

March 9, 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 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) Comments from the Public**

None

**(3) Public Hearing – Discuss 2015 Small Cities Program Application**

- Mr. Larry Wagner stated the purpose of him being there is to have a public hearing on the town's proposed application to the State Department of Housing for funds to renovate and rehabilitate Edythe K. Richmond Homes. He stated that it is 60 units of affordable housing for seniors. Mr. Wagner stated that there has been some work done there in the past but there is more to be done. Mr. Wagner stated that the town is applying for something called the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program. He stated that it is a program of federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Mr. Wagner stated that it comes to cities around the country for cities over 50,000 or large cities like Norwich, New London, Chicago, Los Angeles it goes to them directly. He further stated that for cities under 50,000 such as Stonington it comes to each state and each state has an allocation system. Mr. Wagner stated that there are only certain kinds of projects allowed. He stated that those projects have to either primarily benefit moderate low income people, eliminate slum like conditions or resolve an imminent threat to public health and safety. Mr. Wagner further stated that as many of you know, all of the residents of Edythe K. Richmond are within certain income limits so it would qualify them for that first category. He stated that the state requires we do a public hearing to get public input on the proposed application. Mr. Wagner stated that the process is that the application is actually due April 10<sup>th</sup> and the state has said this year they would make allocations or awards before August 1<sup>st</sup>. He stated that the competition is fairly stiff. Mr. Wagner stated that the project scope is pretty varied. He stated that it will touch on a lot of different things.
- Elaine Schmidt, Executive Director of the Stonington Housing Authority. She stated that a majority of the units are 35 years old and the remaining 10 are 25 years. Ms. Schmidt stated that we have spent some investment over the years. She stated that the bathrooms are original, the windows are original and the exterior doors are original. Ms. Schmidt also stated that a lot of the apartments still have bamboo slat sliding closet doors that either don't operate or are missing pieces. She stated that the storm doors are not working properly both in the front and the rear. Ms. Schmidt further stated that they want to replace the front primary doors. She stated that the flooring is original also and they are very slippery. Ms. Schmidt stated that the tiles are right on top of the concrete. She stated that there has been some movement with the concrete floors because of the age of the units the concrete is separating a little bit. Ms. Schmidt stated that they want to do is put a floating floor which will also be warmer. She stated that the bathroom and kitchen ventilation fans pretty much are

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non-operational. Ms. Schmidt stated that the bathrooms need replacement of the comfort height, ADA toilets, new sinks and replace, if the money allows, some tubs into just showers. She stated that the units need some privacy insulation between the apartment bathrooms and the kitchens. Ms. Schmidt further stated that all of this was done through resident participation and everything that we're doing they gave us direction on what needed to be done.

- Mr. Wagner stated that the town has participated in this program in the past.
- Mr. Kevin Burns, Pawcatuck Fire Department Fire Chief, stated that the fire alarm system is only a year and half to two years old and does not need to be replaced. He stated that it is in fine working order.
- Ms. Ruth Nolder stated that on behalf of all of the residents she wanted to voice support of the grant. She stated that because the floors are the original tiles some of the residents have tiles that keep coming up and they are slipping on them and falling. She stated that because the windows are so old the electric bills are horrendous because the windows are letting in so much and the front door because it is old and hasn't been replaced is also a problem in terms of insulation.
- Mr. Spellman asked Mr. Wagner if he would have the opportunity to get with Chief Burns and work out the problem with the grant.
- Mr. Burns stated that he had one suggestion that he would like to make. He stated that there is land across the street from the newest of the buildings. Mr. Burns stated that if the grant money could be used to buy the property that would be ideal property. He stated that you wouldn't want somebody to start building residential houses with 5 kids a house next door. Mr. Burns further stated that it would take away from what they have there.
- Mr. Wagner stated that unfortunately there is a statute which authorizes this funding and limits it to be the location. It does not allow new construction.

**(4) Comments from the Public**

None

**(5) Comments from the Selectmen**

None

**(6) Adjourn**

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