

August 10, 2022

The Stonington Board of Selectmen held a regular meeting on this date at the Stonington Police Department at 5:30 p.m. Present were First Selectman Danielle Chesebrough and Debbie Motycka Downie. Selectwoman June Strunk arrived at 5:35 p.m. Members of the public and press were present.

(1) Call to Order

Ms. Chesebrough called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

(2) Pledge of Allegiance

(3) Comments from the Public

Ms. Tracy Swain of Pawcatuck commented on the time Board of Selectmen meetings are held and that they should be held later in the evening.

(4) Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the joint Mystic River Boathouse Park Implementation Committee and Board of Selectmen special meeting minutes of May 2, 2022.
- A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the joint Mystic River Boathouse Park Implementation Committee and Board of Selectmen special meeting minutes of July 18, 2022.
- A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the special meeting minutes of July 19, 2022.

(5) Correspondence

- Ms. Chesebrough took in correspondence from Lynn Conway in the form of an application who is interested in being reappointment to the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- Ms. Chesebrough took in correspondence from Gary Belke in the form of an application who is interested in moving from an alternate to regular member of the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- Ms. Chesebrough took in correspondence from Bill Middleton in the form of an application for the Planning and Zoning Commission.

It was noted that application for Planning and Zoning Commission are being accepted until August 22, 2022 with interviews to occur at a later date in August.

(6) Appointment/Reappointment/Resignation

(7) Old Business

None

(8) New Business

Discussion – Revised Bid Award to Classic Turf for Tennis Court Project

Mr. James Sullivan, Director of Finance, gave an overview stating that the bid was originally awarded at the June 8th Board of Selectmen meeting had a discrepancy in the design proposed and the bid document. The difference of the bid specifications was believed to be made in good faith. To allow Classic Turf to build the courts exactly per the engineer's specifications the award of the project has increased. This will include work on the perimeter of the tennis court to give more stability and prevent future cracking at an additional cost of \$15,000. To fund the expense, the \$12,000 screens will be eliminated at this time leaving a \$3,000 shortfall which will be funded by the Recreation Activity Fund.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to revise the bid award to Classic Turf for an additional \$3,000.00.

Request – Building Permit Fee Waiver for Spellman Park Signage

The Department of Human Services requested a building permit fee waiver of \$73.26 associated with the new signage at Spellman Park.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the building permit fee waiver of \$73.26.

Discussion - Tax Abatement of Town Owned Parcels at W. Enterprise/Parkwood Drive

Ms. Chesebrough gave an overview of the request received from Linda Camelio, Tax Collector, regarding an abatement of taxes associated with W. Enterprise and Parkwood Drive. In October, 2021 the Board of Selectmen accepted the partial road parcels at W. Enterprise and Parkwood Drive. As these are now town owned parcels the taxes need to be adjusted.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to abate the taxes associated with the town owned parcels at W. Enterprise and Parkwood Drive.

Discussion – MOU between Town of Stonington and Town of Westerly regarding Water Loop Project

Ms. Chesebrough gave an overview of the MOU noting that the Westerly Town Council has already reviewed, approved and signed. The Town of Stonington received a federal grant estimated at \$1.9 Million for design and construction of the project. The MOU establishes agreement between the two parties relative to the water loop project including project funding, administrative expectations and responsibilities of financial reporting. The majority of which fall onto the Town of Stonington.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the MOU between the Town of Stonington and Town of Westerly regarding the Water Loop Project.

In discussion, Ms. Strunk asked why the MOU was only for three years. Ms. Chesebrough explained that the MOU is just for the timeline for the completion of the water loop project. Ms. Downie asked if the Town Attorney had approved the MOU. Ms. Chesebrough stated that the Town Attorney had reviewed and approved. With no further discussion, the motioned carried.

Discussion – Lease between Town of Stonington and Saint Michael School

Ms. Chesebrough gave an overview of the lease noting that the item would need to go to a Town Meeting for approval tentatively scheduled for September 12, 2022.

St. Michael School entered into a short-term lease with the Town of Stonington in May 2020. The duration of this lease is three years, with the option to renew for an additional two years. There is a small rent of \$300/month, and St. Michael's is responsible for operational costs (e.g., heating fuel, electricity, landscaping, snow removal, etc.) as well as interior repairs. Under the existing lease the Town of Stonington is responsible for the building envelope and building systems (e.g., boiler, fire suppression, roof, etc.). The short-term lease allows for both parties to see if this arrangement would suit their respective needs.

In the past two years, St. Michael School has seen an increase in enrollment to levels not seen since 2006 and is now interested in a long-term lease for the West Broad Street School.

In exchange for the longer-term lease, St. Michael School is willing to take on the costs of the historic building, including needed capital repairs and improvements, of which there are many.

