

MINUTES OF BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE MEETING April 5, 2016

The regularly scheduled Beautification Committee meeting was conducted on Tuesday, April 5, 2016 in the Employee Lounge, of Stratford Town Hall, 2725 Main Street, Stratford, CT pursuant to notice duly posted.

1. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Co-Chair Christine Griffin.

Members in attendance –**Donna Caserta, Christine Griffin**, Florence Kokoruda, Patricia Ritchie, Jen Reiley-Young, Ann Fariss, Indiana Harden

Others in attendance: Guest: Bill O'Brien, Rich Fredette

2. Guest Speakers: Town blight officers; Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Fredette discussed the protocol and reporting process for blight property. Mr. O'Brien shared with the committee some photos of current properties. He mentioned in some cases there are owner/rental problems which can prolong the process, as well as limited work hours. The members had questions about the regulation guidelines. They inquired about several blight areas throughout the town and sign regulations. A suggestion was made for possibly pushing for stronger ordinances on blight property. Any questions or concerns the Committee can email the blight officers. Ms. Fariss shared data on the Amendment to Chapter 161/161-2. Copies will be available for the members at the next meeting. Discussion ensued.

3. Acceptance of minutes-Ms. Caserta made a motion to approve the minutes of March 1, 2016. The motion was seconded by Ms. Fariss. The motion carried unanimously.

4. New Business.

- Christine G. - welcomed the new members to the committee. The agenda is sent two weeks in advance, if there is a particular issue, contact her or Ms. Caserta, within a reasonable time frame. Also, it's important to let Carol know if a member can't make a meeting.
- Ann F. –approximately \$3,717.00 in the budget. Ms. Griffin questioned the amount; she stated Ms. Batoh mentioned there is only \$600.00 available in the account of which \$300.00 will be going toward the newspaper ad. The members discussed the financial account. Discussion continued. Ms. Griffin will email Ms. Batoh and try to rectify this discrepancy.
- Florence K. – lawn signs distribution for Greensweep. Each member will get 10 signs, and will distribute them in their district. Ms. Kokoruda will speak to Ms. Julian, so she can get permission from the Board of Education to let us place signs on school property. Let the Committee know when this is confirmed.
- Donna C. - Update on Kiosk; it will be finished by the end of May.
- Rita S. -resignation - Ms. Griffin expressed how she will be missed, discussed doing something for her to show our appreciation.

- Tina- Council report- Ms. Griffin mentioned she emailed Tina in reference to environmental issues that affect us. What regulations does the State have for disposing hazardous waste such as; paint cans, batteries and any other harmful waste materials that people have around their house. The town only does a waste disposal once a year and we need more than that to eliminate these materials safely. Ms. Caserta stated there is a place at the dump for this. Ms. Griffin announced we need to publicize this, to prevent the items from being tossed in the regular trash.
- Updates on communication - Mistake on the Patch, the date was correct, however the contact people were wrong. We need to find out who is in charge, no one seems to know/a little scary?
- Additions to Beautification Calendar- Ms. Griffin strongly recommended talking with the Housatonic boat Association before setting a Greensweep date. It cost the Commission a lot of money this year to put an ad in the newspaper with the correct date, in which most people didn't notice. Members noted Mother's Day wasn't a good date for most people. She also discussed the involvement of the Commission for next year, something to think about. There will be one last Greensweep meeting on May 3rd.
- June submissions of Ad for Community Calendar - Submit for fall. The information needs to be simple; curb appeal and holiday house contest, people had difficulties submitting online. Ms. Caserta thinks its been corrected, she will confirm this with Mr. Wright.

Ms. Caserta nominated Ms. Harden to give her the authority to set up a Beautification Facebook page. It was seconded by Ms. Kokuruda. It passed unanimously.

Ms. Caserta suggested on behalf of her hard working neighbor, the Committee, devise an Accommodation letter with the Mayor's signature, thanking residents who keep their property well maintained. Members liked the idea.
Discussion ensued.

5. Closing — upon a motion by Ms. Griffin, seconded by Ms. Caserta, it was passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurell Barr