

WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN,
BOARD OF ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
FEBRUARY 21, 2012

(tape recorded meeting)

Present: Chair Judy Colby, Bill Curtis, Pam Dunning, Ed Polewarczyk and Town Manager Laurie Smith

Absent: Vice Chair David Nichols

1. Call to Order

The chair called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

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

3. Approval of Treasurer's Warrant: February 14, 2012 and February 21, 2012

Ed Polewarczyk moved to approve the Treasurer's Warrant of February 14, 2012. Vote 4-0-0.

Ed Polewarczyk moved to approve the Treasurer's Warrant of February 21, 2012. Vote 4-0-0.

4. Approval of Minutes: January 31, 2012 and February 7, 2012

Ed Polewarczyk moved to approve the minutes of January 31, 2012. Vote 4-0-0. Pam Dunning moved to approve the minutes of February 7, 2012. Vote 4-0-0.

5. Special Presentations or Awards:

Wiscasset Educational Research Panel (WERP) presentation of petition and information gathered

Doug Smith described the background and work of WERP and presented a package of statistics and options the town had, WERP's recommendation, and the initial financial impact of its conclusion.

He said Wiscasset has 23% of the students in the RSU and pays 35% of the total RSU budget. Wiscasset has the second highest cost per student in the RSU, second only to Westport and the RSU has voted down any change in allocation until at least 2013. He explained the various charts and graphs in the package and options reflecting the pros and cons of different structures ranging from remaining in the RSU, and joining an Alternative Organizational Structure, to a stand-alone school system and a consolidation of Wiscasset school facilities.

WERP recommends that Wiscasset withdraw from RSU 12, join an Alternative Organizational Structure (AOS), and move forward with the conclusion of the 2008 Professional Study that recommended closing the Middle School and creating a K-6 primary school and a 7-12 high school. He explained the budget figures for the withdrawal committee that totaled \$45,000.

Doug Smith asked the Board of Selectmen to place on the June warrant an article which reads, "Article: Do you favor filing a petition for withdrawal with the board of directors of regional school unit RSU 12 and with the Commissioner of Education, authorizing the withdrawal committee to expend \$_____ and authorizing the Selectmen to issue notes in the name of the Town of Wiscasset or otherwise pledge the credit of the Town of Wiscasset in an amount not to exceed \$_____ for this purpose?" He said the wording was set by the ordinance and could not be changed. He also asked for approval of the budget.

According to the law, following a favorable vote on the article by the residents of Wiscasset, a withdrawal committee will be formed consisting of a selectman, a member of the public, a member from the group filing the petition, and one member of the regional school unit board. The charge of the withdrawal committee includes researching answers to issues such as how we educate our children, what proposed structure would be formed, cost of withdrawal, budget for withdrawal, how property would be returned to Wiscasset, how transportation services would be managed, etc. After the committee's recommendation is sent to the Commissioner of Education, he will have 60 days to approve the recommendation and, if withdrawal is recommended and approved, the residents of Wiscasset will vote on it .

Ed Polewarczyk asked for clarification of some of the statistics presented. He disagreed with some of WERP's findings and asked to make a presentation of his analysis to the board at a later date. He said he had asked that a committee be formed, which had not been done; instead the selectmen had endorsed WERP. He said from his research, Wiscasset would be worse off by withdrawing from the RSU and would see a significant increase in taxes.

Constance Schumann asked what other towns might join Wiscasset in an AOS. Smith said that informal conversations had taken place, but no town would talk to Wiscasset until after the referendum is passed and the withdrawal process begins.

Pam Dunning recommended that the selectmen set the budget for the withdrawal committee. Judy Colby asked for a legal opinion on the warrant.

Judy Colby moved to place the article on the June warrant. Vote 4-0-0.

Chris Dilts, businessman and chair of the Wiscasset area Chamber of Commerce, stressed the importance of education and urged residents to carefully consider the matter presented and to encourage others to vote.

A Wiscasset teacher expressed concern about dragging out the process and losing students. She said poor decisions by Wiscasset have been made in the past but there are still things about the schools to be proud of.

Kim Andersson of the RSU board said some of the WERP data presented was five years old and was not true. She said state subsidies have been reduced, and Wiscasset would have to find the \$1.7 million that RSU 12 is now absorbing. She added that other towns are subsidizing Wiscasset, not the other way around.

7. Public Comment on Non-agenda Items - none

8. Department Head or Committee Chair Report

A. Assessor agent regarding the completion of Brynjolfsson abatement request

Sue Varney, Assessors' Agent, following a site inspection, had prepared a revised valuation report for this property (96 Bath Road) taking into consideration functional and economic obsolescence. She recommended an abatement of \$404,700 in valuation resulting in a refund amount of \$6,131.21. **Judy Colby moved that the Board of Selectmen approve an abatement of \$404,700 in valuation resulting in a refund amount of \$6,131.21. Vote 4-0-0.**

