



TOWN OF STONINGTON

Board of Selectmen
Regular Meeting
March 25, 2009

The Stonington Board of Selectmen held a regular meeting on March 25, 2009, at the Stonington Police Station. Present were First Selectman Edward Haberek, Selectman Peter Balestracci, and Selectman William Brown. Also present were members of the public.

(1) Call to Order

Mr. Haberek called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

(2) Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Haberek to approve the minutes of March 11, 2009, seconded by Mr. Balestracci, and the motion carried unanimously.

(3) Comments from the Public

Gail Shea, River Road - Questioned why the Pawcatuck streetscape and WPCA upgrades were not included in the stimulus funds.

Mr. Haberek responded that the Pawcatuck streetscape did not meet the shovel ready criteria because the project had to be ready to go in 90 days. It was started yesterday. The Connecticut Department of Transportation is driving this project and notification was received that the Mystic streetscape will qualify. WPCA did not meet the criteria as well because it is in the design phase.

Don Sadowski, Pawcatuck - Questioned the status of the Ethics Commission and Code of Ethics. Mr. Haberek responded it is under review by outside legal counsel. On another matter, Mr. Sadowski stated he is concerned about the elimination of the zoning enforcement officer's position and questioned if the Board of Finance has the authority to eliminate positions. Mr. Haberek stated he would address the matter under Correspondence in the meeting's agenda.

Fran O'Neil, Lathrop Avenue - Questioned if there are any signs to move the Welcome to Connecticut.

Tracy Swain, Courtland Street - Discussed the Recycle Bank program and asked that the Town give consideration to the program. Mr. Haberek stated he also participates in the Recycle Bank program and will look into it.

Gail Shea, River Road - Expressed concern about the Town's budget and actions of the Board of Finance and asked for clarification that a decision will not be made until after the hearing.

Bill Sternberg, 153 Elm Street - With regard to the issue of the Board of Finance working down to the line item level of the budget, the Town charter defines the budget process, but when the Board of Finance is making decisions to change staffing, that act is clearly usurping its authority.

(4) Correspondence

Mr. Haberek read correspondence from Attorney Thomas J. Londregan regarding the budget process and procedure as set forth in Section 9.1 of the Charter and General Statutes Section 7-344. It clarifies some of the questions asked by residents and also provides clarification on petitions.

Mr. Haberek read a letter from Attorney Thomas F. Collier, representing Liberty Crossing, LLC requesting a postponement of the April 16, 2009, meeting regarding a tax abatement for the project.

(7) New Business

Mr. Haberek stated the sealed bids for the Spellman Park Restrooms were opened on March 19, 2009. A motion was made by Mr. Haberek, seconded by Mr. Balestracci, and it was voted unanimously to award the contract to United Concrete Products in the amount of \$61,766.00.

(8) Comments from the Public

Don Sadowski, Pawcatuck - Questioned the term of office for the Board of Finance members. Mr. Haberek responded under the Town charter there is no term limits. It is a six-member board. Two members will be up for reelection in 2009.

Gail Shea, River Road - Asked if Mr. Haberek would be willing to start a Charter Revision Commission. Mr. Haberek responded in view of the serious issues this year and the number of residents requesting a change, he will give it serious consideration.

Tracy Swain - Questioned replacing positions at the same starting salary of a person who left the position after 30 years. Mr. Haberek state there is a combination of ways to address filling positions, however, there is more flexibility with a non-union position. Mr. Balestracci also elaborated on the process for filling positions in the Highway Department. Mrs. Swain was referring to the Chief of Police to which Mr. Haberek commented that the decision is made by the Police Commissioner. Mr. Haberek sated incremental personnel improvements have been made. Mr. Brown stated that during his tenure as First Selectman, there was concern about salaries and retaining employees and George Sylvestre, Director of Administrative Services, completed a survey that was quite comprehensive and helpful with union negotiations.

(9) Other Business

Mr. Haberek introduced Kristine Bell who has accepted the administrative assistant's position in the First Selectman's office and will begin on March 30, 2009.

(10) Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Balestracci motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m., seconded by Mr. Haberek, and the motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by,

Maureen L. Carboni