

WISCASSET SELECTBOARD,  
TAX ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR  
JANUARY 4, 2022, VIA ZOOM

Present: Kim Andersson (arrived during the meeting), 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 6:01 p.m.

1. Approval of Treasurer's Warrants

a. **Terry Heller moved to approve the payroll warrants of December 24 and December 31, 2021. Vote 4-0-0.**

b. **Terry Heller moved to approve the accounts payable warrants of December 28, 2021, and January 4, 2022. Vote 4-0-0.**

2. Approval of Minutes

**Terry Heller moved to approve the minutes of December 21, 2021. Vote 4-0-0.**

3. Special Presentations or Awards – none

4. Committee Appointments – none

5. Public Hearings – none

6. Public Comment

Lucia Roby updated the board on the status of the James Weldon Johnson plaque. She has worked with committee members Shannon Gilmore, Terry Heller, and Peter Wells on a finalized design which she will present together with a recommended location and availability of funds to the board at its January 18, 2022, meeting.

7. Department Head or Committee Chair

a. **Broadband Committee Update – Carla Dickstein:** The 2018-2019 ad hoc committee had not been active because of lack of funds and the pandemic Carla Dickstein said, however, the pandemic had demonstrated the need for improved broadband by schools, businesses, and communities. The State has \$150 million from the American Rescue Plan Act available to communities for broadband.

Dickstein, Marty Fox, and Evan Goodkowsky are members of the committee with Dusty Jones as board liaison. The committee is looking for new members. Dickstein said the purpose of the committee is to explore extending high speed fiber optic broadband to all of Wiscasset. making broadband available to all citizens of Wiscasset. She stressed the necessity of broadband to Wiscasset's future. Financing possibilities are being investigated as well as private ownership and working with neighboring towns. A proposed budget for the committee will be submitted to the Town by January 13. The committee is looking for \$10,000, with \$5,000 to \$7,000 from the Town and a match with money from the Island

Institute to begin planning. Board members spoke on the need for further research on securing broadband in Wiscasset.

Dickstein said a decision by the town on the funding for the committee was needed soon, rather than waiting for a vote at Town Meeting in June, because money from the State is available now. The Town could use its ARPA funds for the committee rather than waiting until a vote at Town Meeting. The matter will be on the next agenda so the board will have the opportunity to review documents provided. The board was advised to contact Dickstein with any questions. Pam Dunning suggested that the Spectrum contract be reviewed.

## 8. Unfinished Business

a. Net Energy Billing Request for Proposal Discussion: A presentation was given at the previous meeting on net energy billing, and there was a consensus that Dennis Simmons work with consultant Adam Tiff on sending out a request for proposals.

## 9. New Business

a. New Business Licenses

- Tara Paluck, DBA Root and Reach Consulting, 307 Federal Street
- MD Kazi Abdin DBA Market 27, LLC at 475 Gardiner Road

**Pam Dunning moved to approve both business licenses. Vote 5-0-0.**

b. Resignation – Phil DiVece – Trustee of the Wiscasset Water District: **Pam Dunning moved to accept Phil DiVece’s resignation from the Water with thanks to him for all the years he has worked on it. Vote 5-0-0.**

c. Transfer of Title of 2016 Ford Explorer Police Cruiser: **Pam Dunning moved to authorize the Town Manager to transfer ownership of the 2016 Ford Explorer to Maine Municipal Risk Management Service. Vote 5-0-0.**

## 10. Town Manager’s Report

Dennis Simmons said the Mason Station ash pond clean-up was behind schedule due to wet conditions; the delays have increased the cost and the work has been halted until the Town, Ransom and EnviroVantage can evaluate the situation and form a new plan of action. Simmons will be reviewing change orders from Ransom.

The new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law recently passed included money for the national airport network including \$159,000 to the Wiscasset Municipal Airport. This is a five-year program although it is unclear what future payments might be. The payment is in addition to the recently awarded Rescue Grant of \$32,000. Simmons is awaiting additional guidance to be issued after the first of the year as to what allowable expenses will be.

An insurance claim has been submitted for damage to the police cruiser when it was struck by the driver trying to elude police during a recent chase through town. Given the mileage and age of the vehicle, the insurance company elected to declare it a total loss and will issue a check to the Town for \$6,927.20.

Simmons asked the board for permission to transfer the title to the insurance company. The cruiser will be stripped of all equipment. Funds will be set aside in a special account.

The FY'20 Audit has been completed. Brewer is putting it in electronic form to send to the board for discussion at the January 18 meeting.

Phil DiVece has resigned as trustee of the Water District and the board will appoint a replacement. Chris Cossette has provided the name of someone who might be interested, although Simmons has not contacted him. If necessary, Simmons will post the opening on the town website and at the office.

Lincoln County Emergency Management will pay the \$1200 fee for EMT training from ARPA funds for anyone interested. Only requirement is county residency.

An email from County Planning Office indicated they will be using ARPA funds for wastewater facilities in the county.

#### 11. Other Board Business

Dusty Jones asked for information on the status of the building repair on Main Street. Simmons said he had reached out to the owner but had not received an answer.

a. Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter: AT 6:57 p.m. **Pam Dunning moved to enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (A). Vote 5-0-0.** At 7:47 **Pam Dunning moved to leave executive session. Vote 5-0-0.** Sarah Whitfield reported on the favorable review of the Town Manager's performance in the executive session.

#### 12. Adjournment

**Pam Dunning moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.**