WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN,

BOARD OF ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR

OCTOBER 6, 2015

Preliminary Minutes 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 6 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Hearing

A. Special Amusement Permit, Wiscasset Raceway: **Ben Rines, Jr., moved to open the public hearing. Vote 4-0-0.**

There was no one present from the raceway. David Cherry asked whether an annual permit was being applied for and recommended that the time period be indicated on the application. Marian Anderson said the recommendation of department heads had not yet been received. **Ben Rines, Jr. moved to close the public hearing. Vote 4-0-0.** Judy Flanagan recommended that the ordinance be clarified to indicate the response time period and the length of the permit**. Ben Rines moved to reschedule the public hearing in two weeks. Vote 4-0-0.** (Note: See below for motion approving the application.)

4. Approval of Minutes

**David Cherry moved to accept the minutes of September 15, 2015 as submitted. Vote 4-0-0.**

5. Approval of Treasurer’s Warrants

**Judy Flanagan moved to approve the Payroll Warrants of September 18, September 25 and October 2, 2015. Vote 4-0-0. Ben Rines, Jr., moved to approve the Accounts Payable Warrants of September 22, September 29 and October 6, 2015. Vote 4-0-0.**

6. Assessors’ Business – none

7. Special Presentations or Awards – none

8. Appointments – none

9. Resignations – none

10. Public Comment

Roger Jones, representing his neighborhood, described the poor condition of Route 144 due partially to the heavy truck traffic on the road. He said he had contacted the Town and the State but nothing had been done. He said there are no sides on the road and he has been told the sides can’t be fixed until the road is paved. The State has scheduled paving for 2017. The speed limit on the road is 45 mph. If the town or state cannot fix the road, Jones asked that the town ask the state to reduce the speed limit to 35 mph. The chair advised Mr. Jones that the Town Manager and board members will be meeting with the DOT on Friday, October 9, and will inquire into the possibility of lowering the speed limit.

Ed Kavanaugh returned with thanks the Boston Post Cane which the Historical Society had borrowed for a display at the Old Jail. The cane has in the past been given to the oldest resident; Kavanaugh presented a pin to be given to the oldest resident.

11. Unfinished Business

A. Currier Langley, Property discussion, Map R01, Lot 044-J: Ben Rines, Jr., reported that the total amount of the delinquent taxes had been paid in full.

B. Discussion on Tax-acquired property: Wendy Paradis, Town attorney, was present to answer questions on the legal aspects of dealing with tax-acquired property. Marian Anderson said the Town had sent out 11 letters to residents who had delinquent tax agreements and an additional 23 letters to residents whose property had been foreclosed but did not have tax agreements. The total tax liability is just over $400,000. The board wishes to reduce the outstanding amount. The board has not taken possession of any of the properties. Paradis said the town’s policy has four options: to take the property back for town purposes; if the overdue taxes are minimal, to contact a realtor; to sell it back to the taxpayer; or to put it out to bid. She advised giving taxpayers an additional 30 days, advising them that the Town owns the property and will take possession if taxes are not paid in full. She recommended that the Town act on vacant land, second homes and non-residential properties first.

In response to Ben Rines’ question, Paradis said that the Town has a fiduciary duty to collect taxes, so it should act on the tax-acquired properties. In response to further questions, Paradis said the Town should insure properties that have been acquired even though possession has not yet taken place. When the Town takes possession, the owners will be tenants at will and can be notified to vacate or eviction will take place. She added that the agreements or installment contracts, if not paid, would be foreclosed on, similar to mortgages, which would take 18 to 24 months and if taken to court, would be expensive. However, she said that the agreement is neat and tight and it is clear that the Town is asserting its ownership in the property, but it should be enforced promptly and consistently. Incentives can be used and the board has discretion in granting them. Guidelines for the board should be in the policy. Ben Rines, Jr., moved to instruct the Town Manager to send out letter to owners of vacant and non-residential properties requesting payment by November 30th or the Town will take possession and put the property out for bid. The motion was later amended to send the letter to owners of vacant property owners only, but was defeated on a 2-1-1 vote (Flanagan opposed and Cherry abstained.) Flanagan said she thought tonight’s meeting was going to provide an opportunity for the public to comment or ask questions.

Judy Flanagan and David Cherry urged the board to develop guidelines, tidy up the method of disposition and hold a workshop to discuss the guidelines. Ben Rines, Jr., recommended that a workshop take place after the election to fill the vacant seat on the board.

In response to a question regarding sewer liens, Paradis said sewer liens can be handled the same as real estate tax liens.

Several residents had questions regarding the status of their taxes.

Item 3A was taken up at this point as Vanessa Jordan from the race track was present. She clarified that the application was made annually. She requested no assistance from Town personnel; the racetrack has its own ambulance. Police Chief Cline said there had been no problems at the track. **Ben Rines moved to rescind the earlier motion. Vote 4-0-0. Ben Rines moved to approve the Special Amusement Permit for Wiscasset Speedway, LLC . Vote 4-0-0.**

C. Federal Street Update: Ed Kavanaugh reported a flatbed tractor trailer truck, over the 6,000-pound limit, had traveled down Federal Street to Route 1 and had blocked the intersection in attempting to turn the corner onto Route 1 north. Chief Cline recommended calling him to report illegal truck traffic so that he could stop the truck.

12. New Business

A. Application for temporary liquor license for catered function at Marianmade Farm: It was noted that the application was for state approval but needed a town acknowledgement. **Jeff Slack moved to approve the temporary liquor license application. Vote 4-0-0.**

B. Pole Permit – Municipal Certification for installation of Phone Service at 12 Lobster Lane: **Jeff Slack moved to approve the permit (after inserting “Wiscasset”). Vote 4-0-0.**

C. Wiscasset Municipal Airport lease renewal for office rental space for tenant Peregrine Turbine Technologies: **Judy Flanagan moved to accept the agreement. Vote 4-0-0.**

D. Review of H. M. Payson Statement of Accounts: The statement was distributed.

13. Department Head or Committee Chair Report

The reports were distributed.

14. Town Manager’s Report

Marian Anderson said an update on the solar energy project would be on the next agenda.

CMP is currently working on the connection to switch to the new (used) generator which should be completed on October 7. She thanked Ken Boudin and Kevin Sprague for their efforts.

The Town Manager will be attending the MMA conference on October 7 and 8.

Judy Flanagan demonstrated how much paper would be saved if the selectmen’s packets were double-sided. Her motion to double-side where appropriate the selectmen’s meeting packets to save paper and set an example failed on a 2-2 vote.

Flanagan noted that there was no report from the Ambulance Department and was advised that it would be on the next agenda.

Ben Rines, Jr., said the 25th anniversary dinner at the Senior Center was excellent and thanked the center for inviting the selectmen.

15. Adjournment

**Jeff Slack moved to adjourn. Vote 4-0-0.**