

December 13, 2023

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 Debbie Motycka Downie and Selectman Ben Tamsky. Members of the public and press were present.

**(1) Call to Order**

Ms. Chesebrough called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Ms. Chesebrough and Ms. Downie welcomed Mr. Tamsky to the Board.

**(2) Pledge of Allegiance**

**(3) Condolence**

The Board issued a condolence regarding the recent passing of Zoning Board of Appeals member, J. Jeffrey Walker. The Board of Selectmen extended their sympathies to the family and friends of Mr. Walker as well as to the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals that served with him. Ms. Chesebrough asked for a moment of silence.

**(4) Comments from the Public**

- Mr. Bill Sternberg of Stonington congratulated the Board members on being elected. He also shared his thoughts on opening the charter noting that the process should be given ample time.

**(5) Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 8, 2023. Ms. Chesebrough and Ms. Downie voted in favor. Mr. Tamsky abstained.

**(6) Correspondence**

- The Board received correspondence from Kevin Beverly noting his term on the Stonington Housing Authority ended and he will not be seeking reappointment. Beth Leamon also notified the Board she would step down from the Stonington Housing Authority once a replacement has been named.
- The Board received an application from Jonathan Collins who is interested in serving on the Economic Development Commission.
- The Board received an application from Gregory Sherrod who is interested in serving on the Stonington Housing Authority.

**(7) Appointment/Reappointment/Resignation**

**Appointment – Acting First Selectman**

Section 5-4 of the Town Charter states that within thirty days of taking office, the Board of Selectmen shall elect one of its members to function as Acting First Selectman in the absence of the First Selectman.

Ms. Chesebrough made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to appoint Debbie Motycka Downie as Acting First Selectman.

**Appointment – Retirement Board**

A motion was made by Mr. Tamsky, seconded by Ms. Downie and voted unanimously to appoint Farouk Rajab to the Retirement Board representing the Board of Education.

**Appointment – Mystic River Boathouse Park Implementation Committee**

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to appoint David Brown to the Mystic River Boathouse Park Implementation Committee representing the Board of Finance.

**Reappointment – Commission on Aging**

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to reappoint Gisela Harma and Susan Peglow to the Commission on Aging.

**Reappointment – Tree Warden/Deputy Tree Warden**

In accordance with CT General Statute Section 23-58, Tree Wardens are appointed within thirty days of the Selectmen municipal election.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to reappoint Margaret “Maggie” Jones as the Tree Warden and Kathy Weinberger as Deputy Tree Warden.

**Reappointment - Economic Development Commission**

A motion was made by Mr. Tamsky, seconded by Ms. Downie and voted unanimously to reappoint Charles Glew and Stephen Bessette to the Economic Development Commission noting Stephen Bessette would be moved from an alternate to a regular member effective January 1, 2024.

**Resignation - Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission**

The Board acknowledged the resignation of Nicholas Salerno as an alternate member of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission.

**(8) Old Business**

None

**(9) New Business**

**Discussion – Award of Contract Engineering and Design for Waterloop Project**

Mr. Jim Sullivan, Director of Finance, shared that they received proposals from seven engineering firms which were reviewed, rated and ranked by the selection committee. The top three were invited to make a presentation to the committee. The presentation was rated and the committee requested that the contract be awarded to Hayley Ward in the amount of \$315,000.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to award the contract for engineering and design of the Waterloop Project to Haley Ward, Inc. in the amount of \$315,000.

After some discussion about the construction inspectors and project timeline, the motion carried.

**Discussion – Approval of amendment to Adoption Agreement for VOYA Retirement Insurance and Annuity Company Non-Standardized Governmental 401 (A) Pre-Approved Plan**

Ms. Patti Burmahl, Director of Administrative Services, gave an overview stating that the Retirement Board at its December 5, 2023 meeting voted to amend the vesting schedule for the employer contributions to the defined contribution plan. This changed the vesting schedule from a cliff which is 100% vesting after five years for all participants to a five-year graded schedule which provides vesting at 20% year one and increases by 20% until it reaches 100% at year five. This change better helps to attract talent in a very competitive hiring market. The final step of the process is Board of Selectmen approval.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to approve the revision to the 401 (A) Plan Adoption Agreement.

**Discussion – Charter Revision Commission**

Discussion regarding opening the Charter ensued including the timeline to get items on the 2024 vs. 2025 ballot. Ms. Chesebrough noted areas that she would like the group to consider including Town Clerk/Tax Collector becoming appointed positions, Board of Selectmen moving to a four-year term, adding alternates to the WPCA, making the language gender neutral including titles for the Board of Selectmen as well as other areas. Ms. Downie noted that the timeline for 2024 may be challenging. Mr. Tamsky noted that he needs a better understanding of the Charter before recommending any changes.



A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to request that the Town Attorney draft a resolution to appoint a Charter Revision Commission.

In discussion, it was noted that the Board will begin accepting applications for the commission but until the resolution has been passed the commission cannot be seated. The Board will continue further discussion at their next meeting.

**Discussion – Board of Selectman Assignments**

Ms. Chesebrough stated that the Board of Selectmen are ex-officio members of all Boards/Commissions in the Town. They discussed taking time to review the list of Boards/Commissions and dividing them up amongst each other. Each Board member will act as a liaison and would either attend meetings or review minutes reporting information back to the Board of Selectmen, if needed. Further discussion will occur at a future meeting.

**Discussion – 2024 Meeting Schedule**

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to continue meeting on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at the Stonington Police Department at 5:30 p.m.

**Request – Street Number Assignment: Map 150, Block 2, Lot 7, Street Number 153 Jerry Browne Road, Mystic, CT 06355**

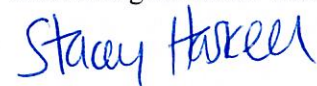
A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to approve the request.

**(10) Comments from the Selectmen**

- Mr. Tamsky gave an overview of meetings he attended including the Mystic Harbor Management Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, Conservation Commission and CUSH. He noted that during the Mystic Harbor Management Commission they discussed an issue with a floating dock near the Mystic River Boathouse Park as well as a potential kayak launch assistant pilot program. He stated that the Conservation Commission is in need of staff support to help streamline the meetings.
- Ms. Downie attended a few different meetings regarding stormwater issues in Town. She noted the Town should not be accepting roads until projects are completed. The Flood Prevention, Climate Resilience and Erosion Control Board will be discussing stormwater utility at their upcoming meeting and are looking for information regarding the cost to repair flood gates. She discussed the importance of aquafer protection and believes this should be included in the zoning rewrite.
- Ms. Chesebrough discussed the Wreath Across America event that will be held at the Stonington Cemetery on December 16<sup>th</sup>. She asked the Board to consider bringing their laptops to meetings to eliminate the need for printed paper packets. She attended several meetings with DOT regarding different projects including drainage and Route 27. She noted she would like to hold a Town Meeting in January/February to put forward the purchase of the Circus Lot, creation of a Cemetery Committee and to again look at the Parking Ordinance. She stated that some workshops in advance of the Town Meeting would be helpful to revisit the Parking Ordinance and provide residents with additional information on the topic.

**(11) Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.



Stacey Haskell  
Recording Secretary