WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN

BOARD OF ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR

JANUARY 5, 2016

Preliminary Minutes Tape recorded meeting

Present: David Cherry, Judy Colby, Vice Chair Judy Flanagan, Chair Ben Rines, Jr., Jeff Slack and Town Manager Marian Anderson

1. Call to Order

Chairman Ben Rines, Jr. called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Hearings – none

4. Approval of Minutes

**Judy Flanagan moved to accept the minutes of December 15, 2015 as corrected. Vote 5-0-0.** The minutes of December 10, 2015 will be on the next agenda.

5. Approval of Treasurer’s Warrants

**David Cherry moved to accept the payroll warrants of December 18, 24, and 31, 2015. Vote 5-0-0. Judy Colby moved to accept the accounts payable warrants of December 22 and 29, 2015 and January 5, 2016. Vote 5-0-0.**

6. Assessors’ Business – None

7. Special Presentation or Awards

The chairman presented a certificate to Mark Jones on his retirement to express the Town’s thanks and sincere gratitude for 27 years of service.

8. Appointments

**Jeff Slack moved to appoint H. Karl Olson to the Planning Board, Peter McRae to the Planning Board, H. Karl Olson to the Ordinance Review Committee and Sue Robson to the Waterfront Committee. Vote 5-0-0.** Judy Flanagan noted that there are vacancies on the Budget Committee and asked that those interested obtain information on the committees from the town office.

9. Resignations

**Ben Rines moved to accept the resignation of Mark Jones with deep regret and wish him the best in his future endeavors. Vote 5-0-0.**

10. Public Comment

Deb Pooler introduced Daren Wood, Wiscasset High School senior class president, who reminded the board that the school had participated in and won the WGME School Spirit challenge two years ago collecting 58,000 pounds of food. Wiscasset high school has again been chosen to participate and Wood asked for the support of the town. WGME Channel 13 will broadcast live a pep rally on January 22 from 6 to 8 a.m., and he invited the community to show its support by attending. The School Spirit Challenge is an effort by WGME and the Good Shepherd Food Bank to raise awareness of hunger in Maine. The food bank supplies food to the food pantries in the schools and the help yourself shelf at the churches. Contributions of canned food or cash are welcome. One dollar will provide five pounds of food. Food may be brought to the high school or checks may be made out to the Good Shepherd Food Bank with a notation that it is for the Wiscasset School Spirit Challenge.

Ben Rines noted that the Town had made a contribution to the Good Shepherd Food Bank and the two churches that have food pantries.

11. Unfinished Business

A. Hesper and Luther Little remains: Ben Rines reported that E. Davies Allen had offered to donate funds for refurbishing the bow of the Hesper whether it is done by the school or by others. A letter accepting his offer and expressing gratitude will be sent to him.

B. Review status of delinquent taxes on land lots only: Ben Rines. Jr., reported that the delinquent taxes on one of the tax-acquired properties had been paid in full. The remaining lot, Map RO3, Lot 43-D, 1.10 acres, with taxes outstanding of $4,678.93, will be turned over to the town realtor with the understanding that it be sold for more than the taxes due. Judy Colby said a board policy requires that abutters be notified and given first option and that the property, if turned over to the realtor, be sold at no less than 35% of fair market value. There was a consensus that the property be offered to the abutters before being turned over to the realtor.

12. New Business

A. Bond Anticipation Note bid opening for refinancing the $2 million bond used to finance the town’s cost of withdrawal from RSU#12: The following bids were received:

Institution 10-years 15-years 20-years

The First 2.56% 2.89% 3.07%

Bath Savings Institution 5.87% 6.35% 6.62%

Androscoggin Bank 4.05% 4.55% 4.95%

**Ben Rines, Jr., moved to turn the matter over to the manager and treasurer to complete the paperwork for Option 1 (10 year note) and award the bid to The First. Vote 5-0-0.**

B. Special Town Meeting discussion: The method of payment was discussed. There was a consensus that payments be made quarterly. A special town meeting will be held to appropriate money for the first payment. **Ben Rines, Jr., moved that discussion of an article will be on the next agenda. Vote 5-0-0.** Meetings with the budget committee and date of special town meeting will be discussed at that time.

