

TOWN OF WISCASSET
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
April 17, 2008

The meeting began at 6:45 PM at the Wiscasset Municipal Building

Budget committee members in attendance: Chairman Steve Mehrl, Judith Colby, Sherri Dunbar, Pamela Dunning, Robert Fairfield Sr., Richard Hanson and Tony True. Members absent were George Greene and Karl Tarbox.

The committee began a discussion about the Emergency Medical Services budget. The discussion turned to why the director's position should or should not be made full-time. Tony left the meeting to see if the director was available. The director was out on a call so a discussion with him was not possible at the time. Tony moved to table the discussion until such time as the EMS director would attend. Motion was seconded by Judy. Motion carried 6-0.

There was a discussion about the Capital Improvements for the schools. Steve read an email from Arthur Faucher and another from Jay McIntire that explained that the articles do need to be on the Municipal ballot. The only items allowed on the school ballot are those that pertain to expenses that are partially funded through state funding. The committee agreed to visit the school Capital Improvement questions on/after Tuesday, April 22.

The committee members met to discuss the way the budget was presented at the April 15th Selectmen meeting. Some members were not satisfied that the amounts listed by Arthur Faucher and the Board of Selectmen on the draft of the warrant questions and voted by the budget committee were being represented as totally the work of the budget committee. The committee has decided to meet with the Selectmen and revisit several items on the warrant for the following reasons:

Question 14 Wiscasset Public Library, the budget committee count reads 7-0-1. Since Pamela Dunning did not abstain, but instead refrained from voting at all to avoid a conflict of interest, the count should read 7-0. A vote can not be counted when it did not occur and Pamela Dunning did not vote this item at all.

Question 22 Emergency Medical Services, The budget committee voted the amount \$240,990. It is currently listed on the new draft as \$240,974. The budget committee did not vote this amount and want an explanation as to why the number changed and the committees vote was still attached to an amount not visited.

Question 35 Approval for the town manager to proceed with grants without the need for a vote. The committee did not vote this item. Rather the committee agreed to entertain the article after it was put into writing so the language could be deciphered and considered. The 6-2 vote is not correct, it was the informal poll taken as to the number of members who would like to see this article on the ballot.

It was the feeling of several members present that the budget committee was put in a bad spot at the April 15 meeting. The amounts on the warrant were all directly attributed to the budget committee, when in fact, the numbers were presented to the committee as amounts the Selectmen would like to see on the ballot. Further several members were not happy that the numbers for the budget committee votes were on the warrant draft but the selectmen numbers were not. The budget committee were strongly encouraged to vote the warrant articles so their votes would be listed with the Selectmen votes.

There was a discussion about the April 12 presentation by Sean Rafter on behalf of LCTV. The town has flat funded LCTV at \$2,000 for the last few years. LCTV would like to expand to 3 channels and hire a person full-time. They asked for half of the franchise fees collected from Time Warner, about \$12,500. The committee will consider this request and vote on it at their next meeting.

It was reported to the committee that Lt. Allen attended the April 15 meeting of the Selectmen and asked about revenue from fees and fines being put aside in an account to fund the new police equipment, such as the new cruiser. The committee will consider this option and vote on it if it is presented as a warrant article.

EMS Director Roland Abbott entered the meeting and talked to committee members. When asked what other duties he would pick up if his position were made full-time, Roland said first he would take over the quality assurance work and save the \$1,500 that is spent by having another person do the work. The EMS report filing to the state is being changed to an electronic system. This will require more time in verifying each record and send it separately. Batch filing of reports will no longer be available. Roland stated that he puts in about 50 to 60 hours a week but is not compensated for them. Assistant Director is paid a stipend each year. It is not a hourly position. Roland thinks it is important to maintain this position as is so an authority is available when the director is not.

The budget committee determined to attend the Selectmen budget workshop on April 22. They also determined to set a time and place on April 23 or 24 to revisit whatever article needs attention and to finalize their votes.

Sherry moved to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Pam Motion passed 6-1.
Meeting closed at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Pamela Dunning