



**Town of North Stonington Tri-Board Meeting: Board of Selectmen,
Board of Finance, and Board of Education
North Stonington Education Center June 26, 2023
6:30 PM**

Minutes

1. **Call to Order** - 6:32 pm (Meeting Chairman: Paul Simonds, Board of Finance)
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Roll Call/Self Introductions** - Board members present were: Bob Carlson (First Selectman), Brett Mastroianni (Selectman), Nicole Porter (Selectman), Paul Simonds (Chairman, Board of Finance), Christine Wagner (Chairman, Board of Education), Troy Hopkins (Superintendent of North Stonington Schools), Sarah Nelson, Carl Johnston, Amy Friend, Winona Berdine, Stephanie Mastroianni, Lisa Mazzella, Alex Karpinski, Jamie Towle-Weicksel, Chet Stefanowicz, and Administration & Finance Officer Christine Dias.
4. ***Board of Finance Comments** - Paul Simonds began the discussion framing conversation around the question of "What can we do better?"
 - a. Budget - Discussion framed around "what all boards can do better" to make the budget process smoother, more collaborative, and perpetuate increased clarity on budgets and expectations across the boards through liaisons, increased sharing of financial reports, the sharing of budget presentations prior to meetings, and continuation of Tri-Board meetings. The scope of department processes in relation to setting budgets and what is statutory must be of key consideration. Overall, all boards agreed on the mission to get ahead of the budget before actual commencement of budget season through capital planning and the like going forward.
 - b. Capital Plan/Path - The Board of Selectman and Christine Dias are in the process of creating the blueprint for a comprehensive capital plan beginning with the consistent definition of capital for use across boards that reflects the changing needs and unforeseen circumstances of different town departments. Discussion continued on the governance of repairs and maintenance of facilities, and expenditures as they relate to capital responsibilities across departments. A plan of action with uniformity across departments should be ready to be discussed at the September 11, 2023 Tri-Board meeting and will remain in discussion at BOS and BOF meetings.
5. ***Board of Selectmen Comments** - First Selectman Carlson thanked everyone for a great meeting and affirmed how conducive the Tri-Board meetings are to the successful operations of the town. Town updates provided by First Selectman Carlson were as follows: Town Planner leaving; Early Learning Center at the 298 building is open, thriving, and already looking to expand services to the town; Review of the transfer station sticker process; Demo of the 298 building is complete and remaining ground maintenance will be

completed in the fall when it makes the most sense to apply grass seed; BOE/BOS monthly reconciliation update; and to continue working as groups, not single departments for the better of the town.

6. ***Board of Education Comments** - Superintendent of Schools Troy Hopkins thanked everyone for a great meeting and the resulting overall support of the school budget. Hopkins affirmed his optimism for successful outcomes over adversity, the future of the schools, and getting ahead of the budget moving forward. Superintendent Hopkins closed with a reflection on his most current read *To Kill a Mockingbird* and referenced two quotes from the timeless novel: "*Most people are [nice], Scout, when you finally see them.*" "*You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.*"

7. **Public Comments** - Public comments were heard.

8. **Next Meeting** - September 11, 2023

9. **Adjournment** - Paul Simonds made the motion to adjourn with Sarah Nelson as the second for the motion. Meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:50pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Friend

North Stonington Board of FinanceT