February 25, 2015

The Stonington Board of Selectmen held a special meeting on this date at the Stonington Police Department at 6:00 p.m. Present were First Selectman George Crouse, Selectman Rob Simmons and Selectman Michael Spellman. Also present were members of the public and press.

(1) Call to Order

Mr. Crouse called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

(2) Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Simmons, seconded by Mr. Crouse and voted unanimously to approve the February 11, 2015 Board of Selectmen regular meeting minutes.

(3) Comments from the Public

- Mr. Crouse stated that we will have to have a hearing regarding the POCD and bring in all parties and have a dialogue rather than condemn or condone certain sections of it.
- Mr. Simmons stated that he concurred with Mr. Crouse's statement that we need a dialogue. He stated that he has spent a good deal of time, at Mr. Crouse's request, looking into the economic issues relative to the Town of Stonington. Mr. Simmons stated that we need a healthy grand list to offset the cost of education which is very significant. He stated that our grand list has been relatively flat. Mr. Simmons also stated that the Economic Development Commission is doing a great job providing substantial input to several different portions to the POCD in particular section 10 which is commercial industrial development. He stated that Mr. White and his commission have done an excellent job of pointing out some of the areas where we need to be very mindful because if this is the future outline to the economic development of the town. Mr. Simmons further stated that if 2/3 of the recommendations have to do with conservation and only 1/3 with development that's an imbalance that we have to address. Mr. Simmons stated that we urge everybody to take a close look because as currently drafted the POCD has some elements that effect people that they may not be aware of.
- Mr. Crouse stated that we will have to have a discussion and hopefully everyone will get along and iron out the differences and everyone should have their view.
- Mr. Spellman stated that his concern is that the Plan of Conservation and Development is skewed. He stated that we need to start looking into the development end of this and grow this grand list.
- Mr. Blunt White stated the discussion about the village districts is important. He stated that the people living in those districts don't know really the significance of what is being proposed. He also stated that he went to all of the meetings that the Planning & Zoning Commission held and there was nobody that talked about this. Mr. White stated that this was in there a lot earlier and then when he looked up what the statute said he was kind of flabbergasted. He stated that the public is in the dark and the Board will do a great service by doing a public hearing.

(4) Correspondence

- Mr. Crouse took in correspondence from Blunt White regarding POCD recommendations to the Board of Selectmen.
- Mr. Crouse took in correspondence from the Planning and Zoning Department regarding a zoning map amendment for 14, 20, 22 and 24 Jackson Avenue, Mystic.

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- Mr. Crouse took in correspondence from Ward Smith expressing his interest in serving on the Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation Committee.
- Mr. Crouse took in correspondence from Van Riley regarding 2014-15 budget issue updates.
- Mr. Crouse took in correspondence from Danielle Chesebrough expressing her interest in serving on the Economic Development Commission.

(5) Appointment

Planning and Zoning Commission

A motion was made by Mr. Simmons and seconded by Mr. Crouse to appoint David Rathbun as an alternate to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Discussion: Mr. Simmons stated that Mr. Rathbun has served as past chairman of Inland Wetlands, he's been on the ZBA. Mr. Simmons stated that Mr. Rathbun's family, he believes, has been in Stonington for 300 years and he's a public spirited person and he thinks he would be good for the commission. The vote was 3-0 in favor of appointing Mr. Rathbun.

(6) New Business

Fair Housing Resolution

A motion was made by Mr. Simmons and seconded by Mr. Crouse to adopt the Fair Housing Resolution. Discussion: Mr. Simmons stated that it says in the bottom paragraph of the resolution that the Chief Executive Officer of the Town of Stonington or his designated representative. Mr. Simmons stated that we have a Commission on Housing in the Town of Stonington and asked Mr. Crouse if it is his intention to delegate this responsibility. Mr. Crouse stated that if he is not here, as Acting Selectmen, it would be Mr. Simmons responsibility. The vote was 3-0 in favor of adopting the resolution.

(7) Comments from the Public

None

(8) Comments from the Selectmen

- Mr. Crouse asked if there was anything else on the EDC.
- Mr. Simmons stated they covered it very nicely. He stated that he appreciates that Mr. Crouse has scheduled a hearing on this subject. He stated that he thinks a hearing is really important. Mr. Simmons stated that he concurs with the idea that the media should be encouraged to write about this topic because the POCD if adopted essentially sets the framework for economic development for this town for 10 years. He also stated that if we don't get it right, and we're not able to enhance our grand list, we're between a rock and a hard place and the dreams that we have for better schools and better opportunities for our kids are going to crunch against the homeowners who may be faced with dramatic increases in their property taxes and that creates a real problem.
- Mr. White stated that in 2004 when the POCD had the introduction of master planning tools. He stated that those products allowed the Mechanic Street renovation that is going on now with the old Thread Mill. He stated that was zoned manufacturing and residential use is not permitted in a manufacturing zone and the master planning tool allowed someone to go in there as if there was not zoning there at all and propose a mix of some commercial space and some residential space. Mr. White stated that would not have been permitted under M-1 manufacturing zone. He further stated that they created a whole zone change and the process involved starting from a blank slate where the person came in and proposed this use. Mr. White stated that when they got a good feeling from the

Planning Board, then they expended the significant sums to get the approval. He stated that some good things happened and those planning tools were not in our tool bag before the 2004 POCD. Mr. White stated that they came out of the 2004 POCD under Jason Vincent's watch. Mr. White further stated that the POCD is an opportunity to bring a lot to the table and to add some pretty good ammunition to what we need to do going forward.

- Mr. Simmons asked if it is correct that those tools have been removed from the current draft.
- Mr. White stated yes. He stated that the initial draft that was done by the POCD subcommittee. Mr. White stated that the subcommittee recommended increased and greater use of the master planning tools. He stated that when it went before the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed it said we are going to take that out. Mr. White also stated that now it just says review where before it said greater use. He stated that's significant and there's also an absence of things that could be added in here that would help economic development and they're not in there. Mr. White also stated that in 2004 we added those things in and they moved the ball down the field with that and that's the same kind of thing we need to do now.
- Mr. Crouse stated that the FOI hearing was yesterday and the hearing officer chastised the town for not expediting it. He stated that we countered that the chastisement was not of the present administrations actions. Mr. Crouse stated that the former First Selectman basically did not operate in a manner to solve this problem and whatever the FOI commissioner rules, we will follow.
- Mr. Crouse shared a risk management statement related to the Water Pollution property in the Borough of Stonington at the water treatment plant and the area surrounding it bounded by dangerous rocks. He stated that the town has been advised that we should fence in that area.
- Mr. Crouse stated that the K-12 Committee have come up with their end point and are working to go to referendum. He stated that the figure is 46.7 million dollars.

(9) Adjourn

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristine Bell
Recording Secretary