

April 25, 2018

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, Selectwoman Kate Rotella and Selectman John Prue. Also present were members of the public and press.

(1) Call to Order

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

(2) Pledge of Allegiance

(3) Comments from the Public

The following individuals spoke in support of Mr. Daniel Oliverio:

- Mr. Tom Nall
- Mr. Chris Donahue
- Mr. Don Maranell on behalf of Mr. Michael Spellman
- Mr. Don Maranell
- Ms. Celeste DiCesare
- Ms. Cynthia DiCesare
- Ms. Michelle DiCesare
- Ms. Cindy Nadeau
- Mr. Lou DiCesare
- Mr. Mel Olson
- Ms. Jessica Morrisey
- Ms. Lisa Konicki

The individuals all stated their support for Mr. Oliverio. Many stated their disappointment in how the Public Works Department is run and asked for an investigation into the management, specifically the Director of Public Works. They requested that employees be given rights bound by their contract, fair labor practices and a harassment free work place.

Mr. Daniel Oliverio stated he would resign from his position as Tree Warden. He added that it has been an honor to serve the Town of Stonington as Tree Warden and the support he has received has been amazing.

A petition signed by residents and several written statements were submitted and are on file at the Town Hall in the First Selectman's office.

(4) Approval of the Minutes

- A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Prue and voted unanimously to approve the February 5, 2018 joint Board of Selectmen and Mystic River Boathouse Park Implementation Committee special meeting minutes.
- A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Prue and voted unanimously to approve the April 11, 2018 special meeting minutes.
- A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Prue and voted unanimously to approve the April 20, 2018 special meeting minutes.

(5) Correspondence

None

(6) Old Business

Discussion – Citizens Participation Plan Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program

Ms. Leanne Theodore, Director of Human Services, stated that Ms. Julie Savin would be helping to produce the grant application. Ms. Savin stated that the Community Development Block Grant Program will be presented at a Public Hearing on May 14th at 6:00 p.m. at the Stonington Police Department.

A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Prue and voted unanimously to approve the signing of the Citizens Participation Plan Community Development Block Grant.

In discussion, Mr. Prue asks if there is any cost associated with pursuing the grant. Ms. Theodore stated that the only cost would be associated with advertising the public hearing.

With no further discussion, the motion carried.

(7) New Business

Discussion – Recommendation for Pawcatuck Harbor Master

Mr. Simmons stated that in light of the recent passing of Mr. John O'Brien, there is a vacancy as Pawcatuck Harbor Master. The Pawcatuck River Harbor Management Commission has recommended that Mr. Charles Smith who has served as the Deputy Harbor Master be recommended to the Governors office for appointment as the Pawcatuck Harbor Master.

A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Prue and voted unanimously to recommend to the Governor that Mr. Charles Smith be appointed as the Pawcatuck Harbor Master.

Discussion – Request from Stonington Ambulance Corp

A motion was made by Mrs. Rotella, seconded by Mr. Prue and voted unanimously to table this item as further information is needed.

(8) Comments from the Public

The following individuals spoke in support of Mr. Oliverio:

- Mr. Don Maranell
- Ms. Michelle DiCesare
- Mr. Greg Howard
- Mr. Larry Theodore
- Ms. Sue Jones
- Mr. James Halleran
- Ms. Celeste DiCesare
- Mr. Mel Olsen
- Ms. Heather Spellman
- Mr. Paul Garrity
- Ms. Jerri Richards

Among the questions raised or comments made were the following:

- Wanting a resolution to the investigations by the next Board of Selectmen's meeting.
- Hoping to hear that the Board is in favor of a harassment free work environment.
- Questioning if the Town has developed an SOP per the consultant's report.
- Questioning what will happen if there is a vacancy of the Tree Warden.
- Questioning how Department Heads are evaluated and how often are they evaluated.

- Those that volunteer for fire and EMS duties are allowed to leave the job for a call. Why can't the Tree Warden do the same?

(9) Comments from the Selectmen

- Mr. Prue stated that he knows Mr. Oliverio and is happy to see so much support on his behalf. He added that the role of the Board of Selectmen, specifically himself and Mrs. Rotella, is misunderstood as the day to day operations are not always brought to the entire Board. Mr. Prue stated that personnel matters go to the First Selectman for resolution and the other members are not made aware of those situations in detail.
- Mrs. Rotella stated that she has served with Mr. Oliverio on several committees and that he always steps up and does a great job. She added that the show of support for Mr. Oliverio is wonderful. Mrs. Rotella stated that she is in support of a harassment free work place. She agreed with Mr. Prue's statements as they are not privy to the day to day operations information; especially personnel actions.
- Mrs. Rotella stated she has organized an Internet Safety Community Forum along with Human Services and the Board of Education which will be held on May 15th at the Stonington High School.
- Mr. Simmons stated he will have a detailed response to the issues that have been raised. He clarified that Mr. Oliverio's complaint was immediately sent to the Town labor attorney and added that due to vacations of several department heads (and the attorney) the investigation began immediately upon their return.
- Mr. Simmons stated that he asked Mr. Oliverio to become the Tree Warden which is a volunteer position that required he take courses and become certified. He added that Mr. Oliverio has done a great job in this role. Mr. Simmons stated that he did not know Mr. Oliverio was going to resign and that he should put that in writing. He continued that he hoped Mr. Oliverio would not submit the resignation letter but will treat his decision with respect. Mr. Simmons stated that the Town benefits greatly from its hundreds of volunteers who step up and sit on many Boards and Commissions. He concluded by saying he believes in the orderly process of government and that matters of this sort are best managed under the law and in accordance with well-established rules, regulations and Human Resources best practices.

(10) Adjourn

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.



Stacey Haskell
Recording Secretary