The basic terms of the new lease would be for 15 years, with the option to renew for an additional 10 years. The same, nominal rent of \$300/month would be in effect, but with St. Michael assuming responsibility for all building costs. The Town of Stonington retains ownership of the building, and the use of the building as a school cannot change during the tenure of the lease.

During the summers of 2020 and 2021, St. Michael School made a number of improvements to the building interior. All classrooms and hallways on the first and second floors, as well as the third-floor auditorium have been repainted. Asbestos floor tiles in seven classrooms and in the main office were abated. The original maple floors underneath was also repaired and refurbished.

During the summer of 2022, St. Michael School made capital repairs to the roof and chimneys, including:

- All four chimneys were repointed, cleaned, and sealed. New counter flashing at the chimney base will be installed before the opening of school.
- The entire roof was replaced which included the removal of 3 layers of shingles (in some places 4). In some areas the roof decking was also replaced.
- Rain gutters will be repaired before the opening of school.
- Damage to ceilings and walls in the third-floor classrooms due to roof leaks will be repaired prior the opening of school. These four classrooms will be repainted.

For the projects listed above, St. Michael School has invested \$365,000 in the West Broad Street School building over the past two years, in addition to countless volunteer hours on many of these projects.

The school is interested in undertaking a number of additional capital projects to restore and preserve the building including but not limited to repointing, cleaning, and sealing all exterior brickwork; repainting all exterior trim; renovation of all bathrooms and repair or replacement of windows.

St. Michael School is eager to address these projects, but would like to enjoy the benefits of its investment through long-term use of the building for its educational program.

St. Michael School will hold an open house, including a tour to see the improvements made, on August 30th from 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Discussion – Lease between Town of Stonington and Stonington Rowing Community, Inc.

Ms. Chesebrough gave an overview of the lease noting that the item would need to go to a Town Meeting for approval tentatively scheduled for September 12, 2022.

Town residents approved the purchase of what is often referred to as the ‘Mystic River Boathouse Park’ at a Town Meeting in 2016. Since then, the project has faced a few challenges that have delayed the project. However, in 2021 the town was able to secure a \$753,889 state grant for environmental remediation needed to create the public park. Since that time Town Officials, staff and volunteers have been working to move the project forward. A key part of the end vision is for Stonington Community Rowing, Inc. (SCRI) to raise funds to construct a Boathouse and meet State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) requirements for restoring the ‘Lovelace’ house that must remain on the site. SCRI plans to raise \$2.5 million to make this plan a reality, and have already raised over half that amount to-date.

The SCRI has taken on the momentous task of not only raising all the funds required to build the newly named Jim Dietz Community Rowing Center, Hart Perry Boathouse, and public restrooms, but also address improvements needed to restore the 'Lovelace' house. Once construction and improvements are complete, SCRI give these properties to the Town, in exchange for a long-term lease.

The proposed lease is for 25 years, with the option to renew for another 25 years so long as an active, community rowing program is being run out of the facilities. The lease would not go into effect until all the buildings and related work are completed.

An informal, public meeting will be held on August 31, 2022 at 5:30pm at Latitude 41. There will be representatives from Stonington Parks and Recreation, the SCRI, Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center, Mystic Seaport Museum, and others to share updates on planned rowing and non-rowing activities for the community.

In discussion, Ms. Strunk asked for clarification that once the SCRI completed all of the fundraising and construction on the building that it would then be turned back over to the Town which Ms. Chesebrough stated was correct.

Request – Assign Map 56, Block 1, Lot 4A, Street Number 252 Palmer Neck Road, Pawcatuck, CT 06379

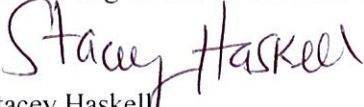
A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the request.

(9) Comments from the Selectmen

- Ms. Downie stated that the remediation timeline will be forwarded to the State soon in regards to the Mystic River Boathouse Park project. The survey and sampling have been completed at Stillman Ave property. A high-level report may be available within the next few weeks.
- Ms. Strunk noted how great the Blessing of the Fleet was and also gave a brief overview of the Climate Change Task Force meeting she attended.
- Ms. Chesebrough stated that August 31st is National Overdose Awareness Day and the Town will be holding different events throughout the day including a candle light vigil. More information will be released soon on specifics. There was a recent open house to celebrate the conservation of the Al Harvey Road property with representatives from the Town, Trust for Public Land, US Fish and Wildlife and, Aquarion Water and Avalonia Land Conservancy. Congress has passed a \$900,000 grant for the North Pier that will now move to the Senate.

(10) Adjourn

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.


Stacey Haskell
Recording Secretary