

**STONINGTON BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING  
THURSDAY, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 5:00p.m.  
STONINGTON POLICE HEADQUARTERS  
173 SOUTH BROAD STREET  
PAWCATUCK, CT 06379**

Meeting Minutes

Present: Chairman Robert O'Shaughnessy  
Commissioner Patricia Coan, Commissioner Richard Balestracci  
Chief Jay DelGrosso, Deputy Chief Todd Olson

**1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance**

Meeting called to order at 5:00pm.

**2. Remarks of the Public**

**3. New Business**

- a. Planning and Zoning Special Use Permit Application: Town of Stonington- Mystic River Boathouse Park\***COMMENTS NEEDED\***

Danielle Chesebrough, Susan Cullen, and Chad Frost were present to discuss the Mystic River Boathouse and park project. The project began in 2016. Now it is at the permitting stage and they are very excited to see the plan come alive. Chad Frost presented the plans that included input from the commission on traffic and parking concerns. The parking lot is shared with the hotel, there's a designated police cruiser space in the lot, and good visibility with low vegetation and trees with high canopies being planted in the park. The park itself closes at sunset, but the rowing building hours are not yet set in stone. The building will have surveillance added to it and the project is replacing the camera previously located at Latitude 41. Following the guidelines for a building classified as an athletic club the rowing center and park require 44 parking spaces. They have 22 spaces but with agreements from the hotel and the seaport they make up the other 22 by sharing spaces with the hotel and using the Rossi Mill lot to provide parking with a short walk to the park. The major use traffic created by people rowing in the area already exists as the rowing club currently travels back and forth to the area for their practices. The project is being brought before the Planning and Zoning Committee at their June 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Chairman O'Shaughnessy asked for clarification on why this project did not have a traffic survey done as the hotel project next door had one done that the commission found some flaws in. Chad Frost shared that they felt that the questions raised about the survey were answered. The night the original approval happened there were no issues raised, and because they had previously received approval and OSTA stated that original approval was fine. They do not believe it would be worth taxpayer money to conduct a survey for this project. Danielle Chesebrough shared that while an easement exists between the park and hotel the two projects should be viewed as two separate entities.

Commissioner Coan raised the question of large vehicle access to the park namely school buses dropping off students for practice and if that would impact traffic. Chad Frost shared that the parking lot is large enough for the buses to come through as well as the large towing trailers needed to transport rowing vessels. Commissioner Coan also questioned if there would be foot traffic created by individuals interested in using the water access but were unable to get a parking spot. Chad Frost relayed that there

is a drop off area for items like kayaks and paddleboards, so the public can drop off their crafts then go park their vehicle at the Rossi Mill parking option. This would prevent individuals attempting to carry kayaks and the like across the street to the park.

Commissioner Balestracci shared his concern over the left turn into one of the entrances. Chad Frost explained that OSTA hasn't given them a final answer on the left turn in. They won't have that final answer until the plans have been approved by the local authorities. They hope to get approval for the left turn but as of now are not sure if they will receive it. The board shared their concerns over the traffic backup that could be caused by people trying to turn left into the park. Chad Frost acknowledged the concern and accepted it was a common challenge with left hand turns.

Nick Kepple the Chairman of the Mystic River Boathouse Implementation Committee shared some information about the project. He shared that when the project was voted on it was one of the biggest turnouts he had seen for a project in this area. The project is a great opportunity for the community to have water access that it doesn't currently have. He shared his belief that the community will appreciate and mean enough that they wouldn't mind a small delay in exchange for the benefits the project brings.

Motion was made by Commissioner Coan to pass along to Planning and Zoning Committee with no issues regarding traffic, parking or safety with the exception of the left-hand turn from Route 27 Northbound. Seconded by Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved.

**b. Planning and Zoning Application: Old Mystic Fire District \*COMMENTS NEEDED\***

Chief Richards attended the meeting to present the details relating to the movement of two mobile training trailers. They already reached out to home owners in the area and have received no major concerns. They also plan to clear the southern property line of brush and plant Giant Green Arborvitae to create a natural screen for the southern neighbors.

Motion was made by Commissioner Coan to pass along to Planning and Zoning Committee with no issues regarding traffic, parking or safety. Seconded by Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved.

**c. Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce Events \*VOTE NEEDED\***

**1. Mystic Outdoor Art Festival**

Bruce Flax spoke on behalf of the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce to discuss their two events coming up. This upcoming Mystic Outdoor Art Festival will be the 65<sup>th</sup> year. The plan is the same as last years, and they already have the appropriate insurance and permitting.

Motion was made by Commissioner Coan to pass along to Planning and Zoning Committee with no issues regarding traffic, parking or safety. Seconded by Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved.

**2. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Mystic Aquarium**

This event would be the same plan as last years plan for the fireworks event for the bridge anniversary including some road closures. Chairman O'Shaughnessy shared that the board reached out to the residents of the roads that would need to be closed to have a chance to come speak. None attended the meeting. Chief DelGrosso shared one resident shared concerns about their ability to get in and out of their home and shared like last year officers can assist with that while working the event.