Varney said while correcting the Brynjolfsson land value, she had also changed the value of the Potter property next door to reflect the purchase of waterfront property from the Brynjolfssons. The increase in valuation of the Potter property would be \$87,500 resulting in a supplemental bill of \$1,325.63. **Pam Dunning moved that the Selectman correct the Potter valuation by adding \$87,500 in valuation and sending a supplemental tax bill of \$1,325.63. Vote 4-0-0.**

9. Unfinished Business

A. Wiscasset Waterfront Committee recommendations of the Main Street Pier Policy and Application

Town Manager Laurie Smith said the Waterfront Committee had last fall reviewed the policy to address vendors wishing to remain on the pier through the winter. The committee has recommended that vendors pay a non-refundable \$300 or \$400 fee (depending on size) for winter rental of space on the pier and a \$400 or \$600 fee depending on size for seasonal permits. Brian Buck, Chairman of the committee, addressed questions from the board and the policy was changed to the following. No. 2, first bullet, was changed to delete "for" and substitute "beginning"; No. 3 was changed from "shall" to "may"; No. 5 was changed to add "a minimum of five hours per day, five days per week" at the end of the sentence; No. 7 was changed to delete "adequate" and add "in the amount of \$1 million" after "liability insurance." **Pam Dunning moved to adopt the Main Street Pier Policy as amended. Vote 4-0-0. Pam Dunning moved to apply the \$300 deposit from the fall of 2011 to the winter rental for the 2011-2012 winter season. Vote 4-0-0.**

10. New Business

A. Wiscasset Waterfront Committee recommendations for pier vendors

Brian Buck recommended approval of the applications of Cecilio Juntura and Pamela Shockley as vendors on the Main Street pier. **Ed Polewarczyk moved to approve the applications for Shockley and Juntura. Vote 4-0-0.**

B. Ambulance rate changes

Roland Abbott, EMS Chief, recommended increasing ambulance fees in light of increases in the fees paid by Medicare and the fact that the service has not had a rate increase since 2009. He proposed increases in the rates for the seven levels of service ranging from \$4 to \$45. He said the increased rates would cover the service's expenses. **Judy Colby moved to adopt the amended ambulance rates effective March 1, 2012. Vote 4-0-0.**

C. Selectmen Goals

Smith presented the Selectmen Goals for 2012. **Judy Colby moved to adopt the attached document as the goals for 2012.** In response to Ed Polewarczyk's question on the inventory of public and private land to market to developers, Town Planner Misty Gorski said she is already working on identifying available town or privately owned land and the zone, size, and infrastructure of each parcel in order to have information readily available. She will be asking for board feedback. Polewarczyk also suggested that each new board have three or four months to evaluate committees and appoint new members. **Vote 4-0-0.**

11. Town Manager's Report

A. Dedication of Town Report

Smith said the report is being prepared and she asked for volunteers from the board to choose a person to whom the report would be dedicated. Ed Polewarczyk and Pam Dunning volunteered.

B. General Update

Smith said photocopying rates are being raised to 25¢ for 8½ x 11 copies, notary services will be \$1 for residents and \$3 for non-residents, and marriage ceremonies will be \$10.

Smith asked the board to direct the ORC to make suggested changes to the Sign Ordinance to make allowances for congregate signs and to change the boundary for the historic district to exclude the town office, the bank and gas station across the street. **Bill Curtis moved that the Board of Selectmen direct the ORC to address the size of congregate signs, to change the boundary of the historic district to exclude the town hall, bank and Mobil station on Route 1, and to establish a standard size for lettering which would be visible to viewers. Vote 4-0-0.**

Smith reported on the Penobscot Energy Recovery Company (PERC) meeting she had attended with the Boothbay Region Refuse District Board, the Nobleboro station manager, Selectmen Nichols and Curtis and Transfer Station Manager Ron Lear to discuss why there is a need to look at the tipping fee schedule and how it will be affected by 2018 when the contracts are no longer in place unless action is taken. The committee is looking at options and Smith said Wiscasset should not be affected for a couple of years.

12. Other Board Business

A. Executive Session - Economic Development

Judy Colby moved that the Board of Selectmen go into Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(C) to discuss economic development at Mason Station. Vote 4-0-0.

The board entered executive session at 8:55 p.m. and exited at 10 p.m.

13. Adjournment

Pam Dunning moved to adjourn the meeting. Vote 4-0-0.

Selectmen Goals 2012

Overarching goal: To create a quality place building upon the historic nature of Wiscasset providing quality community services at an affordable rate for citizens.

Goals:

1. Economic Development
 - a. Perform a land inventory of public and private land to market to developers
 - b. Answer the question “why Wiscasset” and create marketing through print and web.
2. Grow our resources at the Airport.
 - a. Partner with the Texas Flying legends to create a permanent home for them at the airport.
 - b. Find our niche as an airport especially in relation to Brunswick Naval Air Station.
3. Review town committees
 - a. Evaluate the need for the committees
 - b. Determine whether there should be a length of service for members
 - c. Define the purpose of the committee
 - d. Give the committees direction from the Selectmen
 - e. Establish a reporting procedure between Committees and Selectmen
 - f. Hold a workshop with the committees
4. Ambulance service
 - a. Maintain current service
 - b. Maximize revenues
5. Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating for public fire protection