

December 23, 2015

The Stonington Board of Selectmen held a regular meeting on this date at the Stonington Police Department at 7:00 p.m. Present were First Selectman Rob Simmons; Selectman Michael Spellman and Selectwoman Kate Rotella.

**(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**

Jason Vincent thanked the Board for accepting him back as the Director of Planning. Mr. Simmons congratulated Mr. Vincent stating that they had thirty applicants with seven going through the interview process ; Mr. Vincent was the best choice. Mr. Vincent's start date is January 19, 2016.

Ashley Gillece asked the Board to consider not disbanding the West Broad Street School Advisory committee.

Bill Sternberg asked the Board to consider not disbanding the West Broad Street School Advisory committee. He stated that it's only been six months and there is a lot going on in the near future. He asked that the Board not allow WBSS to become an empty building. He stated money will be needed in the future but was puzzled by the article in the newspaper. He feels it isn't currently a planning issue but an engineering issue. He added that the community should have a say about what happens to the building and there is only about two and half years to address that future.

**(4) Approval of the Minutes**

A motion was made by Mr. Spellman, seconded by Mrs. Rotella and voted unanimously to approve the December 9, 2015 Board of Selectmen Executive Session meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Spellman and voted unanimously to approve the December 9, 2015 Board of Selectmen regular meeting minutes.

**(5) Correspondence**

- Mr. Simmons took in correspondence from Robert O'Shaughnessy expressing his interest in serving on the Board of Police Commissioners. Mr. Spellman stated that he knows Mr. O'Shaughnessy and believes him to have extensive experience for the post. Mrs. Rotella asked if there was an opening. Mr. Simmons replied no but the letter will be received to file.
- Mr. Simmons took in correspondence from William Dade Nunez expressing his interest in serving on the Ethics Commission.
- Mr. Simmons took in correspondence from Mark Mitsko expressing his interest in serving on the Zoning Board of Appeals. There is an opening on this Board and members agreed to address at the next meeting.

**(6) Appointments/Reappointments/Resignation**

- A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Spellman and voted unanimously to appoint Pete Robinson to the Economic Development Commission.
- A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Spellman and voted unanimously to reappoint Kate Careb to the Stonington Housing Authority.
- A motion was made by Mr. Spellman, seconded by Mrs. Rotella and voted unanimously to reappoint Leanne Theodore to the Board of Trustees of the Thames Valley Council for Community Action Inc.
- A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Spellman and voted unanimously to accept the resignation of Beth Quesnel from the Recreation Commission. Mr. Simmons suggested a letter of thanks be sent to Mrs. Quesnel for her service.

**(7) Old Business**

- Policy Statement for the Town of Stonington Ombudsman - Attorney Jeff Londregan was present to discuss the ad hoc Policy statement presented to the Board. Mrs. Rotella expressed concern about some of the verbiage and feels that the policy undermines the Department heads and the Selectmen. She understands the intent but wording isn't definitive. She asked how this is different from a State mediator. Mr. Londregan replied that a mediator is for labor issues. Mr. Londregan agreed that the language could be more clearly defined. The Board reviewed and made several corrections and omissions. Mr. Spellman stated that the consensus of the Board is to mediate before litigate. Mrs. Rotella stated that she would prefer to wait before accepting the policy. A motion was made by Mr. Spellman, seconded by Mr. Simmons to approve the Policy Statement for the Town of Stonington Ombudsman as amended. Mrs. Rotella was opposed.

**(8) New Business**

**Request for Use of Town dock**

Letter from Ann and Spike Lobdell requesting permission to use parking spaces at the Town Dock and to run a shuttle service from the Stonington Borough Town Fishing Dock parking lot to the Old Lighthouse Museum at the point on Saturday, July 16, 2016. A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Spellman to approve use of the Town Dock on July 16, 2016 provided proper proof of insurance was provided covering the shuttle service company as well as the Lobdell family. Members agreed to forward this approval to the Waterfront Commission for their approval.

