

January 22, 2020

The Stonington Board of Selectmen held a special meeting on this date at the Stonington Public Schools District Administration Building at 7:00 p.m. Present were First Selectman Danielle Chesebrough and Selectwoman June Strunk. Selectwoman Debbie Motycka Downie was available via phone. Also, present were members of the public and press.

(1) Call to Order

Ms. Chesebrough called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

(2) Pledge of Allegiance

(3) Comments from the Public

All comments were related to the West Broad Street School lease.

- Mr. Rob Simmons spoke in favor.
- Mr. Jim Lathrop spoke in opposition.
- Ms. Julie Holland spoke in favor.
- Ms. Kristine Halleck spoke in opposition.
- Mr. Cal Buxton spoke in favor.
- Mr. Rudy Pancaro spoke in opposition.
- Ms. Ashley Gillece spoke in favor.
- Mr. Nick Kepple, representing St. Michaels, noted that the lease does not prohibit other option being pursued by the Town.
- Mr. Cullen Hagan spoke not in favor or against but wanted consideration to be taken regarding clauses that St. Michael not sell their current building.
- Mr. Paul Sartor, Stonington Facilities Committee Chair, gave an overview how the committee came to make their recommendation of leasing West Broad Street School to St. Michael.

(4) Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the January 8, 2020 special meeting minutes for the 6:15 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. meetings.

(5) Correspondence

- Ms. Chesebrough took in correspondence from Ms. Ruth Nolder in the form of an application for the Commission on Aging.
- Ms. Chesebrough took in correspondence from Mr. Cullen Hagen in the form of an application for the Economic Development Commission.
- Ms. Chesebrough took in correspondence from Mr. Michael Lague in the form of an application for the Economic Development Commission and Mystic Harbor Management Commission.
- Ms. Chesebrough took in correspondence from Ms. Alisa Morrison, Mr. Charles Sheehan and Mr. James Falconieri in the form of an application for the Water Pollution Control Authority.

(6) Appointment/Reappointment/Resignation

Appointment – Waterfront Commission

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Eugene Pfeifer to the Waterfront Commission.

Reappointment – Waterfront Commission

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to reappoint Mr. Ethan Grimes to the Waterfront Commission.

Resignation – Climate Change Task Force

The Selectmen accepted the resignation of Mr. Jeffrey Callahan from the Climate Change Task Force with regret.

(7) Old Business

Discussion – Lease of West Broad Street School

A motion was made by Ms. Chesebrough, seconded by Ms. Downie and voted unanimously to approve the lease of West Broad Street School to St. Michael Church contingent upon acceptance of the language in Section 6.4 by the Town's insurance carrier which refers to use of the playground.

In discussion, Ms. Strunk noted that in 2015 the K-12 Building Committee did a market analysis on the property which noted, at the time, the West Broad Street School building could be sold for around \$200,000 but the analysis also stated that a long-term lease of \$1.00 per year should be considered to maintain ownership and preservation of the property. She noted that two weeks after West Broad Street School was vacated it was vandalized. Ms. Strunk added that she is a communicant of St. Michael's Church but as the former Board of Finance Chair is extremely pragmatic about every tax dollar spent.

Ms. Downie stated that she believes the lease is a good short-term solution which will allow review for long-term use and will keep the building from standing vacant. She added that the short-term lease would give time to do a needs assessment, find a buyer or another idea for building renovation for a long-term solution.

Ms. Chesebrough wanted to clarify that the savings estimate range would be anywhere from \$77,000-\$128,000 which was based on a running number of different scenarios since the Town has only had the building for a short time. Further, she added that since the school was vacated in June 2019, there have been issues such as vandalism, broken windows and adolescents on the fire escapes. The issues resulted in nine times that the police were called to the location as well as Public Works being called out at least twice a month.

The rent amount of \$300 per month is small but will relieve the Town of all utilities and routine maintenance costs. It will allow the building to stay as a school which has been for 120 years and will not change zoning, traffic or parking. Ms. Chesebrough stated that St. Pius School in Westerly, located in walking distance to downtown, has been actively marketed for sale and has sat vacant for over a year.

There have been two changes/additions to the lease since the last Board of Selectmen's meeting which include allowing developers the opportunity to walkthrough the West Broad Street School building as well as the playground being utilized by the public.

With no further discussion, the motion carried.

(8) New Business

Discussion – Ratification of Labor Contract/Local Union 9411 of the United Steel Workers for the Stonington Highway Department

Mr. Vincent Pacileo, Director of Administrative Services and Mr. Paul Thomas, Union President, were present. Mr. Pacileo reported that on January 7, 2020 the Stonington Highway Department ratified the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the Town of Stonington and Local 9411 of the United Steel Workers for the period of July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2022.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to ratify the collective bargaining agreement between the Town of Stonington and Local 9411 of the United Steel Workers for the period of July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2022.

Discussion –Denison Society Abatement of Taxes

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to table the item to a future meeting.

Resolution – Small Cities Program

Ms. Chesebrough stated that this resolution authorizes the First Selectman to sign and file the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve the CDBG Small Cities Resolution.

Resolution – SCCOG Grant Applications for Regional Performance Incentive Programs

Ms. Chesebrough stated that this resolution authorizes the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) to make applications to the CT Office of Policy and Management for Regional Performance Incentive Program Funding.

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

Request – Use of Donahue Park for 22nd Annual Duck Race

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Ms. Strunk and voted unanimously to approve to the use of Donahue Park by the Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce for the 22nd Annual Duck Race on April 25, 2020.

(9) Comments from the Public

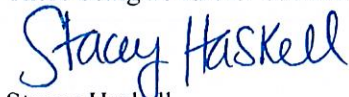
None

(10) Comments from the Selectmen

- Ms. Downie stated that she is working on a summary regarding the past testing of the Stillman Avenue property. She also gave an update on attending meetings of the Beautification Committee and Stonington Facilities Committee.
- Ms. Strunk state the she attended a Climate Change Task Force meeting and also discussed the Commission on Aging needing more members in order to have a quorum.
- Ms. Chesebrough stated that the Town has been selected to be part of the CBI Municipal Program for review of the Stillman Avenue property which is part of the Brownfields Redevelopment course activities at UCONN. She added that the joint Board of Selectmen and Capital Improvement Program meeting will be held on January 30th. The Board of Selectmen will also be holding a few special meetings in the upcoming weeks for discussion purposes only regarding the Stillman Avenue and Mystic River Boathouse Park properties.

(11) Adjourn

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.



Stacey Haskell

Recording Secretary