

WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN,
BOARD OF ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
MINUTES, SEPTEMBER 24, 2013

Tape recorded meeting

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

1. Call to Order

The chairman called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

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

Pam Dunning moved to amend the agenda to go into executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A §405(6)(A) to discuss personnel. Vote 5-0-0. Pam Dunning moved to exit executive session. Vote 5-0-0.

3. Open Recreational Pier Bids

The following bids were received:

	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Less credit for offsite disposal</u>	<u>Vertical Pier Pile Alternative</u>
Wyman & Simpson	\$220,800.00	\$5,000	\$3,840.00
Chesterfield Associates	171,489.64	3,000	6,874.24
Atlantic Mechanical, Inc.	172,236.00	3,330	3,072.00
Scott Construction Corp.	198,550.00	5,000	3,968.00
Prock Marine Co.	168,995.00	13,000	5,760.00

Pam Dunning moved to authorize the Town Manager to award the bid to the lowest qualified bidder. Vote 5-0-0. The bids were given to Travis Prior of Wright Pierce Engineering who will review the bids and send a letter of award recommendation to the board.

4. Discussion of Warrant Articles for the October 8, 2013 Open Town Meeting

Judy Colby moved to go into executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(A) to discuss personnel. Vote 5-0-0. The board entered executive session at 5:10 p.m. and exited at 5:50 p.m. **Judy Colby moved to exit executive session. Vote 5-0-0.**

Ed Polewarczyk reported that he and Judy Colby had met with Sue Varney to review the duties of the Assessor's Agent. A notice has been put on the Assessor's door advising that the selectmen will be handling the duties of the office. Ed Polewarczyk said requests for information had already been made and the selectmen will have to decide how to handle them in addition to figuring out how the tax commitment is calculated and completing that form, getting up to speed on the TIF and how it is calculated, and becoming reasonably skilled on the TRIO software. Also relatively urgent is entering sales into the data base to comply with State requirements, completing a municipal evaluation report due in November, which is the basis for State reimbursement, completing the LD1 spreadsheet, as well

as updating personal property and deed information. He said if the selectmen took on the job, it would probably take 60 hours a week to do the work, and they could possibly face grievances with the union. Ed Polewarczyk asked if each selectman would be willing to put in 12 hours per week on the position.

Article 3:

Jeff Slack said he would favor the minimal budget of \$8,953 for supplies with the selectmen doing the work of the assessor's agent.

Tim Merry said that it was impossible to figure out why the budget was voted down; it may have been because of the salary increase and was not necessarily meant to eliminate the position. He said with the severance number on the ballot, it would be difficult to bring back a number covering an assessor salary. He agreed that \$8,953 was not enough to include training and probably \$15,000 or \$16,000 would be needed; he would favor a smaller salary number.

Judy Colby said maybe the base budget should be \$10,000. She agreed that the Town needed an assessor, but there was a problem with the union. She opposed putting the severance package on the ballot and then adding a salary number and legal fees. She recommended putting a number on the ballot for the bare department necessities and in the next couple of weeks negotiating with the union to change the contract, possibly reducing the hours.

Pam Dunning said \$9,000 was not enough for training on TRIO and assessing, and would recommend \$15,000 or \$16,000. She would also add money for at least partial salary while the Town worked out details with the union.

Ed Polewarczyk said the job was more difficult than he thought and having the selectmen do the job was the wrong approach. The people had said the salary was too high but he questioned whether they meant to terminate Sue Varney. He said the Town needed an assessor and the people would have to approve a number before negotiating with the union. He said he was mistaken in going for two grade changes, and he suggested going into the town meeting with a one pay grade change, which would be comparable to what other employees were getting.

A motion to amend the department budget to \$70,648 failed. Laurie Smith said 3/12 of the budget had already been spent, so that would have to be either included in a budget for department expenses or a new number could be voted on as an additional amount. A motion to set the department budget at \$10,000 also failed. Pam Dunning moved to recommend \$16,000. Judy Colby moved to go into executive session pursuant to Title 1, §405(6)(A) to discuss personnel. Vote 5-0-0. Judy Colby moved to exit executive session. Vote 5-0-0. The vote on the motion for \$16,000 carried 3-2-0. Distribution among the line items will be left to the town manager's discretion.

Article 4:

This amount will supplement the \$34,000 already approved and the need for it will be dependent upon the result of the vote on Article 2, the severance package. If Article 2 does not pass, legal costs are likely to be incurred for grievances and mediation. **Pam Dunning moved that the Board of Selectmen recommend \$20,000 for legal expenses. Vote 5-0-0.**

Article 5:

This article will move the tax due dates to December 6, 2013 and April 25, 2014, leaving four months between due dates. The December 6 date will give the selectmen 2-1/2 weeks after the vote for the commitment and taxpayers a month's notice before taxes are due. The board voted 5-0-0 to approve the article as written.

Laurie Smith said a second poverty abatement request had been received; both will be addressed in executive session on October 1 at 6 p.m.; the selectmen's meeting will begin at 7 p.m.

Dealing with assessing matters was discussed and Jeff Slack volunteered to check email and voice mail messages and make notes for the board's consideration. Tim Merry recommended that a notice be put in the newspapers advising that the selectmen would be dealing with voice mail and email messages. The board will review the workload on October 1 and make decisions at that point on handling the requests.

5. Other Business

Judy Colby moved to approve the Treasurer's Warrant for September 24. Vote 5-0-0.

6. Adjournment

Judy Colby moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.