

WISCASSET SELECTBOARD,  
TAX ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR  
JANUARY 17, 2017

Tape recorded meeting

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

Chair Judy Colby called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Approval of Treasurer's Warrants

a. **David Cherry moved to approve the payroll warrants of January 6 and January 13, 2017. Vote 4-0-0.**

b. **David Cherry moved to approve the accounts payable warrants of January 10 and January 17, 2017. Vote 4-0-0.**

3. Approval of Minutes

a. **Judy Colby moved to approve the minutes of January 3, 2017. Vote 4-0-0.**

4. Special Presentations or Awards – none

5. Committee Appointments

a. Marty Fox – Conservation Committee

b. Cynthia Spurgin – Cemetery Committee

Jeff Slack reported that he had met with both applicants and recommended their appointment. **Slack moved to approve the appointments of Marty Fox to the Conservation Committee and Cynthia Spurgin to the Cemetery Committee. Vote 4-0-0.**

6. Public Hearings – none

7. Public Comment - none

8. Department Head or Committee Chair

a. Public Works Department - Enforcement of public sand limits: Doug Fowler reported that sand is available for residents at the town garage but it is limited to two five-gallon buckets. Some residents have been abusing the policy and he asked the board's opinion on enforcing the limitation. Police Chief Jeff Lange offered to help enforce the policy.

b. EMS 2017/2018 Town assessments for ambulance service. Toby Martin said Edgcomb and Westport are beginning their budget process and have contacted his office for next year's rates. Wiscasset currently has a fixed rate system and both towns are charged \$3000 per year. Martin asked the board's opinion on raising the rate and requiring a contract with both towns. The cost of providing service to the two towns is not available. After discussion, **Jeff Slack moved to leave the cost to the communities the same as what it was last year.** In response to Ben Rines' question Martin said Alna and other nearby communities are currently under contract with other ambulance services. The Town will continue with the assessment letters rather than a contract. **Vote 4-0-0.**

c. Monthly Reports. The Town Manager recommended that the board take time to read the reports.

## 9. Unfinished Business

a. Signing of warrant for proposed special town meeting for the following articles:

- Ordinance Establishing a Moratorium on Retail Marijuana Establishments and Retail Marijuana Social Clubs
- Authorize the School Department to undertake an energy conservation and related air quality improvements project at existing Wiscasset school facilities, including Wiscasset Elementary School, Wiscasset Middle High School, the central office and the transportation facilities building (the "project") at a cost of up to \$1,750,000.

**Jeff Slack moved to approve both articles.** Judy Colby said she opposed open town meetings because they disenfranchise some voters. She would prefer a referendum, which would allow time for open meetings with Siemens to discuss the project with the public. David Cherry said although he liked open town meetings, he would not be able to vote for the motion, as he had found the turnout for referenda is treble that for open town meetings. He added that a school may close before the 16-year loan is paid off. He said he hoped the school department could hold off on a vote until the June warrant. In response to Ben Rines' question regarding a petition being circulated to look into the future of the schools, Colby said the petition calls for a committee to be formed by the school board or the board of selectmen for the education of the children in grades 9 through 12.

Wiscasset schools Director of Transportation and Maintenance John Merry, encouraged the select board to support the school board in this endeavor. He said whether by lease purchase or a loan, it was necessary to take care of the school facilities. He added that time was not on their side as the Efficiency Maine rebate could dry up if the school board doesn't act quickly.

Shana Mueller, Bernstein Shur, said a referendum vote could take place 45 days from the date the warrant is filed with the clerk.

Michael Dunn said Siemens has put on demonstrations several times which were open to the public and he could not see the value of putting on more of them. In order to keep the rebates, which he said were a significant amount of money, an open town meeting was necessary and the project needs to be done for the betterment of the community and the education of the children. In response to Cherry's question, Superintendent of Schools Heather Wilmot said the rebates were time sensitive and work on the lighting, which the largest portion of the project, would have to begin in March in order to be completed by the end of April and eligible for the rebate.

Financing the project by a bond vs. a loan purchase arrangement was discussed in light of the possibility of a school closing before the end of the financing, as well as the repossession of the lighting or other aspects of the improvements should the loan not be paid. Estimated costs: Principal \$1,750,000; Interest \$521,611; and Total Debt Service \$2,271,611. Savings of \$1.1 million over the next 16 years as well as the energy rebate will reduce the annual contribution. **Vote on the Open Town Meeting 1-3-0** (Cherry, Colby and Rines opposed). **Ben Rines, Jr. moved to meet at 5 p.m. on January 18 to sign a special town meeting warrant for the proposed school referendum vote at the Community Center. Vote 3-1-0 (Slack opposed). Ben Rines, Jr. amended his motion to include the marijuana moratorium referendum vote. Vote 3-1-0 (Slack opposed).**

b. Department of Environmental Protection Consent Agreement Wastewater Treatment Plant:

Anderson said the Town has been in negotiations with the DEP since last August on the consent agreement. The Town may or may not have to pay a fine of \$2500 and will have to acknowledge that the Town is required to do an operational audit. **Ben Rines, Jr. moved to authorize the Town Manager to sign the agreement. Vote 4-0-0.**

c. Tax Collection:

- Review of update foreclosure report
- 2016 Tax Collection update: \$8,598,811.03 Committed for collection; \$4,295,521.37 Collected as of 1/9/2017 (49.9% collection rate). Anderson noted that there are outstanding taxes in the amount of \$309,181.66 and the board may at a future date want to consider what action should be taken on these foreclosed properties. **Jeff Slack moved to liquidate the foreclosed Mason Station properties. Vote 4-0-0.**

10. New Business

a. CMP Pole Permit Application, 83 Lowelltown Road: **Jeff Slack moved to approve the pole permit. Vote 4-0-0.**

b. Monthly Financials:

- Year to Date Department: will be available as soon as they can be reconciled (computer problem).
- H.M.Payson payment statement will be on the next agenda.

11. Town Manager's Report

a. Update Budget Calendar: A draft updated calendar was distributed which includes a Saturday budget meeting with the Budget Committee and department heads on February 25 at 8 a.m. Notices will be mailed to participants.

b. Boston Post Cane Update: Anderson said a facsimile of the cane, made by a company in Peterborough New Hampshire, had been obtained. A nomination form for recipients is available. **Ben Rines, Jr. moved to award the Boston Post Cane to Ruth Kierstead, as being the oldest citizen in town at 101. Vote 4-0-0.**

c. Communications

- Charter Communications has acquired Time Warner and has advised that fees will be increased.
- Taking care of the downtown sidewalks was discussed with the merchants as part of the downtown traffic improvements and recently Brad Sevaldson thanked the Public Works department for sanding the sidewalks before the stores opened on a holiday.
- Tours of the Wiscasset schools will take place on January 18 and January 21.

12. Other Board Business

Jeff Slack thanked T. J. Merry for his report.

13. Adjourn

**David Cherry moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Vote 4-0-0.**