

WISCASSET SELECTBOARD,
TAX ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
FEBRUARY 1, 2022, VIA ZOOM

Present: Kim Andersson, Terry Heller, Vice Chair Dusty Jones, Chair Sarah Whitfield, and Town Manager Dennis Simmons

Absent: Pam Dunning

Chair Sarah Whitfield called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

1. Approval of Treasurer's Warrants

a. **Terry Heller moved to approve the payroll warrants of January 21 and January 28, 2022. Vote 4-0-0.**

b. **Terry Heller moved to approve the accounts payable warrants of January 25 and February 1, 2022. Vote 4-0-0.**

2. Approval of Minutes

a. **Terry Heller moved to approve the minutes of January 18, 2022. Vote 4-0-0.**

3. Special Presentations or Awards – none

4. Committee Appointments

Terry Heller moved to appoint Ryan Demeny as Water District Trustee to fill a vacated term expiring June 14, 2022. Vote 4-0-0.

5. Public Hearings – none

6. Public Comment – none

7. Department Head or Committee Chair

a. **Broadband Committee-Request for Funding:** Carla Dickstein presented the goals of the committee: Update the 2019 infrastructure plan, identify different structure financing requirements for building out fiber networks, develop a digital equity and inclusion plan in collaboration with the National Digital Equity Center headquartered in Wiscasset, and start a limited community education and outreach program before the plan is fully developed to help residents immediately access grant programs to pay for broadband and refer them to NDEC's online digital literacy programs. She outlined the estimated costs for consultants, community education, staff support, broadband survey, updated broadband survey and infrastructure study by Axiom Technologies totaling \$35,000. Under the proposal, Wiscasset would contribute \$7,500 which would leverage an additional \$7,500 from the Island Institute's broadband planning grant program. The budget would be reduced up to \$3,700 if Woolwich and Dresden participate. **Dusty Jones moved to authorize the town manager to provide up to \$7500 in ARPA funds for the Broadband Committee. Vote 4-0-0.**

b. Waterfront Committee – 2022 Waterfront fees: **Kim Andersson moved to approve the new waterfront fees.** Susan Robson, Waterfront Committee Chair, in response to a board question, said the current fees were outdated and low compared to other towns; the committee hoped that the proposed increase would eliminate having to raise the fees for the next few years. **Vote 4-0-0.**

8. Unfinished Business

a. James Weldon Johnson Memorial –Rep. Rachel Talbot Ross spoke on the planned memorial to James Weldon Johnson on the state level and on coordinating it with Wiscasset’s plans. A state task force has been established to look at ways to memorialize James Weldon Johnson’s life such as educating the public on the life and work of James Weldon Johnson, creating a task force to look at other models in the country for ideas on memorializing his life such as markers, scholarship programs, arts fellowships, etc. She asked that Wiscasset allow the state-wide task force time to organize ways to celebrate, organize, fund, and memorialize James Weldon Johnson’s life before any further plans are made by Wiscasset. The report of the task force to the legislature on plans for the memorial is due after June 17, the date previously set for an event in Wiscasset.

9. New Business

a. FY ’20 Audit – Fred Brewer: Brewer explained at length the audit to the board and reported the Town’s finances were in good shape, better than in the previous year. Total liabilities and fund balance is \$3,813,688.70. (The audit can be found on the town’s website under “Resources” from the home page, then Forms and Documents.)

b. Resignation: **Terry Heller moved to accept with regret the resignation of Kathy Martin-Savage from the Future of Wiscasset Schools committee. Vote 4-0-0.**

c. Maine Service Center Coalition – Request to Rejoin: **Kim Andersson moved to authorize the Town Manager to enroll Wiscasset in the Maine Service Centers Coalition. Vote 4-0-0.**

d. Assessors’ Agent Contract: **Kim Andersson moved to authorize the Town Manager to execute the Contract for Assessors’ Agent with RJD Appraisal. Vote 4-0-0.**

e. Schedule Budget Workshop Dates: The Town Manager will poll the members for a suitable schedule.

10. Town Manager’s Report

Dennis Simmons reported that the only legal option the Town had regarding the Wawenock Building was a dangerous building proceeding. According to Ralph Doering, even though the insurance company has not settled on his claim, plans are to start repairs in early spring.

Simmons reported that the contract with RJD Appraisal had expired June 30, 2021. Robert Duplisea of RJD has agreed to continue to provide services for the remainder of the fiscal year for the price of the old contract. Simmons recommended that the new three-year contract be approved.

The EMS Department reports that the motherboards for monitor/defibrillators had failed, and repair is not an option. The cost to replace the monitors is \$48,568; delaying until the budget is approved is not

an option. Boothbay Regional Ambulance is loaning one unit to Wiscasset until a replacement is obtained. In order to stay within budget, Simmons authorized a five-year purchase agreement with Stryker for \$10,733 per year.

Simmons met with Wright-Pierce and reviewed the initial design for the Old Ferry Road project which has been designed to Maine DOT specs so that when completed, the State will assume all responsibility for maintenance and future replacement. The project will go out to bid in February with bid opening at the March 14th meeting and, after reviewing the bids with Wright Pierce to make sure they meet bid requirements, the bid will be awarded by May 1. Construction will commence mid to late summer and take about 18 weeks.

11. Other Board Business

a. Executive Session to consider a Poverty Abatement Application: At 7:40 **Terry Heller moved to go into executive session pursuant to the provisions of Title 36, §841(2) MRSA to consider a request for abatement of taxes for reasons of poverty. Vote 4-0-0. Terry Heller moved to leave executive session at 7:46 p.m. Vote 4-0-0. Kim Andersson moved to approve poverty abatement case number 08-3233. Vote 4-0-0.**

12 Adjournment

Kim Andersson moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m. Vote 4-0-0.