

Town of
North Stonington
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
MINUTES
June 15, 2021

A Special Town Meeting of electors and citizens qualified to vote in Town Meetings of the Town of North Stonington, Connecticut was held at the North Stonington Education Center Media Center, 298 Norwich-Westerly Road, North Stonington, Connecticut on Tuesday, June 15, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. and online through Zoom.

Present: First Selectman Michael Urgo, Selectman Robert Carlson, and Selectwoman Nita Kincaid. Also present at the meeting were Board of Finance Chairman Dan Spring, Board of Education Vice-Chairman Alex Karpinski, Planning, Development & Zoning Official Juliet Hodge, Administration & Finance Officer Christine Dias, IT Manager Jim Russell, Democratic Registrar of Voters Constance Berardi, and Republican Registrar of Voters Amy French.

First Selectman Urgo called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and then asked for a **MOTION** from the floor to elect a Moderator. A **MOTION** made by Carolyn Howell, seconded by Sam Cherenzia to elect Lisa Mazzella as the Moderator. A **MOTION** made by Brian Rathbun, seconded by Anne Nalwalk to close all nominations. **MOTION TO CLOSE ALL NOMINATIONS CARRIED. MOTION TO ELECT LISA MAZZELLA AS THE MODERATOR CARRIED.**

Moderator Lisa Mazzella stated the rules of the meeting and voter eligibility requirements. Moderator Mazzella asked Town Clerk Antoinette Pancaro to read the call of the meeting.

Warning is hereby given to the electors and those entitled to vote at town meetings of the Town of North Stonington that a Special Town Meeting shall be held at the following location on the date and time indicated for the purposes of transacting the business set forth below:

Location: North Stonington Education Center Media Center, 298 Norwich Westerly Road &
via Zoom: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-cDjmVw8R7S6wgbb571QNg
Webinar ID: 852 2638 6647

Date: June 15, 2021

Time: 7 PM

For the purpose of verifying registered voters, those wishing to attend the meeting online and vote online will need to pre-register through the link provided by 12 pm on June 15. Those who have the capability for online access are encouraged to attend virtually. In person attendance will be available following COVID-19 guidelines.

1. Shall the Town of North Stonington approve the estimates and recommendations of the Board of Finance with respect to the Annual Budget including General Government Operating: \$5,177,407; Redemption of Debt: \$1,382,949; and Capital: \$242,753; for fiscal year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, in the total amount of \$6,803,109?
2. Shall the Town of North Stonington approve the estimates and recommendations of the Board of Finance with respect to the annual Board of Education budget for fiscal year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 in the amount of \$14,278,721?

Notice of Referendum

Resolved, the Board of Selectmen, pursuant to its authority under Connecticut General Statutes, Section 7-7, hereby removes the questions to be considered at the June 15, 2021 Special Town Meeting cited in the prior resolution, to a referendum to be held on June 28, 2021, the hours for voting at said referendum shall be established by vote at the June 15, 2021 Town Meeting, said hours are recommended by the Board of Selectmen to be 6:00 am-8:00 pm.

A **MOTION** made by Anne Nalwalk, seconded by Brian Rathbun to discuss the call. Board of Finance Chairman Dan Spring gave a PowerPoint presentation reviewing the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget and the proposed Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget. Chairman Spring indicated that this proposed budget is a 1.59% increase from the current fiscal year budget, with a proposed mill rate of 28.6 mills. Board of Education Vice-Chairman Alex Karpinski gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the 2020-2021 year in review and highlighting accomplishments. He detailed the 2021-2022 budget process. He indicated that the Board of Education proposed budget before the May budget referendum was a 1.78% increase from the current fiscal year budget, but the current proposed Board of Education budget is a 1.13% increase from the current fiscal year budget. First Selectman Michael Urgo gave a PowerPoint presentation about the General Government budget and reviewed many budget items in detail. He discussed many of the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 accomplishments, as well as new capital project funding, grants awarded to North Stonington, and support of land use boards and commissions and economic development. Discussion and questions followed regarding different parts of the Town budget.

Before moving on to discussing and voting on the hours of voting at the June 28 Referendum, Moderator Mazzella asked Town Clerk Antoinette Pancaro to again read the two questions to be voted on at the referendum:

1. Shall the Town of North Stonington approve the estimates and recommendations of the Board of Finance with respect to the Annual Budget including General Government Operating: \$5,177,407; Redemption of Debt: \$1,382,949; and Capital: \$242,753; for fiscal year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, in the total amount of \$6,803,109?
2. Shall the Town of North Stonington approve the estimates and recommendations of the Board of Finance with respect to the annual Board of Education budget for fiscal year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 in the amount of \$14,278,721?

A **MOTION** made by Sam Cherenzia, seconded by Anne Nalwalk to accept the call as presented and send the questions to referendum. **MOTION carried.**

A **MOTION** made by Sarah Nelson, seconded by Nicole Porter to accept the hours of voting at the June 28, 2021 Referendum as recommended by the Board of Selectmen to be 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Registrar of Voters Constance Berardi indicated that she would like the voting hours changed from 12:00 Noon to 8:00 p.m. because there is a very small number of voters that come to the polls between the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. She noted that the staff is not busy during those hours and that it is a waste of money. First Selectman Michael Urgo strongly disagreed. He stated that it is important to have all available hours for voting because some people may only be able to vote during the morning hours and cannot come back later in the day to vote. Discussion followed. A **MOTION** made by Shawn Murphy, seconded by Anne Nalwalk to move the question. **MOTION carried. MOTION ON THE HOURS OF VOTING CARRIED.**

Town Clerk Antoinette Pancaro stated that absentee ballots will be available for the June 28 Referendum for anyone needing an absentee ballot. For those people who feel uncomfortable going in person to the polls, she indicated that COVID-19 is still a valid reason to obtain an absentee ballot.

A **MOTION** made by Anne Nalwalk, seconded by Sam Cherenzia to adjourn the meeting. **MOTION carried.** Moderator Lisa Mazzella adjourned the Special Town Meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Antoinette Pancaro
Town Clerk
Town of North Stonington