

March 13, 2024

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 were present.

(1) Call to Order

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

(2) Pledge of Allegiance

(3) Interview – Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission

The Board interviewed JD Fontanella and Peter Gardner for the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission.

(4) Comments from the Public

Blunt White of Stonington shared his thoughts on updates that could be made to the budget book including but not limited to budget to actual, collection rate increased to actual, fund balance reconciliation and additional charts/tables.

(5) Approval of Minutes

- A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to approve the special meeting minutes of February 28, 2024.
- A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to approve the special meeting minutes of March 7, 2024.

(6) Correspondence

- The Board accepted applications from Suzanne Matteson and William Fyke for the Stonington Cemetery Commission.
- John Holstein withdrew his application from the Charter Revision Commission.

(7) Appointment/Reappointment/Resignation

Appointment – Stonington Housing Authority

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to appoint Lisa Reid to the Stonington Housing Authority.

(8) Old Business

Discussion – Charter Revision Commission Resolution

The Board discussed the different areas of the resolution including number of members, appointment of members, naming of a temporary chair, outline of proposed revisions and date of final draft report.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted unanimously to approve the resolution to appoint a Charter Revision Commission as noted below:

Be it hereby resolved, that, pursuant to General Statute Section 7-188, the Town of Stonington Board of Selectmen hereby establish and initiate charter revision of the existing Charter of the Town of Stonington; and

Furthermore, pursuant to General Statute Section 7-190(a), said Board of Selectmen hereby appoint a Charter Revision Commission, consisting of five (5) members with terms ending on November 30, 2025, as follows:

Lynn Young (U)

Raymond Trebisacci (D)

Marsha Standish (I)

June Strunk (D)

David Lee (R)

Not more than one-third of these appointees hold any other public office in the Town of Stonington, and not more than a bare majority of appointees are members of one political party.

Furthermore, that Raymond Trebisacci be the temporary chairperson until a permanent chairperson can be selected; and

Furthermore, that the Board of Selectmen hereby recommend that funds be provided to the Commission for expenses including a recording secretary for all meetings of the Charter Revision Commission; and

Be it also resolved, that the Charter Revision Commission consider the following proposed revisions to the Stonington Town Charter as outlined including but not limited to the following;

Core Proposed Changes:

- Changing Town Clerk to a hired position that includes a full scale, professional hiring process.
- Changing Tax Collector to a hired position that includes a full scale, professional hiring process.
- Changing Board of Selectmen, including First Selectman, from a two-year to a four-year term.
- Addition of two alternate members to the WPCA.
- Making the Charter gender-neutral.

Additional Proposed Changes:

- Throughout the charter there were issues identified by members of the Town staff, as well as the First Selectman, that are recommended for the Charter Commission to look at modifying. They are noted within the edits to the Charter document.

Be it further resolved, that pursuant to General Statute Section 7-190(b), the Charter Revision Commission shall submit its draft report to the Stonington Town Clerk not later than April 1, 2025 so that the Board shall complete its final action on any proposed revisions to the Charter no later than September 1, 2025, in order to assure that the final report, proposed charter revisions, and questions will be submitted in order to be considered at referendum in the general election of 2025;

Be it finally resolved, that pursuant to General Statute Section 7-190(c), the Charter Revision Commission shall terminate upon acceptance or rejections of its final report by the Board of Selectmen.

(9) New Business

Request – Building Permit Fee Waiver for Non-Profit – Ocean Community YMCA

The Ocean Community YMCA requested a building permit fee waiver of \$3,961 associated with the conversion of existing tennis courts into pickleball courts at the Naik Family Branch. This is requesting in accordance with the non-profit building permit fee waiver policy adopted on July 12, 2023.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted to unanimously to approve the building permit fee waiver in the amount of \$3,961.

Request – Building Permit Fee Waiver Town Project – Spellman Park AED Project

Stonington Human Services requested a building permit fee waiver of \$49.78 associated with the Spellman Park AED Project.

A motion was made by Ms. Downie, seconded by Mr. Tamsky and voted to unanimously to approve the building permit fee waiver in the amount of \$49.78.

(10) Comments from the Selectmen

- Ms. Downie noted the many budget meetings that she attended.

- Mr. Tamsky gave an overview of meetings he attended including Planning and Zoning Commission, Stonington Harbor Management Commission and Architectural Design Review Board noting he may know a few people planning to apply. He stated he is still working with the Police Commission regarding the crosswalk on Route 27.
- Ms. Chesebrough gave an overview of the budget meetings noting that the first draft of the budget showed a large increase in the area of long-term capital needs. This was done knowing large cuts would need to be made to allow for public discussions on how to best plan for funding the future infrastructure needs. The Public Hearing on the budget will be held on March 26th at 7:00 p.m. at Stonington High School.

(11) Adjourn

There being no further business to come before this Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Stacey Haskell

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Recording Secretary