

WISCASSET SELECTBOARD,
TAX ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
APRIL 5, 2022
IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM

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

Chair Sarah Whitfield called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Approval of Treasurer's Warrants

a. Payroll Warrants: **Pam Dunning moved to approve the Treasurer's warrants of March 18, March 25, and April 1, 2022. Vote 5-0-0.**

b. Accounts Payable Warrants: **Pam Dunning moved to approve the accounts payable warrants of March 22, March 29, and April 5, 2022. Vote 5-0-0.**

3. Approval of Minutes

Terry Heller moved to approve the minutes of March 15, 2022, as amended. Vote 4-0-1 (Andersson abstained).

4. Special Presentations or Awards – none

5. Committee Appointments

Pam Dunning moved to approve the appointments of Peter McRae to the Planning Board, Michael Costigan to the Airport Committee, and Peter Wells to the Cemetery Committee. Vote 5-0-0.

6. Public Hearings

a. Liquor Licenses: Bath Ale Works, 681 Bath Road. **Pam Dunning moved to open the public hearing at 6:07 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.** There was no discussion. **Pam Dunning moved to close the public hearing at 6:08 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.** **Terry Heller moved to approve the Liquor License application of Bath Ale Works located at 681 Bath Road. Vote 5-0-0.**

b. Proposed new harbor fees: **Pam Dunning moved to open the public hearing at 6:09 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.** Tom Jewett, member of the Budget Committee and President of the Wiscasset Yacht Club, spoke in opposition to the proposed increase in harbor fees. He said the 150% proposed increase for residents and 100% increase for non-residents in a single year were too much and would create a hardship for recreational boaters. He said the increase could backfire and drive boaters to other towns where the fees were less. Several other speakers opposed the increase which would make Wiscasset's fees the highest in the area. **Pam Dunning moved to close the public hearing at 6:16 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.** Kim Andersson said she was not in favor of the increases in harbor fees and asked that the proposal be sent back to the Waterfront Committee. Terry Heller said there were reasons for the recommendations, and

the decision to raise the fees was not made lightly. After discussion, **Pam Dunning moved to send this information back to the Waterfront Committee and have them get back to us. Vote 5-0-0.**

7. Public Comment

Jorge Pena asked that the police monitor the speeding on Gardiner Road and Federal Street where children and adults are facing danger. Dennis Simmons said that Chief Hesselstine has been working on a pilot program with the State to install digital signs on Federal Street and both sides of Route One and marking red painted squares on the roads highlighting the need to slow down.

8. Department Head or Committee Chair

9. Unfinished Business

a. Budget Discussion: Three accounts had not been approved – Planning, Parks and Recreation and Community organizations.

Community Organizations: Lifelight of Maine, Waldo Community Action Partners and Spectrum Generations had been added to community organizations. **Pam Dunning move to approve the Community Organization warrant question in the amount of \$71,737. Vote 5-0-0.**

Parks and Recreation: There was no change in the Parks and Recreation budget since the first meeting. **Pam Dunning moved to approve the parks and recreation budget of \$177,185 Vote 5-0-0.**

Planning: Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission has indicated they will be willing to spend an additional four hours per week on economic development and grants. There was a consensus to stay with Lincoln County Regional Planning for the next year and explore hiring a planner for the following year. **Pam Dunning moved to approve the planning budget at \$50,000.**

Cemetery: **Pam Dunning moved to approve the cemetery budget on the town warrant of \$178,185. Vote 5-0-0.**

Projected revenue to date is 97%. **Pam Dunning moved to approve the revenue as projected. Vote 5-0-0.**

Recreational pier expansion (but not white's island): \$2,168,500.

Dan Lay from H. M. Payson who has handled reserve and endowment accounts for the town since 2011 said the investment policy, formulated by the Investment Committee, recommended keeping a moderate or sustainable spending level at to 4.5% in order to grow the accounts over time. He gave a brief summary of the activity since he has been working with the Town. Historically, the Town was able to adhere to the spending policy for the most part. With the inflation rate now at 6-8%, if it's necessary to exceed the spending limit, Lay advised taking some funds from the portfolio and borrowing at rates below the inflation rate. However, he said it will be difficult to generate returns as in the past.

Community center parking lot: Public Works Director Ted Snowdon advised putting money into roads instead of the Community Center parking lot. He said the roads were in worse shape than the parking lot and the parking lot can be done in the future.

