WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN,

BOARD OF ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR

AUGUST 4, 2015

 Tape recorded meeting

Present: David Cherry, Vice Chair Judy Flanagan, Chair Ben Rines, Jr., Jeff Slack and Town Manager Marian Anderson

1. Call to Order

Chair Ben Rines, Jr., called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Town Manager Marian Anderson introduced the new Town Clerk, Linda Perry.

3. Public Hearings – none

4. Approval of Minutes

**Jeff Slack moved to approve the minutes of July 21, 2015. Vote 4-0-0. Judy Flanagan moved to approve the minutes of July 28, 2015. Vote 4-0-0.**

5. Approval of Treasurer’s Warrants

**Judy Flanagan moved to approve the payroll warrants of July 24 and July 31, 2015. Vote 4-0-0. David Cherry moved to approve the Accounts Payable Warrants of July 28 and August 4, 2015. Vote 4-0-0.**

6. Assessors’ Business – none

7. Special Presentations or Awards – none

8. Appointments

**Jeff Slack moved to approve the appointment of Jenny Spaur to the Historic Preservation Commission. Vote 4-0-0**.

9. Resignations

Ben Rines, Jr., reported that Bill Barnes had submitted his resignation effective August 3, 2015. **Rines moved to accept the resignation with regret. Vote 4-0-0. Rines moved that the election to fill the vacancy be held on November 3, 2015 to coincide with the state off-year election. Vote 4-0-0.** Nomination papers will be available August 10 and must be returned by September 21.

10. Public Comment

Bob Blagden congratulated the new members on their election. Blagden suggested that the selectmen contact the person who is planning to build a recreation center on Route 27 and offer to sell him the Wiscasset Rec Center, which would be a tremendous savings to the town and eliminate competing rec centers. Blagden also urged the selectmen to develop a plan to make the Mason Station property commercial, rather than letting it be sold for postage stamp-sized low income house lots now allowed under current zoning.

Judy Flanagan said the board had in the past applied for a grant to clean up the Mason Station property which she recommended be done first.

Bob Blagden said rather than buying a new loader for the dump, the Town should integrate the new loader at the airport into the town’s fleet. Town Manager Marian Anderson will follow up on the suggestion.

11. Unfinished Business

A. Federal Street – Ed Kavanaugh: Regarding MDOT plans to eliminate the weight limit and allow heavy trucks on Federal Street, Kavanaugh said the quality of life of the residents on the street would deteriorate, the value of the 75 private homes and two historic properties would be affected and the safety of pedestrians and cyclists would be threatened. He said the road was too narrow for large trucks and the speed limit was not being observed by many drivers.

David Pope of Federal Street said the Sheepscot residents keep pressing for the weight limit to be lifted so that Wiscasset could share in the burden of the truck traffic from the gravel pits. He said trucks going to Pemaquid would still go through Sheepscot but trucks going to Boothbay could go through Wiscasset if the weight limit were lifted.

Bill Sutter commented that Federal Street was rebuilt in the 70s to standards not adequate for trucks. He asked what recourse the Town would have if the DOT allows trucks on Federal Street and what ability did the Town have to prohibit commercial vehicles.

John Washburn, George Green, Peter Gagnon and several others also spoke on the problems with truck traffic on Federal Street and the difficulties trucks would have entering Route 1 from Federal Street.

Ben Rines, Jr., said the Town would receive the DOT commissioner ‘s decision soon and it was expected that the decision would be to eliminate the weight limit. Although the Town could appeal the decision, chances of winning an appeal would be almost nil.

Marian Anderson said she has not yet heard when the Commissioner’s decision would be available; however, a meeting with the MDOT on the sidewalks, traffic lights, etc. would be held in early September and all issues could be discussed at that time. She said letters of support for the Town’s position have been received from the state Historic Preservation Commission and others.

David Cherry recommended bombarding the MDOT with letters opposing the elimination of the weight limit; Jeff Slack suggested holding the September meeting at the (former) middle school to illustrate the problems additional truck traffic would cause.

Bill Sutter recommended investigating the school busing situation with younger students at the new elementary school and also contacting an attorney for legal advice.

Judy Flanagan said an Alna selectman had indicated support for Wiscasset on the issue and she recommended that a committee be formed to coordinate opposition to the expected decision. Ben Rines, Jr., said town departments and the school committee will be contacted for support. Ed Kavanaugh solicited phone numbers from those interested in working on the committee.

The matter will be on the August 18 agenda.

