

June 29, 2016

The Stonington Board of Selectmen held a special meeting on this date at the Stonington Police Department at 7:00 p.m. Present were First Selectman Rob Simmons, Selectman Mike Spellman and Selectwoman Kate Rotella. Also present were members of the public.

**(1) Call to Order**

Mr. Simmons called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**(2) Pledge of Allegiance**

**(3) Comments from the Public**

None

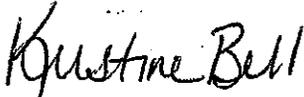
**(4) New Business**

**Discussion and approval of up to \$15,000.00 for consulting services**

Mr. Simmons read a statement to the Board which is attached to these minutes as Exhibit "A". A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella and seconded by Mr. Spellman to approve up to \$15,000.00 for consulting services. Discussion: Mr. Spellman stated that among other things he would like to look at a cost analysis for outsourcing to private vendors for town maintenance including schools as part of that study, and consider a hiring freeze until the study is complete. Mr. Spellman further stated that would be conditional on his complete approval. Mr. Simmons stated that the only problem he sees with Mr. Spellman's request goes to the issue of new hires. Mr. Simmons stated that having that analysis is no problem but if there is a hiring process underway he personally doesn't know what the ramifications would be with them stopping the process. Mr. Spellman stated that there is nothing that stops the decision after the study. Mrs. Rotella stated that they are only interviewing tomorrow and they are not hiring. The vote was 3-0 in favor of hiring a consultant.

**(5) Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.



Kristine Bell  
Recording Secretary

EXHIBIT "A"

Statement to the Stonington Board of Selectmen

Robert R. "Rob" Simmons, First Selectmen

June 29, 2016

1. The next item on the agenda is "Discussion and approval of up to \$15,000 for consulting services." This is an action item.
2. Let me begin by thanking my fellow Members of the Board for accommodating my request for this Special Meeting. Let me also say what a pleasure it has been for me to have such a productive relationship with my colleagues. Politics works best when we collaborate together on a common purpose. That approach has certainly characterized this Board this year, and I am grateful for that.
3. Over the past few months we have enjoyed a number of positive policy outcomes -- for example, we:
  - a. Passed the Town Budget on the first vote;
  - b. Placed our K-12 School project on the school bonding bill;
  - c. Got a positive result on our state reimbursement to the town;
  - d. Hired a Director of Planning and appointed a Human Services Director;
  - e. Obtained a state grant so that Davis Standard could expand its facilities in Pawcatuck; and
  - f. So forth.
4. But the Town of Stonington is a complicated governmental entity with a lot of moving parts. And sometimes these do not work as well as I would like. We are often wedded to "past practices" when we really need to be looking at new ways of doing business. I am concerned that we can and must do better to promote better communication among the various departments. We need to upgrade some of our policies and procedures. We need to make sure that our facilities are safe and secure; and that the heavy equipment we use on a daily basis provides us with safe and efficient outcomes.

5. It is not easy to accomplish these tasks. As I said before, there are a lot of 'moving parts.' On that basis I have reached the conclusion that Stonington would benefit from having a 'fresh set of eyes' come in and take a look at how we do business.
6. There is nothing new about this. Thirty years ago George Crouse and I did this very thing when we were on the Police Commission. And the result was very positive. The work we did then laid the ground work for our very excellent Police Force today.
7. I do not believe in doing a 'study' just for the sake of doing a study. That is not my purpose. What I want to do is to bring in a municipal professional with substantial experience in looking at a town like ours and recommending how we can improve our performance in a number of areas. He or she will interview our staff, look at our facilities, and examine our processes and procedures. Thereafter, we will come up with an implementation plan.
8. Of course, there will be a cost. But I believe that for no more than \$15,000 we can accomplish the task. When set against a \$64 million budget, this is a small amount of money. If the work is done well, we will probably recover that amount many times over in savings and efficiencies.
9. That being said, I would entertain a motion to "approve up to \$15,000 for consulting services."