

WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN,  
BOARD OF ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR  
SEPTEMBER 4, 2012

Tape-recorded meeting

Present: Judy Colby, Bill Curtis, Chair Pam Dunning, Vice Chair Ed Polewarczyk, Jeff Slack and Town Manager Laurie Smith

1. Call to Order

Chair Pam Dunning called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

3. Approval of Treasurer's Warrant: August 28, 2012 and September 4, 2012

**Judy Colby moved to approve the Treasurer's Warrant of August 28, 2012. Vote 5-0-0.  
Judy Colby moved to approve the Treasurer's Warrant of September 4, 2012. Vote 5-0-0.**

4. Approval of Minutes: August 21, 2012 and August 28, 2012

**Ed Polewarczyk moved to approve the minutes of August 21, 2012 as amended. Vote 4-0-1.  
Ed Polewarczyk moved to approve the minutes of August 28, 2012. Vote 5-0-0.**

5. Special Presentations or Awards

Chair Pam Dunning presented Alex Diamond, an LCTV volunteer for the past two years, with the Volunteer Appreciation Award for outstanding commitment to the Town of Wiscasset, its residents and the surrounding community and his dedication in providing audio-visual services in cooperation with LCTV. Town Manager Laurie Smith presented Diamond with a gift certificate for Le Garage. Diamond thanked Dunning for the award and said LCTV's work is important and provides 1,000 hours of coverage of Wiscasset meetings and events.

6. Appointments - none

7. Public Comment

Dot Holbrook brought to the board's attention a newspaper article outlining a Maine law that addresses the problem of seniors losing their homes because of inability to pay property taxes. She said she could not afford her taxes and others were in the same situation. The new law does not mandate the program but allows towns to adopt a tax deferral program with certain conditions such as 10 years' residency, owner must be at least 70 years of age and income does not exceed 300% of federal poverty level. Smith said under the program the town would lien but not foreclose on the property until the senior no longer lives in the property and then would allow 45 days for payment of taxes. Sue Varney will be contacting other towns to see if they have adopted this program.

In discussion of the program, the following points were made: relatives or heirs to the property would have only 45 days to pay the taxes, which could be substantial, depending on how many years' taxes were due; deferred tax liability may exceed the value of the property; other programs such as reverse mortgages, circuit-breaker based programs or other means by which the elderly could remain in their homes should be investigated; and the Town would have to look at potential receivables issues. Smith recommended that not only this State program should be investigated, but also other programs available to seniors and suggested a fair might be held to advise the elderly of their options with legal and financial resources available. The board will review the State option and discuss it as well as other programs at a future meeting.

## 8. Department Head or Committee Chair Report

A. Selectman Slack regarding the RSU Withdrawal sub-committee request: In response to Slack's question about what information the board needed with regard to the request for a sub-committee, Pam Dunning said that while the town had spent considerable money on a study detailing what would have to be done to bring the schools up to code with various options, and the Withdrawal Committee would determine the cost of joining another RSU, an AOS or a stand-alone school system, the main question was what the townspeople wanted for a future school system (K-8, all three schools open, K-12 in two schools, or tuition students out) and the cost of each alternative. Dunning suggested a non-binding referendum to determine what the voters preferred. Ed Polewarczyk said determining which option the voters want would not be needed immediately, as the withdrawal agreement may not be voted on until November 2013.

Judy Colby suggested that a survey be conducted by mail to determine which option the voters preferred rather than a non-binding referendum. She said this would be the responsibility of the sub-committee. She added that the Withdrawal Committee should appoint the sub-committee and when the Withdrawal Committee had finished with the withdrawal agreement, the sub-committee would become a selectmen's committee and continue its work. Polewarczyk said there should be some criteria for the members of the committee and specifics as to the committee's outcome. Bill Curtis recommended that a member of the Budget Committee be on the sub-committee. Cliff Hendricks asked that the cost of each option be included in the survey.

