

August 23, 2017

The Stonington Board of Selectmen held a regular meeting on this date at the Stonington Police Department at 7:00 p.m. Present were First Selectman Rob Simmons, Selectman Mike Spellman and Selectwoman Kate Rotella. Also present were members of the public and press.

**(1) Call to Order**

Mr. Simmons called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**(2) Pledge of Allegiance**

**(3) Comments from the Public**

Ms. Peggy Townsend stated that she had sent in a packet of information to the Board a few weeks prior and wanted to know if anyone had questions. She added that there have been four complaints of zoning violations on the matter. Ms. Townsend thanked the Board and stated she was grateful to zoning for putting in protections for the residents.

Mr. Simmons stated that although the Board can only listen to comments he wanted everyone to be aware that Ms. Townsend was referring to the Ender's Island request for the sea wall to be constructed and that her and other resident's comments had been forwarded to the Army Corps of Engineers who are overseeing the project.

**(4) Approval of the Minutes**

A motion was made by Mr. Spellman, seconded by Mrs. Rotella and voted unanimously to approve the August 9, 2017 Board of Selectmen regular meeting minutes.

**(5) Correspondence**

None

**(6) Appointment/Reappointment**

**Planning and Zoning Commission**

The Board acknowledged the completion of Ms. Frances Hoffman's term on the Planning and Zoning Commission effective August 31, 2017. Mr. Simmons thanked Ms. Hoffman and stated that she did an extraordinary job on the commission and added that she brought a wealth of knowledge, talent and experience.

Mr. Simmons stated that Mr. Dave Rathbun, Chairman of Planning and Zoning had requested that Mr. Ben Philbrick be moved from an alternate to a regular member in lieu of the vacancy.

A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Spellman and voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Ben Philbrick from an alternate to a regular member on the Planning and Zoning Commission effective September 1, 2017.

**Zoning Board of Appeals**

Mr. Simmons asked that the reappointments be tabled as he had not had the opportunity to speak with the two individuals requesting reappointment prior to the meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Spellman, seconded by Mrs. Rotella and voted unanimously to table the reappointments until a future meeting.

**(7) Old Business**

**Discussion – Rat Infestation Update**

Mr. Ryan McCammon, Supervisor of Environmental Health for Ledge Light Health District, gave an update on the rat infestation. Mr. McCammon stated that in total six orders have been issued since May, four in

regards to rats and two in regards to trash. Mr. McCammon added that two of the six orders were issued since the last Board meeting. He added that there are twenty-one properties in total with rat issues and of that only three new issues within the last three weeks. Mr. McCammon stated that the residents in Pawcatuck have been very cooperative in eliminating harborage, food sources, etc. He added that since removing food sources new complaints have arisen with rats eating vegetables from gardens, specifically tomatoes.

Mr. Simmons asked if we were winning against the rat infestation. Mr. McCammon stated that the number of complaints has gone down and that things seem to be getting better. Mr. Simmons added that the Board has requested that the Planning and Zoning Commission review the Keeping of Hens Zoning Regulation. Mr. Spellman stated that there are many people who raise hens respectfully and properly but also some who do not and feels the regulation should be reviewed. Mrs. Rotella stated that she is glad to hear that the regulation will be reviewed and that the rat issue seems to be under control. Mr. Simmons praised the citizens of Pawcatuck for collaborating with Ledge Light and thanked Ledge Light for all of their hard work.

#### **(8) New Business**

A motion was made by Mr. Spellman, seconded by Mrs. Rotella and voted unanimously to open the agenda to include a discussion from Lantern Energy regarding an energy audit.

Mr. Mark Ballou, Energy Manager for Lantern Energy, gave a brief overview stating that his company has worked with Human Services as part of a grant through Eversource to help decrease energy consumption for residents. He added that he would like permission to do a no cost audit and look at ways to decrease energy throughout town buildings. Mr. Ballou stated he would need to gain access to electric bills in order to complete a pre-audit to decide which buildings need further exploration.

A motion was made by Mr. Spellman, seconded by Mrs. Rotella and voted unanimously to allow Lantern Energy to complete a no cost audit on the Town of Stonington's buildings with permission from those who oversee said buildings.

In discussion, Mr. Simmons stated that he had heard from several residents who had completed audits with Lantern Energy that stated they had since saved several hundreds of dollars and were very satisfied.

With no further discussion, the motion carried.

