

WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OCTOBER 21, 2008

(Tape recorded meeting)

Present: Bill Curtis, Phil DiVece, Bob Fairfield, Chairman David Nichols, Vice
Chairman Nicole Viele and Town Manager Arthur Faucher

1. Call to Order

The chairman called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

3. Public Hearings: General Assistance New Maximums

The chairman opened the public hearings at 7:02 p.m. Becky Applin said the State issued new maximums for General Assistance on October 1st each year and these guidelines were presented to the selectmen for approval. In response to Ed Polewarczyk's question, she said that if the town failed to adopt the new maximums it would not receive the 50/50 reimbursement from the state.

4. Public Hearing: Automobile Graveyard and/or Junkyard Permit Renewal for Jim's Auto Trim; Blagden's Garage; Grover Tire and Auto, Inc.; Norm's Used Cars, Inc.; and Pro Body Works

Stuart Wyman, Code Enforcement Officer, said he had found all sites satisfactory. The public hearings closed at 7:10 p.m.

5. Approve Minutes of October 7 and 9, 2008

Bob Fairfield moved to accept the minutes of October 7, 2008 as written. Vote 4-0-1 (DiVece abstained). Bill Curtis moved to accept the minutes of October 9, 2008 as written. Vote 4-0-1 (DiVece abstained).

New Business

6. Consideration of new General Assistance Maximums

Phil DiVece moved to adopt the 2008/2009 General Assistance maximum appendices as presented in the MMA model. Vote 5-0.

7. Selectmen consideration of Automobile Graveyard and/or Junkyard Permit Renewals for Jim's Auto Trim; Blagden's Garage; Grover Tire and Auto, Inc.; Norm's Used Cars, Inc.; and Pro Body Works

Bill Curtis moved to accept the Junkyard permit renewals. Vote 5-0.

8. Town Manager's Report

- Interim Certificates of Appointment for Municipal Clerks: Arthur Faucher presented interim certificates of appointment of Jim George as Town Clerk and as Registrar of Voters for the Board's signatures. Upon appointment as Town Clerk, George will then appoint Susan Varney as Deputy Clerk, Joan Barnes as Deputy Town Clerk, Becky Applin as Assistant Clerk for Inland Fish and Wildlife and as Animal Control Assistant. **Bob Fairfield moved to accept Jim George as Town Clerk and Registrar of Voters. Vote 5-0.**
- Clarification of snow removal bid award: Arthur Faucher said in a clarification of the bid on the snow removal contract, the low bid was accepted for \$385 per event with a snowfall of 2" to 8" and \$38 per hour for snowfalls above that amount.
- Recommendation on the Thorndike Road gate: Arthur Faucher and the Road Commissioner had visited the site and agreed that before a decision is made on the gate, they would see what kind of road was being built. Road Commissioner Bob Blagden said the town should not install a gate on a public right of way. Faucher will so advise the MDOT.
- Murray, Plumb & Murray Legal and Tax Assessment Fees: The Town Manager said that the town had received a bill of \$7751 for legal services connected with the reassessment of the Maine Yankee property. Because payment of the MP&M legal costs will overdraw the legal account, he recommended designating a separate line item for the legal costs of the Maine Yankee project and cover the overage from the contingency account. **Bill Curtis moved to authorize the Town Manager to create a separate account to cover the Maine Yankee litigation and draw down the necessary amount from the contingency account.** The Town Manager and/or the Selectmen will discuss with the attorneys the length of the project. **Vote 5-0.**
- Compensation due to Sandra Johnson per Collective Bargaining Agreement: Arthur Faucher said the town has a legal obligation to pay half of the sick and vacation hours owed to Johnson in the amount of \$2,827.66. He said the town would seek restitution through the legal process. **Nicole Viele moved to honor the union contract and pay Sandra Johnson \$2,827.66. Vote 5-0.**

9. Other Board Business

Phil DiVece asked that the board be given a progress report on the web page. The Town Manager will get an update from Jeffrey Hinderliter.