Slack said a rough draft of the withdrawal agreement will be ready the end of September. The completed agreement, which will be voted on, will include the estimated expense for the first year and provision for a superintendent. The Withdrawal Committee will be meeting with the consultants on September 5, 2012.

## 9. Unfinished Business - none

## 10. New Business

A. Review draft Subdivision and Site Plan Ordinance: Town Planner Misty Gorski presented draft copies of the two ordinances that had been recommended by the Ordinance Review Committee and approved by the Planning Board. When approved by the Selectmen, public hearings will be held and the ordinances will be presented to the town for a vote.

Gorski summarized the uses that would be approved under the Subdivision Ordinance and said the changes to it included the new State Subdivision Standards, which she listed. Included in this ordinance is a provision for open space subdivisions in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan which requires these subdivisions in the yet-to-be-approved Rural 1 and Rural 2 Districts.

The Site Plan Review Ordinance covers commercial structures and uses, change of use and multi-family residential. Although not required by law, most towns adopt a site plan review ordinance to avoid negative impacts on the neighborhood or the town. The process for Planning Board approval has been changed to reduce the number of meetings required by an applicant and to allow some approvals to be handled by the Planning Office.

If the ordinances are to be scheduled for the November ballot, they will have to be approved at the next meeting in order to allow sufficient time for public hearings. If changes are required and voting is delayed, public hearings would be held in March or April for a June vote. Selectmen with questions will meet with Gorski before the next meeting, and any unresolved issues will be brought to the next meeting.

B. Discussion of Credit Card Payment option: In response to customer requests, Treasurer/Tax Collector Shari Fredette has investigated options for accepting credit card payments in the office.

The town's software company, Harris Computers, is offering a Cash Receipt/PayPort Credit Card Interface that will save the Town setup costs, reduce staff training time, meet industry regulations and State of Maine law. The complete system would cost \$1,205 including the annual maintenance fee of \$150. Customers will be charged a \$1 fee for transactions less than \$40 or 2.5% of transactions more than \$40. Smith said the costs for the system were not budgeted and would come from contingency funds. Ed Polewarczyk said he was concerned with the budget and recommended waiting until after the September 11 vote. **Jeff Slack moved that the town proceed with credit card payment options. Vote 4-1-0.**

C. Alna Transfer Station Contract: Smith reported that the Alna Selectmen had requested information before signing the Transfer Station contract. Specifically, their concern was that the fee schedule would remain constant until the following year's contract was signed. They also requested information on how mandatory recycling had affected the cost and/or savings to the Transfer Station. **Judy Colby moved that the Town will not make changes to the Transfer Station Contract during a contract year with other municipalities. Vote 5-0-0.** Smith will advise both Alna and Westport Island of the vote and provide them with additional information on the Transfer Station operations, which she summarized for the board.

#### 11. Town Manager's Report

Smith said the Lincoln County Commissioners' caucus for municipal officers regarding the Lincoln County Budget would be held on Thursday, September 13, 2012 at 7 p.m., which is the only opportunity to elect members to the budget committee for the County. She encouraged all selectmen to attend.

Smith reminded the board of the Museum in the Streets' invitation to an open house on Friday, September 7 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Maine Art Gallery. An open house for the public will be held on September 8.

MMA will be holding its annual convention business meeting on October 3 at 1:45 p.m. and has asked that a delegate be selected from the town to vote on behalf of the board. **Ed Polewarczyk moved that the Board authorize the Town Manager to vote on behalf of the Board. Vote 5-0-0.**

The Maine Yankee Community Advisory Panel has scheduled a meeting including public comment on spent nuclear fuel storage and removal on September 20 from 3:30 to 5:30 at the Davis Island Grill.

The meeting with Edgecomb and the DOT has been scheduled for Wednesday, September 26, at 6 p.m.

#### 12. Other Business

The Bath Road Master Plan meeting will be held on October 4 from 6 to 8 p.m.

#### 13. Adjournment

At 8:50 p.m., **Judy Colby moved to adjourn the meeting. Vote 5-0-0.**