C. Tentative School Committee Budget Workshop dates: Wiscasset School Superintendent Heather Wilmot discussed the tentative schedule for budget workshop dates some of which will take place an hour before regular school committee meetings. Ben Rines, Jr., asked about the school committee chairman’s anticipated 5% increase in the budget and Wilmot said she would be better able to address that further on in the budget process. Rines added that with the loan just approved, the Town’s budget may increase 3% before any increases in the school budget. Wilmot said that in designing the school budget the committee must take into consideration the long-term goals, vision for school department, and fiscal responsibility. Judy Flanagan recommended that the school board and select board meet during the budget process. She added that the school committee’s challenge to present a budget that can be passed while keeping the school attractive academically and socially will be difficult.

13. Department Head or Committee Chair Reports

A. Wiscasset Ambulance Update: Retired Interim Director Joseph McCole reported on the state of the ambulance service. He said the work force had been stabilized by paying on a per diem basis, the billing system had been streamlined resulting in improved earnings, and improved scheduling had reduced gaps in service. In response to Judy Flanagan’s question, McCole said that communication with Alna, Westport Island and Edgecomb was necessary to inform those towns that Wiscasset could not cover their debts for service. He regretted that the information was not as clear as it could have been. Ben Rines, Jr., said the cost of supplying ambulance service to the three towns would be discussed in the budget process. McCole said the service’s first responsibility was to Wiscasset and the contribution of those towns and the service delivered would have to be addressed.

Town Manager Marian Anderson said the letters had started a conversation with the neighboring towns and they will be invited to interviews for the director’s position which has been advertised. She said Wiscasset made in 2015 118 calls to Edgecomb, 28 to Alna and 33 to Westport. She said she appreciated the staff taking the initiative to inform the towns that Wiscasset cannot pay the bad debts for their services any more. She recommended that the contracts for service with the neighboring towns require that the towns be responsible for unpaid debts for service. She commended deputy director Wendy Williams for the work she puts in and will put in until the new director is hired. Although McCole’s contract has expired, he will be available on an as needed basis.

Judy Flanagan asked for a progress report on the issues raised by the Tidewater Group’s report. McCole said that many had been addressed. Anderson said that with the help of other departments, much had been accomplished. Saturday scheduling remains an issue, as does the decision whether to remain a membership organization or become a paid service. She said some of the young firefighters had taken the EMT class and she thanked the chief for making it available.

B. Fire Department- Chief T. J. Merry discussion on brush truck: Merry said the department’s brush truck was totaled two years ago and he had located a 2002 Ford F350 with 137,000 miles for $7,500 to replace the previous truck which could be put in surplus. The brush truck would eliminate using other equipment for brush fires and other calls where the larger equipment is not needed. There are insufficient funds in the Fire Department budget for the purchase. **Jeff Slack moved to use $7,500 in contingency for the truck.**  Marian Anderson said the furnace at the airport had failed and will need replacing so the cost of that replacement should be taken into consideration while making a decision on the truck. Judy Colby recommended waiting until the open town meeting for approval of the purchase of both the furnace and the truck or until the next meeting when the cost of the furnace is determined. Merry will contact the Alna Fire Department about the delay. **Vote: 2-3-0** (Colby, Flanagan and Rines opposed).

14. Town Manager’s Report

Marian Anderson said the failure of the furnace at the airport was unexpected and it will have to be replaced. The airport does not have funds in its operating budget for the furnace and the airport manager is investigating a replacement which will be put to bid. She said beacon and approach lights at the airport will be replaced.

All vacancies in town departments have been advertised; the sergeant’s position application time has closed and an interview team is being assembled. Judy Colby and Jeff Slack have asked to be included in the interview process. Interviews with three applicants for the harbormaster will be scheduled the week of January 11. Applications are being accepted for the Town Planner, EMS Director and Town Mechanic.

Anderson had heard from Patricia Aho, office representative for Senator Collins, and had been assured that the senator is committed to assisting Wiscasset with Maine Yankee, perhaps with grant funds, and assistance with redevelopment of the Mason Station. Aho had been provided with the airport master plan and Maine Yankee agreements.

In response to Judy Flanagan’s question Anderson said no date had been scheduled to meet with the State about Route 1. Flanagan also asked whether the items addressed in the Seimens report would be addressed in the budget process. Anderson said they will be discussed with individual the department heads during the budget scheduling process. Anderson will meet with Darryl Joudrey to determine priorities. Flanagan noted that the sidewalks on Federal Street had not been plowed and commented on the heartwarming success of the gift program. She thanked Kathy Onorato for her efforts.

15. Adjournment

**Jeff Slack moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.**