

STONINGTON BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting
April 17, 2023
Stonington Police Department

Approved
5/15/23 JH

Members present: Stacy Cassata, Carole Nossek, Kit Hartford, Julie Holland, and Ann Marie Castagno-Clark

Members absent: Eric Beverly

- 1) Call to Order
 - a. Co-Chair Stacy Cassata called meeting to order at 5:01PM.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
- 3) Approval of minutes March 20, 2023
 - a. Motion to approve the March minutes was made by Julie Holland; seconded by Ann Marie Castagno-Clark; motion approved and carried.
- 4) New Business
 - a. Correspondence
 - i. Email from Adrienne Albotelli (Davis Standard) - Re: Earth Day volunteer planting 4/21 - (5) tree saplings to be planted at Pawcatuck WPCA property.
 - ii. Email from Margaret Victoria (Stonington Rotary) - \$1,200 grant received to plant trees in Spellman Park.
 - iii. Email from Megan Kacenski, CT Licensed Arborist (Bartlett Tree Experts) - Re: Volunteering.
 - b. Summer Planting Schedule
 - i. Julie Holland announced that most of the summer plantings will be completed around Memorial Day, depending on the weather.
 - c. Summer Downtown Watering Plan
 - i. Stacy Cassata announced that she has lined up volunteers to help water the Pawcatuck River bridge planters. Discussion ensued regarding the need for more volunteers to help water during the summer months.
 - d. SPD Veteran Memorial Planting
 - i. Discussion ensued regarding SBC's role supporting this project. Carole Nossek announced she has been in communication with Stacey Haskell (Veteran Memorial Committee) to offer SBC assistance with the planning and fundraising for new plantings at the site. Nossek shared that she will sit in on a future meeting of the Committee to discuss ideas. Nossek shared that she was very sad to learn that all of the trees were taken down at the future site and that some of the trees had been installed as memorials. Nossek announced she will be personally funding the replacement of one of the trees that was planted by her daughter's girl scout group. Discussion surrounded regarding a town wide registry of memorial trees for future plantings. Committee

members discussed the need for replacement plantings for memorial trees that have needed to be taken down due to construction, damage to sidewalks, age or disease and if a tree can't be replaced from its current location, then another location should be looked into on town property. SBC agreed to discuss the idea of a memorial tree registry at a future meeting.

- e. Spring Fest May 6th at Stonington Human Services
 - i. Holland announced that Stonington Spring Fest will be held on Saturday, May 6th from 11AM-1PM. Cassata and Nossek will be volunteering at this event representing SBC. The two co-chairs will be doing a planting activity and will be advertising the rain barrel fundraiser.

5) Old Business

- a. Spring Plantings Update
 - i. Holland announced that all Spring pots have been completed, with Eric Beverly scheduled to work on the gateway to Donahue Park and the *Welcome to Pawcatuck* Garden this month.
- b. Earth Day 2023
 - i. Volunteers from Davis Standard will be doing a town-wide cleanup and will also be planting (50) Colorado spruce trees at the WPCA property on 4/21/23. Holland is working with DPW on the location of the future tree plantings. Nossek and Holland will be present to get the group of volunteers set up.
- c. Arbor Day 2023
 - i. Holland announced that Arbor Day is 4/28/23 and the SHS Voice Program will be providing volunteers to plant tree saplings in Spellman Park. (50) pine tree saplings will be planted on the back side of the West Pavilion and will be a future buffer to the train tracks. Nossek and Holland will be present on day of plantings to set up volunteers.
- d. Community Tree Planting Program Discussion
 - i. Kit Harford and Ann Marie Castagno-Clark presented research for ideas on a future Community Tree Planting Program. Clark said they researched the native tree, Witch Hazel, and agreed that that would be a great tree to give out to the community. Hartford discussed the need for the SBC to decide on which direction they would like a future Tree Planting Project to go before they can continue writing a grant with Sustainable CT. Cassata suggested that they start off slow with this program and see how much of an interest is there in the community. SBC agreed to continue to work on a DRAFT layout of this project, with a possible Spring 2024 launch.
- e. 2023 Tree Plantings
 - i. Holland announced that (20) trees will be planted this Spring in Stonington neighborhoods, funded by the Breezeline Communication grant. Stonington Tree Warden, Maggie Jones, provided locations for future tree plantings to DPW and also gave suggestions on new native trees which could be planted. Holland said that working with a local nursery, DPW was able to order a nice variety of trees to be planted this year, with funds from the SBC and recent grant from the Stonington Rotary. Work continues with Eric Beverly and DPW on additional tree

suggestions for Fall planting in Spellman Park. Holland shared that they are looking at (6) trees by the entrance of Spellman Park; (1) tree by the softball field and (2) trees by the outdoor basketball courts.

f. Future Fundraisers

- i. Stacy Cassata announced that (17) rain barrels have been sold already and the fundraiser will run through 6/19/23. Pick up is planned for 6/28/23 from 5:00-7:00PM at Human Services.

g. Safety / Lighting Downtown Pawcatuck

- i. Holland announced that she met with town officials regarding SBC and DPW recommendations for new lighting in Downtown Pawcatuck to improve safety and create a more welcoming atmosphere for residents and visitors. Holland was pleased to share with the group that all ideas were very well received and supported. Town officials discussed using ARPA funds to support funding new lighting for the area(s) - Gateway to Donahue Park; Donahue Park, and under the Amtrak bridge in Pawcatuck.

h. Comments from the Public

- i. None

6) Meeting Adjourned at 6:01PM

- a. Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Carole Nossek; seconded by Ann Marie Castagno-Clark; motion approved and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Holland
Committee Member

