcatuck Bridge. Cassata said she has some volunteers that can water the bridge two days a week. Holland also shared that community volunteer Joelle Wellemans has offered to continue to water on Sunday's. New board member Cindy Moore offered to water the Stillman Ave Bridge along with community volunteer Rachel O'Dell.

5) Old Business

a. Spring/Summer Plantings Update

- i. Nossek announced she will be planting the SPD pots and memorial pots for summer within the next week. Holland announced she will plant the Donahue Park planters before Memorial Day. Eric Beverly announced the landscape work on the Gateway to Donahue Park is complete but will need to be watered every other day at least. Cassata reached out to Jewett City Bank and they said they should be able to start watering next week. Holland will continue to check the plants through out the summer. Beverly announced he will add more perennials to the Welcome to Pawcatuck Island within the next week and will clean up the rest of the gateway to Donahue Park as well. Holland announced that she did reach out to Stonington Public Works to see if they can construct flower boxes off the railings of the Gazebo in Donahue Park for summer.

b. Earth Day 2023

- i. Holland announced that volunteers from Davis Standard did an incredible job with their town wide clean up on Friday April 21st and planted 50 Colorado spruce trees at the WPCA property. Nossek announced that the neighbor to the property offered to keep the saplings watered. Holland shared that she hopes more business reach out to the committee in the future to help with clean up projects.

c. Arbor Day 2023

- i. Holland announced that Arbor Day Friday April 28th was a complete success. The committee worked alongside volunteers from the SHS Voice Program to plant 50 pine tree saplings on the back side of the West Pavilion. The volunteers also worked with the Recreation department to clear out some of the walking/ running trails in Spellman Park.

d. Future Fundraisers for 2023

- i. Cassata announced she continues to reach out to local restaurants to host a Dine to Donate to support the committee. Cassata also announced the rain barrel fundraiser is going very well. Pick up for the rain barrels is scheduled for Wed June 28th from 5-7pm at Stonington Human Services

e. Safety/ Lighting in Downtown Pawcatuck Update

- i. Nossek announced she attended the last BOF meeting to help present the lighting project to the board to approve. The board tabled their decision for their next meeting which is scheduled for Wed June 7, 2023.

f. Comments from the public


- i. None

6) Meeting Adjourned at 6:15Pm

- a. Motion made by Julie Holland; 2nd by Ann Marie Castagno-Clark, motion approved and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Holland
Committee Member

 7/17/23

 approved
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