Matching for recreational pier grant: With regard to improvements at the recreational pier, Kim Dolce said the Town was not in the business of running a marina and suggested that the Waterfront Committee explore private for-profit firms for the improvements.

White's Island: Peter Wells updated the board on the plans for White's Island which had been adjusted to meet the public's concerns. An ecologically based storm water management plan to treat the water was added to the plan. The playground was removed and replaced with a garden area and an overlook fishing and seating area. Several options for parking were proposed either at the Pleasant Street extension or on town-owned property on Fore Street with drop-off areas for those with disabilities. The parking areas would be buffered and the plans included plantings and walkway to the bridge. Wells said he had met with Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission on the proposal. The budget is \$582,000 for Phase 1 which includes the bridges, railroad crossing and creating a small walkway encircling White's Island. He requested matching funds of \$291,000 for Phase I from the Town if the grant for that amount is awarded.

Sarah Whitfield clarified that if a grant for phase I was granted, the Town could also apply for a grant for phase 2. The Town's contribution could include in kind services such as \$24,000 for Wells' time and referred the board to Duane Goud for other possible contributions. Dusty Jones asked why the proposal was being brought up now. Wells replied that the project had been around since 2004 and although there would be no direct revenue, it would attract people from outside and would be a recreational resource. Kim Andersson pointed out that the plan will be presented to the voters. Terry Heller said that the bridges are a hazard and eyesore, and the Town has been derelict in taking care of its property.

Speakers in opposition to the plan commented that the island should remain a quiet place for Wiscasset residents, not an attraction and parking for people from out of town. They pointed out that although the bridges needed repair for access, White's Island should be kept as a sanctuary. There was objection to the planned parking, and it was mentioned that one of the projected parking areas is not owned wholly by the Town but partly by an abutter. Residents of the immediate area had had no notice of the proposed plan. Cost of maintenance and police supervision was also mentioned as a downside to the plan. It was pointed out that the Town needed a planner to look into both the waterfront improvements and the plan for White's Island, that public hearings be held, followed by a plan for which proposals would be advertised. Further comments included the opinion that preservation is better than providing a destination, and now is not the time for the Town to be spending money except for repair of roads and sidewalks.

Denis Simmons will put together some options for the matching grant. The proposal will be discussed at the next meeting on April 12 at 5:30 p.m. If necessary, the option can be postponed to the general election in November.

10. New Business

- a. Resignations: **Terry Heller moved to approve the resignations of Anthony Rauseo from the Cemetery Committee and Terri Wells from the Cemetery Committee with regret. Vote 5-0-0.**
- b. Appointment of Election Clerks: **Pam Dunning moved to appoint the Election Clerks as recommended by the Town Clerk. Vote 5-0-0.**

c. Correspondence: Letter from Nancy Roby regarding public restrooms.

d. Request to revive Conservation Commission – Leslie Roberts: In response to the request, Pam Dunning asked to see a description of the duties and policy of the commission.

e. Juneteenth Holiday: This is a state and federal holiday which some towns have chosen to celebrate. The schools will be closed. **Terry Heller moved that the Town observe the holiday. Vote 5-0-0.**

f. Sewer Abatement – Andree Baston-Dixon: **Pam Dunning moved to approve the sewer abatement for Andree Baston Dixon. Vote 5-0-0.**

g. Update Property/Facility Use Policy: The policy states that temporary use of the town property with the exception of the Community Center is only allowed after approval by the Selectboard. The use of the Community Center must be approved by the Community Center Director. One-day or shorter events may be approved by the Town Manager. **Pam Dunning moved to approve the Property/Facility Use Policy. Vote 5-0-0.**

11. Town Manager's Report

12. Assessors' Business

a. Abatement: **Pam Dunning moved to approve the abatement for Kazy, LLC on Map R04 Lot 5 in the amount of \$775.09. Vote 5-0-0.**

13. Other Board Business

A representative of the Art Gallery described the drainage problems being experienced by the structure. The gallery has received a \$15,000 Grant and the gallery will contribute the additional \$7,500 needed to resolve the issue. There will be no alternations to the building. **Pam Dunning moved to approve. Vote 5-0-0.**

14. Adjournment

Pam Dunning moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.