

WISCASSET BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BOARD OF ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
NOVEMBER 18, 2008

Preliminary Minutes

(Tape Recorded meeting)

Present: Bill Curtis, Phil DiVece, Bob Fairfield, Chairman David Nichols, Vice Chairman Nicole Viele 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 November 4, 2008

The minutes were amended to correct Lt. John Allen's report to indicate that 34% of the fiscal year had passed and the Police Department had spent only 28% of its budget, although several line items were over budget. Phil DiVece asked that Bob Blagden, Road Commissioner, be included in the last sentence of the fourth paragraph on page 2. **Phil DiVece moved to accept the minutes of November 4, 2008 as amended.** DiVece said he omitted expressing his appreciation to Les Wentworth and John Grundy for filling in at the Transfer Station. **Vote 4-0-1** (Viele abstained).

4. Citizen Comment

George Green noted that the Town was locked into a \$4.52 price for fuel, whereas the current price was now \$2.50, and he asked whether there was any way to get out of the contract legally. David Nichols asked the Town Manager to check with MMA on the matter.

Regarding the future of the schools, George Green asked whether the Town would save money if it used the high school for grades K through 8. He was advised to contact the School Board. The School Board will be invited to the next meeting to address questions on the closing of the middle school, the use of portable classrooms and necessary repairs to the primary and middle schools.

In response to Ed Polewarczyk's comment on the closure of the middle school by the consolidated school district, Nicole Viele said that it would require the approval of voters of all eight towns. She will supply Mr. Polewarczyk with a copy of the plan.

New Business

5. Department Head Reports

Chief Timothy Merry - Fire Department: Merry gave a breakdown of the 34 calls in the past three months, reported that the department has 38 members and the equipment is in good shape. There are four people on the waiting list, but his department cannot afford to hire more members at this time. His primary concern was the need for turnout gear, which he is trying to replace at the rate of two sets per year at a cost of \$2500 each. At the end of the first quarter, expenditures were 25% of budget. Bill Curtis recommended that the Selectmen and Budget

Committee accept an increase in the fire department budget to allow the purchase of six sets of turnout gear. In response to Phil DiVece's question, Merry said that there has been some interest expressed by buyers in the old truck at the training facility. It will be disposed of and any money realized will be given to the training facility. Bill Curtis said ladder trucks now cost \$800,000 to \$1 million and the town should be putting away money to replace its ladder truck at the appropriate time.

Ervin Deck - Municipal Airport: Deck reported that a mower had been purchased, the hay had been cut, weeds and shrubs cut, the fuel tanks were painted, a new light pole was installed and windows in the FBO building were replaced. He will be meeting with the FAA and State regarding the construction of a 40' x 50' snow removal equipment building that will be 97-1/2% funded by the FAA and State. He said expenditures were 35.6% of the budget at 35% of the fiscal year. The FBO is doing well and the fly-in in October was a success with plane rides provided for 50 to 60 kids. In response to Bill Curtis' question, Deck said the last consultant's contract expired in May; the Airport Committee had decided that a consultant was not needed at this time, but will be selecting a consultant in the spring for the master plan in the fall. Bill Curtis said that in light of potential economic development in the town, it was important to go forward with the master plan and he recommended that the airport committee maintain more frequent contact with the Board of Selectmen.

In response to Arthur Faucher's question, Deck said the FAA does not subsidize the consultant fee for the master plan but that it is part of the contract. Phil DiVece thanked Deck and the airport crew for the fly-in.

Roland Abbott - Ambulance Service: Abbott reported that expenses are below budget at 28.78% spent at 34.61% of the fiscal year. Ambulance #87 was recently repaired at the town garage at a cost of \$986. Current daytime personnel are down to six people; the service is losing employees to private ambulance services that pay better hourly rates than Wiscasset. Wiscasset pays \$3 per hour for standby whereas the private companies pay \$11 to \$17 per hour for a 12-hour shift. Volume has increased from 637 calls in 2007 to 606 calls to date in 2008. There are adequate personnel for the first ambulance, but the second ambulance, if needed, is the problem. Alternatives are being explored such as using town employees; however, personnel are not paid for training. Abbott recommended that Dickey Brigance be appointed as Assistant EMA Director. Abbott was asked to forward information on the scope of duties for this position as well as a resume and letter of recommendation before the Board takes action on filling the position. Phil DiVece asked that Abbott develop a plan for the daytime manpower issue as part of the budget planning for next year.

Todd Souza - Recreation Department: Souza reported that Jeff Slack had resigned and because of the current economy and revenue level, personnel shifts had been made in-house. He said the department's responsibilities at the waterfront and airport had been completed. Revenue is down \$11,000 from last year but his department is running \$10,700 under expenses compared to the previous year. He reported that 26% of the budget has been spent; normally, by this time 37% has been spent because of summer programs. The center is changing to green chemicals, a warming oven has been installed in the senior center, and new tires have been purchased for the plow truck. He said that there are 13 youth soccer teams, 66 members on the swim team and 60% to 70% of the middle school students are attending the dances. The center is stable financially.

6. Town Manager's Report

The Town manager reported that the taxes had been paid on the property of Brian and Darcy Sukeforth. **Bill Curtis moved to sign the property lien release deed. Vote 5-0.**

Arthur Faucher and the Road Commissioner recommended the municipal officers approve a construction overlimit permit for vehicles traveling on town ways to the Montsweag Arch Railroad Bridge project and that the town request the contractor to obtain a bond to cover the cost of any damage that might occur as a result of the overweight loads, which may not be evident until the spring. Bob Blagden recommended a bond for \$500,000. **Nicole Viele moved to authorize the use of heavy equipment and recommend to the MDOT that the contractor provide a bond of \$500,000. Vote 5-0.**

Arthur Faucher said the Christmas tree lighting would take place on December 6 at 4:30.

Mark Antony's restaurant will hold a fundraiser for the high school on November 29 from 11:30 to 3 P.M.

Positive Matters Foundation, the nonprofit organization that runs Lincoln County Family Holiday Wishes Program, and the Town of Wiscasset Santa Fund are teaming up for the 2008 Santa Fund and Adopt-A-Family program. Those wishing to donate gifts may pick up tags at the town office or community center.

7. Other Business

David Nichols moved to name the Rines' driveway off West Alna Road Bumpa Lane. Vote 5-0.

Katharine Martin-Savage's letter to the board advised that the Woody Freeman Memorial Tree would be planted in the spring and that contributions may be sent to the Wiscasset Town Office.

In accordance with Bob Blagden's request, Arthur Faucher will write a letter of commendation to Les Wentworth for the excellent job he has done at the transfer station.

Nomination papers are available at the town office for three positions as director of the Sheepscot Valley Regional School Unit. Papers must be returned by November 28, 2008.

Phil DiVece reminded the board that there is a vacancy on the Budget Committee and asked what the timeline was for hiring the administrative secretary. He asked if interviews could be conducted in order to make an offer in early December for a start date at the first of the year. Board members will forward their choices among the resumes received to the Town Manager who will set up interviews.

8. Adjourn

Bob Fairfield moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Vote 5-0.