

WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN
JANUARY 29, 2008

(Tape recorded meeting)

Present: Bill Curtis, Phil DiVece, Chairman Duane Goud (arrived during the meeting), Vice Chairman David Nichols, Nicole Viele and Town Manager Arthur Faucher

1. Call to Order

In the chairman's absence, Vice Chairman David Nichols called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

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

3. Approve minutes of January 22, 2008

Nicole Viele moved, Phil DiVece seconded, to approve the minutes as written. Vote 4-0.

New Business

4. Sign Warrant for special Town Meeting scheduled for February 7, 2008 at 7 p.m., Wiscasset Middle School

David Nichols read the warrant containing a citizen-initiated petition regarding funding in the amount of \$30,328.12 for the Assessment/Human Resources Manager position for the remainder of the year. The Budget Committee and the Selectmen both recommended approval. **Bill Curtis moved, Nicole Viele seconded, to accept the warrant as printed. Vote 4-0.**

5. Set schedule for abatement hearings (Recommended week of February 25, 2008)

The Board will conduct abatement hearings after the meeting on February 26 if the meeting is short and will continue hearings at 6 p.m. on Thursday, January 28. Further hearings will be scheduled for those hearings requiring the presence of Tyler Technologies.

6. Town Manager's Report

● Hesper and Luther Little Memorabilia: The drawing for the pens, plaques, and key chains had been held. The Town Manager asked the Board to set prices for these items. **Nicole Viele moved, Phil DiVece seconded, to charge \$8 for the key chains. Vote 4-0. Nicole Viele moved, Phil DiVece seconded, to charge \$15 for the ladies' gold pens. Vote 4-0. Nicole Viele moved, Phil DiVece seconded, to charge \$18 for the men's pearl pens. Vote 4-0. Nicole Viele moved, Phil DiVece seconded, to charge \$40 for the small wood blocks (with the etching of the boats) and \$50 for the larger wood blocks. Vote 4-0.** The sole remaining disk will be installed at the community center. There will be another drawing for the remaining key chains.

- Budget Committee member Kerry Leeman resignation: Arthur Faucher said that he had received the resignation of Kerry Leeman from the Budget Committee. **David Nichols moved, Nicole Viele seconded, to accept Kerry Leeman's resignation with regret. Vote 4-0.**

- Progress of sunken boat removal: The Town Manager reported that the sunken vessel had been raised and was now on the southern launch ramp. It will be trucked away in two days.

- LCTV Local Representative Seat Opening: Persons interested in the opening for a Wiscasset representative to LCTV's Board of Directors should contact Sean Rafter or Debi Applebee.

7. Other Board Business

8. Citizen Comments

Ben Rines, Jr., asked whether the Town had funds to pay the severance package to the Assessment/Human Resources Manager if the citizen-initiated petition failed. David Nichols said the Town did not have the money for the severance package; it would have to wait until June to see if the voters approve the severance package. Rines, referring to the Town Manager's comment in the newspaper about overdrafting the account, said he reviewed the audit report and found that the Town had overspent the Public Safety budget by \$5900, the TIF account by \$42,000, and the overlay account, from which abatements are paid, by \$45,000. He asked where the money was coming from to cover these overdrafts and added that it was standard practice for the Board to go to the voters for appropriation of funds to cover overdrafts before they occur. The Town Manager said the overdrafts had not happened on his watch but that he would look into it. Rines said that regardless of when the overdrafts occurred, the Selectmen should have been advised because they need to have the money in hand before it can be spent. He added that the matter needs to be addressed. Faucher said the Board receives monthly expense reports. David Nichols said the Board would research the matter and get back to Rines.

Bill Barnes expressed his concern over the 20% raises recently granted to some Town employees. He said he was on a fixed income and his raise was only 2.7%. David Nichols said the raises covered a 3-1/2-year period, were less than 20% and another raise would not be made until 2009. Barnes said that there was no time limit put on the raise.

Phil DiVece asked whether raises for town employees were discussed with the Budget Committee before approval. David Nichols said the Budget Committee was not consulted; they were decided on in executive session. DiVece said that although the Board had authority to approve raises, it should have discussed them with the Budget Committee.

In response to Bill Barnes' comments, Arthur Faucher said he was not hired at the salary he had requested but had agreed to accept what was being paid to the previous Town Manager. He said he had not asked for the increase the Board had granted, he has not taken health insurance for himself or his family, he had received no cost of living increase and he does not charge for travel expense. He said the Town does provide

him with a phone. He said the other employees who were given an adjustment were paid for performance and added that one employee is not taking the retirement benefit offered by the Town. Mark Johnson said employees who do not have health insurance get a stipend of \$200 per month, which is a savings to the Town, and he assumed that the Town Manager received the stipend also.

(Duane Goud arrived)

Steve Mehrl said he had concerns with the audit. Arthur Faucher said he would arrange a meeting with the auditors to explain terminology and review the cost centers. In response to Duane Goud's question regarding a meeting of the Budget Committee with the School Committee, Mehrl said he had received an email from the superintendent and a meeting would be set up.

At 7:40 p.m. Duane Goud moved, Bill Curtis seconded, to go into two separate executive sessions; Session 1 with Mark E. Johnson of Wiscasset in accordance with Title 1, Section 405 6.A (I) whereby public discussion could be reasonably expected to cause damage to the reputation or the individual's right to privacy would be violated; Session 2 in accordance with 1 M.R.S.A Section 405(6) D to discuss labor negotiations regarding the Support Staff Unit of District Lodge #4 for the IAMAW Local Lodge S/89. Vote 5-0.

The Board exited executive session at 10:03 p.m. The Selectmen took no action. They will meet again on Tuesday, February 5, at 6:30 p.m. in reference to labor negotiations regarding the Support Staff Unit.

9. Adjourn

At 10:05 p.m. Duane Goud moved, David Nichols seconded, to adjourn the meeting. Vote 5-0.