

WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN,
BOARD OF ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
FEBRUARY 5, 2013

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 State of America

3. Approval of Treasurer's Warrant: January 29, 2013 and February 5, 2013

Judy Colby moved to approve the Treasurer's Warrant of January 29, 2013. Vote 5-0-0. Judy Colby moved to approve the Treasurer's Warrant of February 5, 2013. Vote 5-0-0.

4. Approval of Minutes: January 15, 2013 and January 22, 2013

Ed Polewarczyk moved to approve the minutes of January 15, 2013 as amended. Vote 5-0-0. Ed Polewarczyk moved to approve the minutes of January 22, 2013 as amended. Vote 5-0-0.

5. Special Presentations or Awards – None

6. Appointments

A. Appointment of Joan Barnes: **Judy Colby moved to appoint Joan Barnes as an Appeals Board member with a term to expire on December 31, 2015. Vote 5-0-0.**

B. Appointment of Rick Scanlan: **Judy Colby moved to appoint Rick Scanlan as a Waterfront Committee member with a term to expire on December 31, 2014. Vote 5-0-0.**

C. Appointment of Kent Reed: **Judy Colby moved to appoint Kent Reed as a Budget Committee member, with a term to expire on June 11, 2013. Vote 5-0-0.**

7. Public Comment

In response to George Green's question on the list of selectmen's goals, Pam Dunning explained the check marks indicated the number of selectmen's votes for each item.

In response to Bob Blagden's questions on the Audit Report, Laurie Smith explained that

some funds that were held over were for bills that should have been paid during the last fiscal year or were for expenses had been contracted for or committed to during the last fiscal year. She also explained that rather than going to the fund balance at the end of June, 2012, the town had voted to bring forward \$40,000 to FY 2013 because of capital items that came in under budget. The low fund balance was due to receivables.

With respect to the discussion in the past about forming a Committee for Nuclear Resources, Steve Mehrl asked whether the town was aware that the State may be looking at possible sites to acquire and remove from the tax rolls. He suggested that the town contact the governor's office about the matter. He addressed the seriousness of the fiscal problem and said it would take several big box stores like Walmart, Cosco, Lowes, etc. to make up the deficit.

Bill Barnes recommended outsourcing services such as some of the highway work and the police department to minimize the impact on the taxpayers.

8. Department Head or Committee Chair Report – none

9. Unfinished Business

A. Review of Cemetery Ad Hoc Committee Tasks: Laurie Smith had reviewed past minutes of the cemetery committee which were brief and did not comment on the original intent or refer to rules. Ed Polewarczyk agreed with the revised list of tasks. He saw no need for a standing committee and suggested that rather than rules and regulations, an ordinance be written. Other suggestions were that a selectman be part of the committee or regular reporting to the selectmen be required; that the committee develop a plan and timeline for the selectmen's approval; and that the town advertise for five members. **Judy Colby moved to adopt the tasks for the Cemetery ad hoc committee. Vote 5-0-0.**

B. Adoption of Selectmen's 2013 Goals: *1. Reduce the Town's outstanding accounts receivable.* Smith said the \$750,000 Mason Station lien should be written off, there are EMS receivables that are uncollectible and should be written off and Wastewater receivables which recently were reduced by two payments should also be written off. If these amounts are written off, their balance will be subtracted from the current unassigned fund balance.

2. Adopt a fund balance policy: Smith said the auditor recommended that Wiscasset have a minimum of two months of revenue as unassigned fund balance. In order to do this the town will have to increase the fund balance by approximately \$2,000,000 and reduce the commitment of the fund balance to offset the tax rate, adding another \$500,000 to the required fund balance.

Ed Polewarczyk suggested that the town work off this amount over five years, \$500,000 per year which the selectmen will have to find somewhere. He said 73% of the tax rate is established by the schools and 7 % by the county, both of which are out of the town's control. Even though the town has influence on only 20% of the tax rate, the State will be reducing its

contribution by proposed cuts. He recommended that the town's goal should be to significantly reduce the use of the fund balance in the coming budget by either raising taxes or cutting spending by layoffs or reducing services. Outsourcing was mentioned as a possible alternative but union contracts would have to be considered.

3. Create public emails for the selectmen: Of the top eight goals, Judy Colby said creating emails for the selectmen had been done.

4. and 5. Create an annual Town Event and Develop the Montsweag Brook Parcel into a recreation area: Judy Colby said these two goals could be postponed. She said with the governor's proposed cuts, it is likely a tax increase would be necessary and the Budget committee and selectmen must be on the same page.

Bill Phinney said economic development was not on the list of goals and he recommended an economic development workshop such as Don Gerrish presents be held with public participation.

Laurie Smith noted the seriousness of the issue and said attacking the problem would be necessary in order to keep tax increases to a minimum. She said that cuts could be made in services and staff such as reduced hours or attrition, but she needed direction from the board in reaching its goal

Pam Dunning said that the governor has proposed cuts which would result in a \$419,000 loss to the town and suggested investigating the possibility of working with other communities by sharing services and in purchasing.

Bob Blagden said the town manager had done a good job and encouraged support of any proposed budget cuts.

Ed Polewarczyk moved that the selectmen direct the Town Manager to provide a budget to significantly reduce the use of the fund balance for FY2013 by a target of \$300,000 and adopt a fund balance policy, reduce the town's outstanding receivables, and liquidate unneeded town-owned properties. Vote 5-0-0.

10. New Business

A. Quit Claim Deeds for the following properties:

Karl J. Marean, 6 Hooper Street, Map/Lot U02-084

David Chubbuck, 188 Old Bath Road, Map/Lot R07-063

Glade O. Bloom, Jr., 241 West Alna Road, Map/Lot R05-060

Peter G. and Michaela H. West, 42 Federal Street, Map/Lot U02-063

Christopher G. Chapman, 242 Gibbs Road, Map/Lot R03-014-B

David R. and June L. Murray, 175 West Alna Road, Map/Lot R05-066-A

Jean E. Beattie, 342 Old Bath Road, Map/Lot R07-070
Kimberly M. Fairfield and Mark A. Lincoln, 236 Foye Road, Map/Lot R02-038-K
Shaun Fairfield, Foye Road, Map/Lot R02-038-L
Murray Hill Properties, Inc., 3 Heritage Lane, Map/Lot U11-007-A

Jeff Slack moved to authorize Quit Claim Deeds for the above properties. Vote 5-0-0.

Pam Dunning announced that Chris Johnson will be holding meetings to hear citizens' concerns, particularly about municipal budgets, at Skidompha Library on February 15 from 6 to 8 p.m. and at the Lincoln County Call Center on February 27 from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

11. Town Manager's Report

Smith announced that the town will now accept credit and debit cards; a 2-1/2% fee will be charged.

Pam Dunning reported on an MMA meeting where several municipalities were taking a strong stand against the proposed governor's cuts in funding and asked whether the selectmen wanted a letter sent regarding the impact to the town of Wiscasset in view of the proposed \$419,000 cut in state funding. There was a no consensus that this be done.

12. Other Business

A. Executive Session to Discuss the Sale of the Superintendent Property

Judy Colby moved that the Board of Selectmen go into executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(C) to discuss real estate negotiations. Vote 5-0-0. The board entered executive session at 8:45 p.m. **Ed Polewarczyk moved to exit executive session at 8:55. Vote 5-0-0.**

B. Executive Session to discuss labor negotiations

Ed Polewarczyk moved to go into executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(D) to discuss labor contracts at 8:56. Vote 5-0-0. Judy Colby moved to exit executive session at 9:14. Vote 5-0-0.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.