A ten-minute recess followed.

12. New Business

A. School Department request for Mary E. Bailey funds to support an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle course at Wiscasset High School: Cheri Towle, Wiscasset High School principal, said offering the UAV course was in response to the students’ request for innovative courses. Jesse Hinman, a WHS graduate, and Towle have created the UAV Academy, a course designed to introduce students to UAV construction and piloting as well as to FAA rules and regulations. Towle requested $4,750 from the Mary E. Bailey fund to purchase five drone kits. The drones will be dismantled at the end of the course and used for the next class. David Cherry voiced his opposition to the UAV program saying he had serious question as to safety and privacy in the use of drones, and questioned why the school would use school resources for what the information sheet described as kits “for hobby or recreational purposes only.” He also questioned who had the engineering or computer qualifications to teach the course. Towle said she was certified to teach computer science and the engineering standards required for the program; Hinman, who has built a drone, has a New Media degree. With regard to the use of cameras, Towle said the drones are not intended to violate anyone’s privacy but would be used for overhead sports photos and not be out of sight of the operator. Towle said the airport had been contacted and determined that the drones would not be flying in the flight paths used by the airport. After liability and other concerns voiced by Judy Flanagan, a motion by Jeff Slack to approve the request failed on a 2-2 vote with Cherry and Flanagan opposing.

B. Outstanding sewer lien report: In response to Judy Flanagan’s question at a previous meeting about collecting overdue sewer bills, Anderson said in the case of commercial properties, the Town could petition the PUC to disconnect the sewer line. Ben Rines suggested the outstanding sewer liens be listed in the Town Report.

C. Electricity Pricing updates: Marian Anderson said the contract with Maine PowerOption expires at the end of the year and she would be looking at the Town’s options. David Cherry asked if the SunCats had a recommendation. The matter will be put on a future agenda.

13. Department Head or Committee Chair Report

A. Montsweag Dam Parcel, request to utilize “Stewardship Funds” for dam repairs – Jamel Torres, Town Planner: Torres, together with Road Commissioner Doug Fowler and Conservation Commission Chair Anne Leslie, requested use of funds to make repairs to the dam. The Town was given $100,000 in 2013 by Central Maine Power for stewardship of the dam. Previous estimates for the repair were from $30,000 to $45,000. Torres said the Conservation Commission was drafting a management plan for the parcel which would include signage, improved access and the construction of a pathway.

David Cherry suggested removing rather than repairing the dam, as it was no longer used as backup for Maine Yankee. Torres said it was still used as a backup water supply for the neighborhood In case of fire. There were questions from the board regarding the town’s responsibility to maintain the dam and surrounding land and whether the CMP funds could be used to remove the dam. Torres will research these issues and report at a later meeting on the Conservation Commission’s proposed management plan.

B. Maine DOT Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, Jamel Torres, Town Planner: The Maine Department of Transportation is offering to municipalities at no cost flashing beacons for installation at pedestrian crosswalks. Jamel Torres, Police Chief Troy Cline, Road Commissioner Doug Fowler and Recreation Director Todd Souza have chosen the following crosswalks for the beacons: Route 218 near Wiscasset Elementary School, Route 27 near entrance to Wiscasset Community Center and Route 1 at Middle Street. The board agreed with the locations selected. Although there are three alternatives, the Town will probably receive only one or two beacons. Torres has been researching grants to obtain flashing lights at school zones from MDOT.

14. Town Manager’s Report

Marian Anderson asked if there was a timekeeper for the town clock. It was suggested that perhaps Pam Lear was the person to contact.

The Department of Motor Vehicles has advised that September 10 will be the last day the mobile driver’s license unit will be in Wiscasset. Nearby offices are in Topsham, Rockland and Augusta.

Anderson reported that she and Road Commissioner Doug Fowler will look at the lighting situation on Water Street near Sarah’s Café.

A motion to double-side the selectmen’s materials failed on a 2-2 vote.

The Town Manager was asked to have legal counsel available at the next meeting to discuss the Federal Street issue and to contact the police regarding early morning presence at the school.

Materials distributed at a May selectmen’s meeting regarding the Federal Street issue will be made available (double-sided) to the new board members.

**David Cherry moved to hold an executive session pursuant to 1 §405(6) (A) to discuss personnel matters on Monday, August 17 at 6 p.m. Vote 4-0-0.**

15. Adjournment

**Jeff Slack moved to adjourn at 9:40 p.m. Vote 4-0-0.**