10. Session Two: Overview of Tidal Energy

Peter Arnold, Chewonki Foundation, introduced Christopher R. Sauer, CEO of Ocean Renewable Power Company, and Huijie Xue, Professor, School of Marine Sciences, University of Maine, as representatives of a possible alternative to Natural Currents who gave a presentation at the previous meeting. Peter Arnold suggested that if the Town of Wiscasset applied to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a preliminary permit for a tidal resources project, the town could then choose a company with which to work and would have more control over the project. He submitted a draft application for a permit to the board.

Chris Sauer, whose company developed tidal power technology in cooperation with the U. S. Navy, gave a power point presentation demonstrating the equipment, which consists of turbines on a single shaft with a generator. A demonstration project in the Bay of Fundy begun in 2007 has proven the technical feasibility of the system. The project met or exceeded ten of the twelve criteria the company had set. The company spent \$1.3 million from October 2007 to April 2008, half of which went into the Maine economy. Thirty jobs were created to build the project, and supplies and services were obtained locally.

Sauer said the Maine tidal energy industry includes ORPC, University of Maine at Orono, Maine Maritime Academy, U. S. Windblade (providing blades for wind turbines), Harbor Technology in Brunswick, Gulf of Maine Research Institute, and Law firm of Pierce Atwood.

Huijie Xue, an oceanographer, spoke on the reduction of carbon footprint with renewable tidal energy, her research into system design, forecasts of tidal energy density, the socio-economic effects of this technology, and the expertise at UMO.

Peter Arnold reviewed the draft application, which had been made in the Town's name, for a permit allowing three years of research. He asked that the application be placed on the next agenda for discussion and that he be contacted with any questions in the meantime.

Ed Polewarczyk asked about efficiency. Sauer said he was looking at 30% for the turbines and overall 98.5% for the generator.

George Green asked whether the town would get a piece of the action, and what incentive the town would have to allow use of its power lines. Sauer said it would first be necessary to establish a value of the resource, and although there has to be local benefit, no one knows how much power can be generated. Green said the town should know ahead of time the dollar amount that the town would receive plus the number of jobs that would be created. Peter Arnold said the advantage of the town filing the application was that it would then be able to negotiate with the tidal energy companies.

Arthur Faucher asked whether funds would come from the Department of Energy. Sauer said no government funds would be used, private investment would be necessary. He added that in Eastport, his company has a host agreement with the town. While ORPC cannot sell electricity to the town, it could benefit the town in other ways by paying the electric bills, paying sales tax, renting property, etc.

In response to Prior Morrell's questions, Sauer said that 480 volts would be generated, commercially available permanent magnet material would be used and the generator could be used as a brake.

Larry Lomison asked whether taxpayers' money would be invested, and Arthur Faucher said there would be no taxpayer investment. Peter Arnold said Chewonki would cover the cost of the application and had funds to look at resources. At that point, the town could decide whether it wanted to invest any funds in the project.

In response to other questions, Sauer said that the town cannot be locked into an agreement with a company during the permit process, and the town's application would be given preference over Natural Currents' application if it is filed on time.

11. Citizen Comments

Becky Applin reminded the board and audience of the need for contributions for the baskets for the needy during the holiday season.

Prior Morrell and Larry Lomison objected to both the placement of the Citizen Comments item on the agenda and the restriction of comments to those relevant to agenda items. They saw no point in commenting on an agenda item at the end of the meeting when the board had already taken action. Ed Polewarczyk took exception to the complaint as the Board had asked for discussion of the items on which there was a public hearing before voting.

George Green asked why people should come to Selectmen's meetings if they can't speak. Arthur Faucher said that if anyone wanted an item included in the agenda, he or she should contact him, as the board wanted to prepare for agenda items rather than have them brought up at a meeting. David Nichols said that the procedure had changed after an outburst had occurred. Bob Fairfield added that the Board was not obliged to allow any citizen comments.

12. Adjourn

Bill Curtis moved to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. Vote 5-0.