

WISCASSET SELECT BOARD,
TAX ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
APRIL 28, 2020

Present: Kim Andersson, Chair Judy Colby, Kathy Martin-Savage, Vice Chair Ben Rines, Jr., Jeff Slack, Town Manager John O'Connell, Administrative Assistant Kathy Onorato and Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager Robert Lalli

Press: Phil DiVece, Wiscasset Newspaper; Charlotte Boynton, Lincoln County News

1. Call to Order

Chair Judy Colby called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. via Cisco Webex remote conferencing.

2. Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager Robert Lalli, Sewer Plant Update

Lalli reported that the Town has been granted \$20,000 for a continuing climate adaptation study. In order to receive the grant, the Town must first apply for a loan in order to get loan forgiveness. The Town has applied through the Maine Municipal Bond Bank for a loan to cover the study. The loan will be used to pay off the \$20,000 study. **Kathy Martin-Savage moved to authorize the Town Manager to sign the loan application for the repayment of the loan from DEP. Vote 5-0-0.**

Lalli reported on power outages in parts of town during the last three storms, which affected Pump Station #1. He has been having problems obtaining a generator to produce power to run the pumps at Pump Station #1 which also needs wiring and service of an electrician. He added that the crew had worked around the clock handling problems.

Lalli has received a draft of the new discharge permit for the sewer plant which requires year-round inspections, rather than the current permit which requires disinfection between May and October. Lalli has requested and received a one-year deferral. In order to perform year-round disinfections, piping will have to be heated as chemicals may have freezing problems below 37°. An alternative would be to move the piping to a shed with a space heater. Lalli would like to investigate options as the cost of chemicals and running the tests is not insignificant. In response to a question, Lalli said that the increased costs would not be included in this year's budget. The cost of chemicals for twice weekly testing has increased adding \$170 which has not been budgeted.

Ransom Consulting has submitted a final plan for clean-up of the ash ponds at Mason Station and is awaiting approval. When approved, they will run tests on the ash ponds, proceed to clean up the water and put it in another storage facility before being piped to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Lalli has asked that the water be tested for A-10 priority pollutants, a DEP requirement. He also asked that pumping to the sewer plant be limited to 30 to 40 gallons per day and only Monday through Friday.

Lalli said he and Code Enforcement Officer Bruce Mullins had met regarding connection fee and impact fee bills. The \$100 connection fee is for new businesses or residences that have never hooked up to the system. Houses that have changed hands will not be charged a connection fee. The impact fee is charged to houses and businesses to cover sewer maintenance over time. The bills include an explanation as to the method of charging the fee, based on a chart of plumbing standards which assigns

a certain number of gallons per day to the site. The impact fees are considered impact fee revenue for the sewer plant. The line item currently has \$46,000 accumulated which has not been used but may be requested for capital improvement. In response to Ben Rines, Jr.,'s question, Lalli said the impact fee and conditional discharge agreement are two separate things. The conditional discharge agreement will require some testing when a business first opens and several times during the year to check that BOD discharge levels are not toxic. The customer will pay for the tests

John O'Connell said that an agreement for septic tanks with Chuck Applebee will be presented at the first meeting in May for the board's approval. Lalli said tests for PH will be done each time a sample is taken to make sure it is within the required range (5-1/2 to 9-1/2) and this will be in the agreement

3. Town Manager's Report

a. Letter to employees: Letters have been sent to employees thanking them for their hard work.

b. MDOT Post-construction agreement: As the project draws to an end, an agreement will be drafted listing the responsibilities of the parties. The transfer of CEI property to the town, a boundary line problem and other items will be discussed by Ernie Martin (DOT) and Jeff Slack who will report to the board.

c. Town Treasurer update: Kathy Onorato reported that Vernice Boyce, former treasurer, will be able to work remotely from her home one day a week until social distancing is no longer necessary. The system has been updated which will allow her to work from home. The board approved of the arrangement.

d. Union Contract/ Negotiations: O'Connell said the agreement is ready for the board to ratify. **Kathy Martin-Savage moved to ratify the proposed collective Bargaining Agreement between Local S/89 District Lodge #4 of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Public Works Unit and the Town of Wiscasset. Vote 5-0-0.** John will sign the contract on behalf of the board members until they have an opportunity to sign in person. The union has ratified the contract. Copies will be sent to the members of the press present.

John O'Connell has spoken with the attorney representing the third bargaining unit, the police unit, and will meet with Jeff Slack to outline the offer and costs and report back to the board. O'Connell said he had not obtained any professional help, but maybe Judy Colby and Jeff Slack could outline costs for the 18-month term and report back to the board. If further help is needed, that can be dealt with later.

e. Airport Plans: Senator Susan Collins has announced the \$3.2 million grant for runway improvements. O'Connell said this will enable the town to get the work done this year as opposed to next year or the year after.

f. O'Connell said the Governor has come up with a prudent and sensible approach to opening and is going in the right direction. He anticipated the month of May will be like April, but after that things will loosen up if nothing triggers backsliding.

4. Other Board Business

In response to Jeff Slack's question regarding the request from Frank Sprague wanting guidelines for opening in May, O'Connell said he would have to go by the governor's guidelines; the Town cannot make that decision. He anticipated word would be forthcoming from MMA regarding guidelines.

There are five applications for renewal of business licenses which will be on the May 5 agenda. No public hearing is required. All five applications are renewals, and all have been approved by the Waterfront Committee. The applicants will have to obtain approval from the State to open.

In response to Kim Andersson's question regarding holding outdoor meetings, Judy Colby said the stay in place order runs to the end of the month, and she anticipated no great change in May although the restrictions could be relaxed in June. The logistics of outdoor meetings would be difficult, and the board discussed various methods of including the public. Members of the public are encouraged to contact the Town Manager if they wish to speak to the board at a meeting. Colby said she would like the Board to take care of as much business as possible during May and hopefully open in June. There have been no complaints about the current method of holding meetings which are accessible from YouTube.

It was reported that a local restaurant had opened, and the board questioned whether it had the approval of the State. The owner will be contacted.

Asked about the date of the election, O'Connell said it was up to the board, but he thought August would be the earliest possible date. Holding the election on July 14, primary day, was discussed. O'Connell clarified that nomination papers already turned in would be held until the election and there will be a further opportunity for returning papers. Because candidates must have 100 days to submit nomination papers, the election could not happen until August. Colby reminded the board that the books close the end of June and the budget has not yet been finalized. The matter will be discussed at the next meeting.

Judy Colby said it was good for the town to be able to see the board meeting and she thanked the board members, press, John O'Connell and Kathy Onorato.

5. Adjournment

Jeff Slack moved to adjourn the meeting. Vote 5-0-0.