

February 23, 2022

The Stonington Board of Selectmen held a regular meeting on this date at the Stonington Police Department at 5:30 p.m. Present were First Selectman Danielle Chesebrough, Selectwoman June Strunk and Selectwoman Debbie Motycka Downie. Members of the public and press were present.

(1) Call to Order

Ms. Chesebrough called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

(2) Pledge of Allegiance

(3) Comments from the Public

Mr. Rick Newton of Mystic spoke in favor of seating the Flood Prevention, Climate Resilience and Erosion Control Board.

(4) Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the special meeting minutes of February 9, 2022.

(5) Correspondence

Ms. Chesebrough took in correspondence from Anthony Caporale in the form of an application for the alternate seat on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

(6) Appointment/Reappointment/Resignation

Acknowledgement of Term Expirations/Not Seeking Reappointment – Stonington Facilities Committee

Mr. Paul Sartor's term on the Stonington Facilities Committee will expire on March 31, 2022 and he will not be seeking reappointment. We will send him an acknowledgement and thank him for his service.

(7) Old Business

Discussion – Project Priorities

Ms. Chesebrough gave an overview of the projects occurring in Town. She noted that the monthly email newsletter includes updates on the projects. Residents can sign up for the newsletter through the Town website under the header town communications.

(8) New Business

Request – Waiver of Blight Violation at 14 Wheeler Brook Park

We received a request from Ms. Linda Flynn to waive the blight fine and remove the lien associated with 14 Wheeler Brook Village located in the Wheeler Brook Village Mobile Home Park. Ms. Flynn is in the process of refinancing the mobile home property and cannot do so until the lien is withdrawn.

Ms. Candy Palmer, Zoning and Wetlands Official/Blight Officer provided an overview and the history of the property. In summary, a complaint was filed in 2015 regarding the condition of a trailer located inside the Wheeler Brook Village Mobile Home Park at 14 Wheeler Brook Road. Upon research into the ownership of the trailer, it was discovered that the owner Howard Pierce was deceased leaving blight enforcement until the trailer ownership went through probate.

During 2018-2019, other complaints were received. At that time, it was revealed that the owner of the trailer park, Peter Flynn was also deceased. The complaint was reopened and in April of 2019, Ms. Linda Flynn, was issued a notice of violation for 14 Wheeler Brook Road stating that there would be a \$100 per day fine starting in May of 2019 if the blighted trailer was not removed or repaired. Ms. Flynn reached out to the planning department at the time to state she intended to remove the trailer and explained she was struggling with probate issues.

In the summer of 2019, it was discovered that the notice of violation had been filed on the land records by the Blight Officer at the time, Mr. Jason Vincent. Ms. Palmer discussed with Mr. Vincent her

intention to work with Ms. Flynn regarding the blight issue. Mr. Vincent stated he would begin working on revoking the notice of violation. The notice was not revoked prior to Mr. Vincent's departure from employment with the Town.

Upon inspection in October 2021, the trailer was still located on the property.

As of February 12, 2022, the trailer was removed and the blight fines to date totaled \$101,600. Due to the unusual circumstances, the recommendation from planning staff is a partial revocation of the fines, maintaining a fine of no more than \$500.00.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to reduce the blight fine to \$500.00.

Discussion – Flood Prevention, Climate Erosion and Control Board

The Flood Prevention, Climate Erosion and Control Board was approved by Town ordinance in 1961 having all powers granted by the statutes of the State of CT.

Effective July 1, 2021, in accordance with CT General State Statute 25-84 and House Bill 6441, it was renamed the Flood Prevention, Climate Resilience and Erosion Control Board along with repealing and substituting other language within the statute.

Discussion ensued regarding the importance of establishing and seating the board. Ms. Chesebrough noted that the duties that previously fell under the Stormwater Task Force will also be overseen by this Board. The original ordinance states that it is a five-member board but the current updated general statute allows for additional members and alternates. The number of members to be seated will be confirmed by the Town Attorney.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to reestablish and seat the Flood Prevention, Climate Resilience and Erosion Control Board after clarifying the number of members permitted with the Town Attorney.

Discussion – Charter Revision Commission

The Board discussed the potential for seating the Charter Revision Commission.

Ms. Chesebrough noted that about an eighteen-month timeline would be needed to complete the very detailed process. She stated that it is a huge undertaking and that if the decision is made to move forward, they will need to act quickly in order to meet the timeline to get questions onto the November, 2023 ballot. She shared her concern that we may be behind schedule. She gave an overview of next steps noting a decision should be made at the next Board of Selectmen meeting as they would need to advertise the vacancies, interview and seat the commission. She also stated the importance of having someone as the clerk who can manage the process and legal timeframe.

Ms. Strunk and Ms. Downie both agreed that it is a very tight timeline and a large endeavor. They both noted that they would have discuss with community members to hear their thoughts on the topic of seating the commission prior to the next meeting.

Request – Assign Map 87, Block 1, Lot 2A, Street Number 517 Wheeler Road, Stonington, CT 06378

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the request.

(9) Comments from the Selectmen

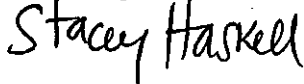
- Ms. Downie gave an update on the meetings she attended including the Board of Education noting they voted to make mask wearing at the discretion of parents effective March 1st. She stated she was honored to attend a ceremony for two local residents who just became Eagle Scouts. She noted that

three requests for proposal were received for the Stillman project. The Mystic River Boathouse Park request for proposal is still being reviewed but will go out soon.

- Ms. Strunk gave an overview of the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting noting that they are working on a moratorium regarding cannabis. In regards to the Police Commission, she noted that four individuals will be interviewed for the Chief of Police position.
- Ms. Chesebrough gave an update stating that the first Board of Finance budget meeting will occur on February 27th and encouraged resident participation. She noted that the housing rehabilitation fund pilot program is getting close to being ready. U.S. Fish and Wildlife held a fourteen-day comment period from February 10th-24th on the potential conservation efforts on Al Harvey Road. Covid test kit/mask distribution continues at Human Services, Monday- Friday from 9:30 a.m-3:30 p.m. while supplies last.

(10) Adjourn

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stacey Haskell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stacey Haskell

Recording Secretary