Motion was made by Commissioner Coan to pass subject to the town's insurance and the Stonington Police Department safety requirements. Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved.

d. Stonington Como Village Fair **\*VOTE NEEDED\***

A vote was unable to be held this meeting due to two commissioners being out of country and Commissioner Balestracci having to recuse himself from this vote. Instead, it will be presented at the next meeting when quorum can be made.

e. Taste of Mystic **\*VOTE NEEDED\***

The village came seeking both approval and a date change to the event. The event was set to be held in June but instead they would like to hold it September 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> as to not conflict with the other summer events being held. They also expect a surge in tourism this summer due to USA today ranking Mystic and #4 city to visit in the United States. Chief DelGrosso shared that the date change does benefit the department a lot as the summer is extremely busy and it eases some of the strain. As of now the department is willing to reduce the number of officers required for the event as a test run to see how the event runs but if needed will raise the number back up.

Motion was made by Commissioner Coan to accept the Taste of Mystic as submitted following the requirements of the town's insurance and the Stonington Police Department safety requirements. Seconded by Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved.

f. Apple Festival 2023 **\*VOTE NEEDED\***

Bethany Perkins came on behalf of the Apple Festival. It will occur October 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. Chief DelGrosso shared that one change that will be made for this year is a staged time for office presence. Last year the officers arrived at 11:00am as the event was starting but some of the issues began ahead of the event. Instead, this year one officer will work 9:00am to 5:00pm and 10:00am to 6:00pm.

Motion was made by Commissioner Coan to accept the Apple Festival as submitted following the requirements of the town's insurance and the Stonington Police Department safety requirements. Seconded by Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved.

g. Ground Up Construction Re: Construction on Cottrell Street, Summer Months **\*VOTE NEEDED\***

Deputy Chief Olson shared the owner of Whaler's Inn is starting some major construction that will require them to get approval from planning and zoning to close the sidewalk and occasionally the parking spaces in front of the business.

Motion was made by Commissioner Coan that the board finds no issues regarding traffic, parking or safety. Seconded by Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved.

#### 4. Correspondence

None

#### 5. Old business

a. Planning & Zoning Text & Map Amendment Application: Maple Lawn Farm, LLC 343 Wheeler Road, Stonington **\*COMMENTS NEEDED\***

Paul Cerullo shared the improvements he's made to the property over the last 24 years and acknowledges that there is still work to be done. Deputy Chief Olson shared his opinion on the property

after visiting several times. He stated the Cerullo's have been doing a great job on the property working to clear the site lines and with the work being put it he does not have concerns going forward.

Motion was made by Commissioner Coan to pass along to Planning and Zoning Committee with no issues regarding traffic, parking or safety as long as agreements made occur. Seconded by Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved.

**b. E-Mail Re: South Anguilla Road Bridge \*VOTE NEEDED\***

Commissioner Coan shared her major concern that this road closure will impact the Pawcatuck little league. She recommended notifying the families so they were aware of the closure. The Deputy Chief also shared he has received a phone call from a concerned citizen in regards to tractor trailers illegally using Farmholme. He will contact Davis Standard to let them know and will look into getting signage posted.

Motion was made by Commissioner Coan that the board reviewed the detour and see no issues regarding traffic and safety with the proposed detour. Seconded Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved.

**6. Traffic**

**a. Speeding Concerns (2 Requests)- Stonington Borough \*VOTE NEEDED\***

Several concerned citizens have brought forth complaints about speeding concerns in the Borough. Chairman O'Shaughnessy shared that once they have a speed sign available it would be placed in the area as a starting point.

**7. Approval of Minutes from Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 \*VOTE NEEDED\***

Motion made by Commissioner Coan to approve the minutes from the April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting as submitted. Seconded by Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved.

**8. Report of the Chief of Police**

**a. Budget Report**

Chief DelGrosso shared the department is doing well. Nothing goes through without his approval. The Deputy Chief has three recruits set to attend the July academy which once they're ready should help lower the overtime spending.

**b. Monthly Report**

**c. Special Events Schedule**

Chief DelGrosso reiterated that the department is now working with the larger events ahead of time to smooth out details.

**d. Parking Ordinance**

The Parking Ordinance previously submitted will be resubmitted in July to include municipal parking lots. The major issue last time was that residents were not aware of the existing ordinance and thought it was a brand new ordinance being presented. It will also include the ticket increase.

**e. Termination of Agreement for Use of Hotel Lobby as Sub-Station**

The hotel lobby is no longer available so the sub-station is terminated.

**9. Consent Agenda**

**a. Letter Re: Approval of Filming of "Mystic Christmas"**

Filming is set to begin soon.

Motion made by Commissioner Coan to accept the Report of the Chief and the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved.

**10. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Coan. Seconded by Commissioner Balestracci. All in favor, motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 6:24pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Tepper Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Lisa Tepper Bates  
Secretary