#### **Discussion – Bricks & Murals Pawcatuck Kick-Off**

Mr. Fred Paretta, Ms. Mia Brynes, Ms. Ayo Bryant and Mrs. Beth Paretta were in attendance from the Bricks & Murals Committee. Mr. Paretta gave an overview of the upcoming event to be held September 13-17, 2017 in Pawcatuck, CT and Westerly, RI. Mr. Paretta stated that it is an art based event with over 100 artists coming to paint 14 murals in 5 days on 14 buildings. He added that this is the first time the event will encompass two states and two towns.

Mr. Simmons stated that the Board of Selectmen will be hosting the Bricks & Murals Pawcatuck Kick Off on Thursday, August 31, 2017 at Mia's Café in Pawcatuck where the mural renderings will be available to view. He added that it their goal to fill the room and show Pawcatuck Pride during this event. Mr. Paretta unveiled a print of one of the murals which highlights the Stonington/Westerly football rivalry.

The Board recessed at 7:25 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 7:26 p.m.

Mr. Simmons thanked the members of the Bricks & Murals Committee for attending.

**Request – Award of Bid Boiler Refurbishment for Stonington Police Department**

Mr. James Sullivan, Director of Finance, stated that the Board of Police Commissioners voted to award the bid to SK Mechanical after reviewing those who submitted an RFP.

A motion was made by Mr. Spellman seconded by Mrs. Rotella and voted unanimously to Award the Bid in the amount of \$51,445 to SK Mechanical, LLC for the refurbishment of the boiler at the Stonington Police Department.

Mr. Simmons asked if the company was qualified. Mr. Sullivan stated that they were and had several references.

With no further discussion, the motion carried.

**(9) Comments from the Public**

Mr. Ed Hart stated that he thinks the ongoing litigation (Louis DiCesare, II vs. Town of Stonington, et al) has been very expensive. He added that he thought it would be an item of discussion on the agenda and felt this was a long running unnecessary problem.

**(10) Comments from the Selectmen**

Mrs. Rotella did not have any comments.

Mr. Spellman stated that when the Governor issued the recent cut to ECS he criticized the Town of Stonington for having an adequate reserve and referred to Stonington as an affluent town. Mr. Spellman added that the reserve has been saved up for decades to be utilized, if needed, to pay for things such as new schools, etc.

Mr. Spellman review the following data provided by the Human Services Department gathered from January 2015-August 2017:

**Consolidated Client Demographics**

<b>Total Unduplicated</b>	<b># Persons Served:</b>	<b># Households Served:</b>
	3,729*	2,580**
<b>Social Services</b>	1,285	1,140
<b>Youth &amp; Family Services</b>	1,276	808
<b>Senior Services</b>	253	222
<b>Recreation</b>	1,743	1,183

*\*20% of all Stonington Residents*

*\*\*33% of all Stonington Households*

**Additional Highlights:**

- 685 Energy Assistance applications processed, totaling over \$300,000 in grant funds disbursed to residents in need.
- 1,009 Housing/Homelessness/Rental Assistance/Eviction contacts.
- 447 Medical Assistance/Health Insurance contacts.
- 661 State of CT Renter's Rebate applications processed, resulting in over \$200,000 for the elderly/disabled members of our community.

- 4 **Community Forums** conducted to educate the community at-large on the growing opiate crisis.
- 90 homeless individuals within the town have been referred to Human Services and provided assistance.

Mr. Spellman stated that Stonington Human Services has turned no one away. He added that those statistics are not a hallmark of an affluent community and invited the Governor to come to Stonington to tour the parts of town that are in need of assistance.

Mr. Simmons stated that he agreed with Mr. Spellman's remarks and stated that early in the week he responded to Mr. Ben Barnes of the Office of Policy and Management requesting the Town's total fund and unassigned fund balance. During an interview, Mr. Barnes drew a comparison between New London and Stonington. Mr. Simmons stated that it is an unfair comparison as New London has several non-profits that do not pay taxes to the City of New London. He added that the State is obligated to provide New London with PILOT funding which the State has failed to do. Mr. Simmons stated that the Town of Stonington has built a reserve over ten years in anticipation of renovating two elementary schools. He added that the Town has been prudent, fair and transparent about how the Town has gone about business. Mr. Simmons stated that the Governor should do business in the Capitol where it belongs and not on the backs of the residents of Stonington.

**(11) Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.



Stacey Haskell  
Recording Secretary