

WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SEPTEMBER 1, 2009

(Tape recorded meeting)

Present: Chairman Bob Blagden, Bill Curtis, Vice Chairman Phil DiVece, Pam Dunning,  
Bob Fairfield 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. Approve minutes of August 25, 2009

**Phil DiVece moved to approve the minutes of the August 25, 2009 Selectmen's meeting.  
Vote 3-0-2** (Curtis and Fairfield abstained).

4. Citizen Comment

Don Jones asked the status of the High Street road sign on upper Main Street. He said he was interested in preserving the history of the town and correctly indicating that Main Street extended from Route 1 to High Street, as had been discussed in the early 1990s by a committee refining street names and numbers. He added that the numbering on High Street continues north to the Congregational Church, which is beyond the intersection with Main Street. He urged the board to change the sign to Main Street. He pointed out that the Musical Wonder House who favored the designation of High Street on this portion of the road already had a directional sign at the Route 1 intersection. Pam Dunning said she has spoken to many people, none of whom considered that portion of the road as Main Street. Bob Blagden asked that the road commissioner be asked to comment at a selectmen's meeting.

In response to Richard Hanson's question on the mill rate, Bob Blagden said that the board had not yet discussed it because the audit was not completed, and it would be necessary to find out what the fund balance was from last year. Hanson also asked whether Point East had paid interest on the \$250,000 payment that was delayed from October to April. Arthur Faucher said a bill had been sent but that the interest had not yet been paid. He added that Point East had been reminded of the payment due in October 2009. Bob Blagden asked the town manager to check if the bill had been sent.

5. Tim Merry: Fire Department Progress Report

Fire Chief Merry reported that 23% of the budget had been spent in two months, and 33 calls were answered. There are currently 37 members of the department and a waiting list of 2. Full complement is 40. In an update of the federal fire pact grant, he said bids packages had been sent to area vendors for gear and equipment, four bids were received and the grant committee will review them later in the week. He said an open house would be held on Wednesday October 7 from 6 to 8 p.m.

6. Town Manager

Dave Gagnon - 20 Year Service Award: Arthur Faucher congratulated Gagnon on 20 years of service to the town. He gave a brief history of Gagnon's employment with the Town of Wiscasset and presented him with plaque commemorating the event.

Review of the 2008 Town Report: Arthur Faucher distributed a collage of color photographs of the town that was proposed as the cover of the 2009 Town Report. The photos in color will cost an additional \$225. He recommended that 200 to 300 additional copies be ordered for the 250th anniversary of the town. The board will decide on the dedication. **Bob Blagden moved to use the mockup in color as the official cover. Vote 5-0-0.**

Posting of town warrants: Faucher reported that the format of the warrant for the September 8 Special Town Meeting was the same as that used since 2006. In order to avoid any problem in the future, the warrant as well as the specimen ballot will contain complete wording of the questions. The town clerk consulted MMA on the matter and was informed that the format of the warrant was acceptable and that there was no requirement that the warrant state "Wiscasset Board of Selectmen" above the selectmen's signatures. Phil DiVece asked that the Selectman designation be placed below the signature lines with the chairman indicated.

Municipal Building entry door replacement award: Faucher recommended that the board accept the bid of Tim Irish, Narrow Door Company, LLC for \$10,545, which includes a \$450 discount for purchasing all doors at the same time. He said that the new doors can be made ADA compliant in the future and that the office back entrance door will have a mailbox to accommodate the public. **Phil DiVece moved to award the municipal building entry door replacement to Narrow Door Company of Gorham, Maine at a price not to exceed \$10,545.**

In response to Bob Blagden's question on the bids for other work, Faucher said that the fuel tank bids were higher than anticipated and the persons who will actually be doing the work will visit the site to explain the high cost. With regard to roof repairs, Pam Lear, building maintenance, had found through research that the roof was installed in 2001-2002 and should be still under warranty. The town report indicates that the balance to 2002 was \$170,617 for the town office roof. Further investigation will be done. Faucher said the roof repairs did not have to be done immediately; the fuel tank and doors were a priority. Vote 5-0-0.

## 7. Other Business

Paula Gibbs asked whether the town had anything in writing pertaining to the roof warranty. Faucher said there is always a warranty on materials, the usual being 10 years, but Pam Lear will check on it with the contractor.

Pam Dunning recommended that Sue Varney be trained to balance the checkbook to avoid having the person who handles money also balance the checkbook, which is the current policy. The auditor has recommended the change. Arthur Faucher said that the treasurer and the town clerk now check each other's work and that cross training is taking place. Phil DiVece said he would like to know who balances the checkbook in other towns and would like to discuss the matter with Sue Varney. The matter was postponed until the next meeting when Varney can attend.

Dunning said that although the town departments work together and sometimes for each other, there is no way for one department to bill another department for the work done. For instance, if the sewer department needs road repair, the road crew may do it, but the cost of that repair is not charged to the sewer department; the highway department absorbs it. The true cost of each department is not known when there is no way for one department to bill another. The auditor has recommended that when an employee works for another department, his hours for that work be noted on the time sheet and the other department billed for his service. **Pam Dunning moved that the Board of Selectmen instruct department heads to begin interdepartmental billing. Vote 5-0-0.** Dunning recommended that department heads meet with Jim George on the process.

Bob Blagden said he had received a memo from Don Jones regarding a request for the SVCA report to appear in the Town Report, which he thought was odd. Blagden agreed and said he hoped it would not be included in the future.

Bob Blagden asked about a discrepancy in the police department payroll where officers were paid for work not performed or that hours reported on the time sheet were not worked. Arthur Faucher said that he, David Nichols (then board chair), Lt. John Allen and a union rep had met, and the union rep had recommended that in lieu of not signing the union contract, the three major officers be given 40 hours of comp time. Bob Blagden said this action was highly irregular, other departments would want the same benefit and it was hard to negotiate contracts when this sort of action took place. None of the three current selectmen, who had been in office at the time, was present when any agreement was made with the police department. Faucher said the recommendation for comp time was not approved by the selectmen. Dunning said the time sheets filled out by the a police department employee were whited out and changed so that 50 hours (the officers work 10-hour days) were not shown as vacation hours but as hours worked when actually they had not been worked. She said public records need to be accurate and she asked where the money had come from.

Dick Hanson asked who, in the absence of the three present selectmen, had made the decision and who had authorized it. He asked who had whited out the time sheets and said whoever authorized it needs to be held accountable and should face disciplinary action.

**Bill Curtis moved to authorize the town manager to conduct an investigation and report back.** Pam Dunning recommended that the board seek legal advice from a specialist in these matters and report to an individual contact person on the board. Phil DiVece said the discussion was entering a gray area and an executive session might be necessary for further discussion.  
**Vote 5-0-0.**

Phil DiVece asked about the status of the comp time policy that he had asked for a month ago. Arthur Faucher said a workshop with David Barrett is planned after the holiday and asked that the board review the material he had submitted to them.

Bob Blagden asked that a workshop be held on the bid process and asked if a bid list had been compiled. Arthur Faucher said that he had asked department heads to submit a list of trades and categories of contractors they would be soliciting for bids. The next meeting will be devoted to a short agenda and a workshop on comp time and the bid policy.

With regard to the harbormaster's hours discussed at a previous meeting, Arthur Faucher said that the report was correct and there was no discrepancy between hours worked and paid. In the future, the salary will be consistent from week to week.

#### 8. Adjourn

At 8:35 p.m., **Pam Dunning moved to adjourn the meeting. Vote 5-0-0.**