

WISCASSET ORDINANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE
MINUTES, MARCH 9, 2020

Present: Al Cohen, Chris Juntura, Jackie Lowell, Chairman Karl Olson, Deb Pooler, and Jason Putnam

1. Call to Order

Karl Olson called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of February 10, 2020

The minutes were tabled.

3. Final approval of Changes to Building Laws, Subdivision Article and Glossary

Jason Putnam moved to accept the changes in the Building Laws, Subdivision Article and Glossary and forward the articles to the select board. Vote 6-0-0.

4. Selectmen's requests for future ordinance work

a. Wastewater Treatment Plant regulations for coffee roasters and beer breweries

Robert Lalli, Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor, said that Wiscasset does not have a sewer ordinance to protect the wastewater treatment plant from strong effluents. He suggested that the town immediately adopt a Sewer System Conditional Discharge Agreement between the town and the breweries in lieu of an ordinance because several breweries and a coffee roaster are planned for Wiscasset. The agreement would require the business to run laboratory tests on its discharges, install pre-treatment processes if necessary, allow on-site property access to town officials, to cap the proposed production levels at those stated on the agreement, to add additional of increased sewer bill charges if necessary, to determine when the business may discharge high strength sewage into the collection system and to evaluate any related odor control issues and have them corrected at the business's expense. The committee was in favor of the agreement. Al Cohen moved that the board approved the agreement subject to legal approval. Vote 6-0-0.

b. Regulations regarding flags with lettering

Don Davis, 21 Middle Street, asked the board whether he could fly a flag on his property with lettering. He had approached the Historic Preservation Commission regarding an exemption for the flag and was told it was not subject to historic preservation ordinance restrictions. The 3 x 5 flag would be on a pole with the American flag and the Maine flag. The sign ordinance does not address this type of flag; it addresses only "Open" signs. He confirmed that it was a political flag. Deb Pooler moved to ask the selectmen to give the ORC permission to review and advise. Vote 6-0-0.

c. Residential Building Code

CEO Bruce Mullins said that Wiscasset is not required to have the Maine Uniform Building Code because its population is less than 4,000. However, because Wiscasset does not have a building code for

residential structures, Mullins cannot issue certificates of occupancy for residential buildings. He was advised that if the town voted to have a building code, the ORC would then recommend changes to the ordinances.

d. Solar Farm Ordinance

Mullins asked that the ORC recommend changes to the ordinance to regulate solar farms, as there are two planned for the airport and the possibility of others at the jail and another on Bradford Road. He asked what permits would be needed, what would the permit cost and where solar farms would be allowed in town. He was advised solar farms would require site plan review by the planning board.

e. Abandoned Mobile Homes

Abandoned mobile homes and abandoned houses were discussed. The major complaint is that they are an eyesore and affect the property values of neighbors. Mullins asked for guidelines on how to handle these abandoned properties.

f. Home Occupations

The current definition was discussed in light of current apparent violations and the prospect of a new antique store in a private home being planned as a home occupation. The number of antique stores in private homes was noted. Deb Pooler will research other definitions of a home occupation than that in the town ordinance, as the current definition is vague.

4. Other Business

5. Adjournment

Al Cohen moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m. Vote 9-0-0.