

Minutes of the Stony Creek Association – Executive Board Meeting

March 4, 2025

Call to order: A meeting of the Stony Creek Association Executive Board was called to order at 7:03 p.m. on Tuesday March 4th, 2025, at the Willoughby Wallace Memorial Library by Mark Richter.

Present: Mark Richter-President, Harlan Fichtenholtz-Vice President, Brain Love-Treasurer, Kate Waldron, Mark Gaynor, Matt Milano, Stephen Palumbo Jr., Randi O'Brien, Amy Bloom, Sara Richter

Absent: Nick Fischer- Tax collector, Courtney Rosenberg, Clara Pagliaro, Dan Bullard

Public: 2

Minutes:

Randi O'Brien's attendance in the January minutes was incorrect. Attendance changed to show Randi O'Brien as present for January minutes.

Kate Waldron motions to accept the minutes as written for 2/4/25 and Matt Milano seconds. All were in favor.

Treasurer's Report

- Brain Love read the bills for the month totaling \$3,119.73 (see attached).
- Harlan Fichtenholtz motions to pay the bills, and Stephen Palumbo Jr. seconds. All were in favor.
- Brain Love read the treasurers report.
- We have a total of \$61,625.60 in the checking account, including \$10,675.92 in the CD (see attached).
- Stephen Palumbo Jr. makes a motion to send the report to the auditor and Mark Gaynor seconds. All were in favor.

Tax Collector's Report

- Matt Milano read the tax collectors report. We have collected \$37,013.16, approximately 99% of the total taxes due.

Legal & Zoning

- Kate Waldron reports there is new business for John and Randi O'Brien of 180 Thimble Island Road, to allow a rear setback of 19 feet where 20 is required for the construction of a second story bath and closet.
- Old Business: Cut In Two- John Petrofsky- Special Exception-accessory apartment

Police & Traffic

- Randi O'Brien reports that the police commission meeting was canceled without notice for the month of February.
 - Randi O'Brien will send an email requesting there be better communication going forward if meetings are cancelled.
 - Peter Henschel states the town posts the cancelation on the website 2 days prior to the meetings.
- There is a new meeting scheduled this month that Randi O'Brien will attend.
- Randi O'Brien states that the police commissioner previously commented that they are working on the budget to potentially get extra help in Stony Creek.

Maintenance

- Matt Milano reports he spoke with Courtney Rosenberg who reports:
- The handicap porta potty at Bayview is in the works
 - It will be placed on the ground, not on a slab as previously discussed, and will not require a ramp.
- Courtney Rosenberg talked with Jake Paulozzi about restarting maintenance for us. The Board previously approved for him to resume services.
- Courtney Rosenberg talked with Peter Henschel about the gazebo at the beach- what can we really do this year? (See Town Representative Report for Peter Henschel's comments on the gazebo.)
- Another thank you to everyone who helped with our "Dog Poop Clean Up Day".
- All the receptacles for the dog poop bags were empty, more have been ordered and delivered to Jake, who will help manage them
- Mark Richter removed all the garbage that was stuck in and under the trash can in front of the post office.
 - New liners have not been delivered yet.
- Stony Creek Spring Clean Up Day will be April 26th at 9am. We will meet at Bayview Park.

By-Laws Committee

No report.

Town Representative Report

- Peter Henschel, the town representative, provided an update on the ongoing budget season, highlighting the impact of the recent property reassessment.
- The reassessment led to a shift in the tax burden, with residential properties seeing a greater increase than commercial properties. This shift has resulted in a higher tax burden on residential property owners.
- The reassessment process is state-mandated and occurs every five years, conducted by an external company that evaluates property values based on a set formula.
- The current tax increase is a direct result of the changing property values.
- If all properties had increased by a uniform percentage (e.g., 30%), the impact would have been less pronounced. However, the reassessment revealed a broad range of valuation changes, leading to varied tax implications for property owners.
- Peter Henschel spoke with John Hoefflerle about a few potential projects related to the gazebo and pier.
 - **Gazebo**
 - The structure is in good condition overall, but certain elements, including benches, supports, braces, and railings, may need replacement.
 - The roof could be removed, re-sheathed, and re-shingled with cedar as a relatively economical option.
 - **Pier**
 - Capping the existing pier with a new concrete slab.
 - Removing and rebuilding the cap.
 - A full teardown and reconstruction, which would require approval from DEEP and be a time-consuming process.
 - It remains unclear whether adding an additional concrete cap would require DEEP review.
 - The pier is town property, meaning any town-funded work could face delays. If the goal is fast action, alternative funding sources may be preferable.
 - Mark Richter previously met with Nick Fischer who recommended using the same company that did the sidewalk.
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 - **Kayak Launch/Ramp**
 - A potential kayak launch to the right of the gazebo was proposed.
 - Randi O'Brien objected to adding a kayak launch in this area, raising concerns about its impact.
 - Another option would be to re-do the existing boat launch and repositioning it so backing down it would be more straight on. Adding a kayak ramp to the right, next to Maderia Park.

- There was talk of adding “Kayak Loading & Unloading” parking spots, but that takes away from our already limited parking.
- Kayak Launch at the Trolley Trail would be a much bigger project
 - Would need to meet with Jamie Cosgrove to inform where the launch would be placed.
- Mark Richter, Peter Henschel, and Matt Milano will meet at the pier Friday.
- Mark Richter suggested organizing volunteers to monitor the beach for kayaks and dogs during the summer.
 - Sara Richer spoke about the volunteer event her and Clara Pagliaro went to last month at the Branford High School.
 - www.branfordvolunteers.org Amy Bloom will investigate this.
- Dredging is supposed to happen in the fall, but a date has not been set yet.

Stony Creek Day Committee

- Matt Milano states the first meeting went well.
- Phil and Sue said they have 40 volunteers already!
- Changes they would like to see for this year: touch tank, lobster dinner option.
- Theme of beach and boats.
- Big tent in middle for games and tables.
- Talked to Rob from Market-he potentially would like to do ice cream, pizza, salad.
- Courtney Rosenberg wants to do tie-dye in the craft tent.
- Making the parade bigger, adding more cars, and parking the cars around the park

Special Events Committee

- The meet and mingle was a great success!
- Mark Richter would like to see this done a couple times a year. Winter, before Memorial Day, Stony Creek Day.
- Talks of using the Drum Corps for the next meet and mingle.
- Farmers Market:
 - Sara Richter reports she and Clara Pagliaro went to Branford High School Community Fair and over 20 students applied to volunteer for the 2025 Farmers Market.
 - We have had over 35 applications for this year, including 4 farms, 3 bread bakeries, and many different community offerings.
 - Sara Richter will be in charge of the finances for this year’s market.
 - Would like to have our own checking account, so all payments can be directly deposited.
 - Using Venmo or Square for payments.
 - Requiring payments 7 days before planned market

Old Business

- Mark Gaynor asked about the sign welcoming people to Stony Creek.
- Mark Richter will talk to Michelle at Taken for Granite about putting the sign in their driveway.
- Amy Bloom can bring a mockup of the sign to the next meeting, and we will vote on it then.
- Mark Gaynor states the no parking sign by the Milano's driveway has still not been moved.

New Business

None

Amy Bloom motions to adjourn and Stephen Palumbo Jr. seconds. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sara Richter
Secretary