**West Broad Street School Advisory Committee**

Mr. Spellman stated that as liaison to the WBSSAC his intent was to temporarily suspend the Committee not disband. He believes that with diminishing state and federal aid, he cannot in good conscience approach the Town to fund an expensive Engineering study. He added that a "study and review" could be done on town employee salary basis. This includes the hiring of a Director of

Planning, which could allow for access to grant funding. A motion was made by Mr. Spellman, seconded by Mrs. Rotella and voted unanimously to suspend until further notice the West Broad Street School Advisory Committee.

**Resolution to Approve Town Clerk's application to the State Elections Enforcement Commission's Municipal Filing Pilot Program**

Correspondence from the Town Clerk states that the Special Act establishes a pilot program for the State Elections Enforcement Commission to provide assistance to the town clerks of up to twenty municipalities with the completion of some or all of their filing repository duties for the 2017 election cycle. A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Spellman and voted unanimously to approve the resolution as presented.

**Sewer Treatment Plan Expansion Parcel Ad Hoc committee**

Mr. Simmons stated that he met with all interested parties and they have agreed to suspend the lawsuit with the start of an ad hoc committee. Mr. Londregan stated that the committee must include the residents of 13 Front Street .

*The Board of Selectmen hereby establish an Ad Hoc committee consisting of ten members, who shall be appointed by the Board, to review and investigate the Town's Sewer Treatment parcel property, to explore the use of the property as a formal recreational area for persons and dogs. Said committee shall be required to report back to the Board of Selectmen with its findings and conclusions no later than April 1, 2016.*

Mr. Simmons stated that he has learned extensively about dog parks. Mr. Spellman and Mrs. Rotella were in complete agreement with the committee. The Board agreed to address further at the January meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Spellman, seconded by Mrs. Rotella and voted unanimously to add the following item to the agenda:

**(9) Selectman/Selectwoman salary realignment**

Mr. Simmons referred to Chapter 91 of the State statute 7-12. He added that he takes his responsibility to the Town seriously as does Mr. Spellman and Mrs. Rotella. In an effort to make some consideration for time and energy they have pledged to put into the job, he stated he would like to reduce his salary and take the deduction and apply to their salaries. Mr. Spellman is a safety and security expert and Mrs. Rotella is experienced in financial administration and procurement.

A motion was made by Mr. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Rotella to increase the 2015/2016 salary of Mr. Spellman by \$5000.00. Mr. Spellman abstained from voting.

A motion was made by Mr. Simmons, seconded by Mr. Spellman to increase the 2015/2016 salary of Mrs. Rotella by \$5000.00. Mrs. Rotella abstained from voting.

**(10) Comments from the Public**

Ashley Gillece stated that she was disappointed that the letter from the WBSSAC Chairman wasn't read at the meeting. There is plenty of work that needs to be done adding that at no point did the Chairman state the Committee would not go ahead without funding.

Don Kluberanz thanked the Board and the Waterfront Commission for addressing the Open Space Recreation area at the Sewer Treatment plant property.

Linda Trebisacci applauded the First Selectman for disbursing his wages to his Board.

**(11) Comment from the Selectmen**

Mrs. Rotella wanted to reiterate that she is not against the Ombudsman but believes the current Board of Selectmen can address the issues and has full confidence in the First Selectman.

She added that she understands the emotions with regard to the WBSS but agrees that the Town should wait for the Director of Planning to start.

Mr. Spellman stated that the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center has no walk in freezer. He informed those present that there is to be a fundraiser December 30, 2015 at C.C. O'Brien's. Please attend and help the community.

Mr. Simmons thanked Mrs. Rotella for her full participation at this difficult time and stated that with hope they would never have the need for an ombudsman.

With many challenges ahead of the Board, they will need the support of the community.

**(12) Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.



Leslie Packer  
Recording Secretary