AMENDED DRAFT MINUTES

Members present: Annmarie Castagno, Stacy Cassata, Julie Holland, Ayo Bryant, Carole Nossek, Danny Oliverio, Kit Hartford
Absent: Eric Beverly, Kristen Parsons,
Guests: Paul Getz, SJD Schwartzstein

1) Call to order – Meeting called to order by Stacy Cassata at 5:00 pm.
2) Pledge of Allegiance
3) Approval of the minutes by Annmarie Castagno 2nd by Kit Hartford. All in favor.

4) New Business:
   a) Correspondence
      Breezeline Communication regarding donation of trees for Stonington.
      Paul Goetz/ Stonington Marina asking for assistance with installing a pollinating pathway by his business.
      Julie Holland Letter to Chief DelGrosso regarding crosswalk safety in Downtown Pawcatuck.
   b) Willow Island Planting
      Committee discussion that a signed letter needs to be prepared from the Neighbors of Willow and Broadway Triangle Mystic to be responsible for the watering and weeding of any future planting on the Willow St Island. The neighbors of this area asked the committee to relandscape the Island. Julie Holland presented the plans to committee which was designed by resident and former committee member Shaun Mastronanni. The plantings would cost $1,200. The committee would need to be responsible for adding mulch each year. The design would mirror the landscape design from the Route 1 Island in Stonington Project. The DPW has agreed to prep the area for planting. Carole made the motion to allocate $1200.00 for the planting of The Willow St Island 2nd by Stacy Cassata.
   c) Fall Plantings
      Carole and Julie completed the fall plantings on The Welcome to Pawcatuck Garden and all the War Memorials are decorated for fall. Eric Beverly planted the 3 pots on the intersection of Pequot Trail and Route 1. Kit Hartford will plant the Welcome to Mystic flowering pot. The Bridge flowers will be done in October. For winter decorations, the committee agreed to hire a local landscaper or green house to add Christmas greens to the pots on the bridge this year and the committee would decorate them with holiday balls and bows. Julie announced the DPW is purchasing more Christmas wreaths for the poles downtown. No decision was made on location of the First Responder Holiday Tree. It was discussed The Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce will be decorating Donahue Park and Downtown Pawcatuck with beautiful lighted Stars for the holiday season. Committee will decorate with bows, wreaths and holiday greens in Mystic, Stonington, and Pawcatuck the week before and after Thanksgiving.
d) Scarecrow Contest
The Scarecrow Contest 2022 is on for residences, businesses and schools of Stonington. Stacy and Ayo will ask some local businesses if they would like to donate 1st and 2nd place prizes for the residents. Suggestion for prizes from committee was $100.00 gift certificate for 1st prize and $50.00 gift Certificate for 2nd prize. The winning businesses could possibly be recognized in an upcoming Stonington magazine. More discussion to follow with subcommittee.

e) Fall Tree Planting
The committee donated $2000.00 toward future tree plantings in Stonington. The committee is directly working with the DPW and the Town of Stonington tree warden to locate future tree plantings but most importantly to put together a grand list of trees that need to planted. The committee made a suggestion to DPW and tree warden to replace the tree in front of West Broad that died over the summer and replace the tree in front of Hoofs Restaurant in Pawcatuck that also died. DPW and tree warden will work together on other locations. The committee discussed working on the Sustainable CT Grant to raise more funds for tree plantings. Kit Hartford volunteered to work on the grant with the first selectwoman. Julie shared the SBC article in The Fall edition of Stonington Magazine. The article talks about the benefits of tree planting and is asking for donations for future tree plantings in Stonington. It also states that Stonington has lost over 200 trees in the last 2-3 years do to disease, age, and storm damage.

f) Stonington Public Schools Seasonal Pots
Julie announced the committee has partnered with Stonington Public Schools to volunteer to plant their seasonal pots at the entrances of their schools. SPS has agreed to pay for the material. The SBC would simply volunteer to plant the pots.

g) Gateway to Donahue Park
Stacy has been in communication with Jewett City Bank to grind down the tree stump at this location where a large tree was recently taken down. She also asked them if the committee can plant a future pollinating garden at this location. The Bank officials will take a look at getting the stump removed and funded from their 2023 budget. Stacy will circle back to the bank January 2023.

h) Under Amtrack Bridge Pawcatuck/Future Planting
Julie met with DPW regarding the possibility of planting future gardens in 3 locations; under and near the Amtrack Bridge in Pawcatuck. DPW asked our committee to come up with a landscape design for the 3 areas and the DPW would help the committee submit the paperwork to the state for approval.

i) Discussions of Future Beautification Projects
Carole mentioned she would like to ask the Stonington PD if they would like to relandscape the front and side of their building. A landscape design approved by the SPD and DPW would be needed and possible fundraiser to fund the project.

j) Budget Discussions
$7500 was allocated for 2022 with current and future fall projects
Discussion with committee members to possibly ask for $10,000 for the Stonington Beautification budget from the town for 2023. The committee discussed with possibly 3-4 more gardens going in next year. The committee would need additional funding to maintain what they currently take care of and to fund future trees and gardens in Stonington.

5) Old Business:

a) Future Fundraising: Stacy reported that $420.00 was raised from rain barrel sales and she would like to do another fundraiser in the Spring of 2023
b) Clean Up: Discussion Organize cleanup for Fall 2022 and Spring 2023

c) Open Officers Position: Julie nominated Carole Nossek for open co-chairperson position Annmarie 2nd. All in favor.

6). Comments from the public:
   a) Resident Paul Getz reached out to the SBC for suggestions and support in adding pollinating and rain gardens in the area of Wequetequock Cove. Suggestions was made by the committee to do a walking tour of the area in the next month and to invite some town officials. Date and time to be determined.

   B) Resident SJD Schwartzstein made a presentation that more trees need be planted in Stonington and that the Stonington town government, DPW and Stonington BC need to be doing more to help with global climate change and educating the public. (Statements/ Questions from Mr. Schwartzstein are attached to minutes)

Committee members reassured Mr. Schwartzstein that the BC committee is actively fundraising and advocating for tree plantings in Stonington and appreciate his comments but most of his requests do not fall under the BC committee. Also that the committee is working with DPW and the Tree Warden to start a grand list of trees that need to be replaced in Stonington and welcomed his suggestions on possible tree locations. Julie Holland also shared the BC article in the Fall edition of The Stonington Magazine on the fundraising efforts and alerting the public that Stonington has lost over 200 trees in the last 2-3 years. Committee suggested to Mr. Schwartzstein to talk to the Stonington Tree Warden and send concerns to the BOS.

7). Adjourn 6:25PM

Respectfully submitted,

Annmarie Castagno - Clark
Secretary