

TOWN OF WISCASSET
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
January 17, 2008

The meeting was called to order by Chair Steve Mehrl at 7:24 PM at the Wiscasset Municipal Building.

Budget committee Members in attendance: Chairman Steve Mehrl, Judith Colby, Sherri Dunbar, Pamela Dunning, and Robert Fairfield, Sr. Town Manager, Arthur Faucher and Selectman Phil DiVece were also present. Members absent were George Green, Kerry Leeman, Karl Tarbox and Tony True.

Acceptance of the agenda for the meeting was moved by Judith Colby, seconded by Robert Fairfield. Motion passed 5-0.

Chair Steve Mehrl announced a meeting with Todd Sousa at the Wiscasset Community Center for 2:30 PM on Friday January 18. He encouraged any interested members of the Budget Committee to attend the meeting to hear some new ideas from the WCC.

Chair Steve Mehrl asked Town Manager, Arthur Faucher what date would be open for an open town meeting to allow the public to vote on funding the position of Assessor's Agent. Arthur gave the date of February 2, 2008 as a probable day.

Town Manager, Arthur Faucher introduced Richard Forrest as a member of the Shell Fish Conservation committee. Richard Forrest talked about the Shell Fish Conservation budget and described some areas of the expenditures and revenues. Richard further talked about the Ordinance (Article X.6) that demands the conservation efforts. Richard explained some of the clam seeding process and how the hours of conservation were recorded to prove which clam diggers were eligible for their license. Chair, Steve Mehrl thanked Richard Forrest for describing the Shell Fish Conservation Committee and for explaining their policies and procedures.

Town Manager, Arthur Faucher introduced Harbor Master, David Sutter. Arthur described some of the work done on the waterfront property this year. Arthur continued to talk about a small harbor improvement grant of \$150,000 for working waterfronts that for which Wiscasset had applied to use on the Memorial Pier. Receiving the grant money would require the Town of Wiscasset to raise matching funds. Harbor Master David Sutter talked about the work he has completed this year. The repairs included replacing seating at the waterfront with park benches, roof repair, painting and updating the fixtures in the building at the waterfront and rebuilding the walkway between the ramps by the yacht club. Work that is still pending is the replacement of rotting planks on the Creamery Pier. A temporary fix using hemlock has been put in place but will need to be done with pressure treated lumber at some point. There was some discussion about boat launching fees and why they are not collected any longer. The main reasons were the decline in public relations, complaint from the public and members of the public who were launching in other towns where fees were not collected. There followed some

discussion about adding and removing pilings and the conservations that were involved in the process. There was also some discussion about a software program that would plot and keep track of all equipment, mooring slips and inventory left under water. The software would cost between \$400 and \$1400, depending on the options that were purchased. There was an explanation that the ordinance that governs the Waterfront & harbors would need to be edited to include limits to equipment allowed so the software could be used effectively. The Ferry Landing area had some repairs made a few years ago but still has issues that need to be addressed. Referring back to the small harbor grant, Chair Steve Mehrl asked where the matching funds would be raised. Town Manager, Arthur Faucher said that Wiscasset had established a repairs reserve account that currently had approximately \$265,000 in the repairs reserve account and another approximately \$5,500,000 in the large reserve account. He recommends that Wiscasset use interest from these accounts be used for the required matching funds. The grant would pay \$150,000 and Wiscasset's 92% matching funds would amount to \$137,700. Chair, Steve Mehrl thanked Harbor Master, David Sutter for his time.

Town Manager, Arthur Faucher said he would supply revenue information on these two accounts for the next meeting.

There was discussion of setting a date for the Planning & Development and Code Enforcement offices. The date was set at February 6, 2008. .

Discussion moved on to the funding of the Assessor's Agent and Human Resources positions. Town Manager, Arthur Faucher and Selectman Phil DiVece briefly explained what the union contract for these positions demanded and how negotiations may proceed in the future. Further explanation described the consequences to the town if these positions were not funded. Members spoke about how the positions had developed and how they may change in the future. Judith Colby asked for an explanation of how the unions had come to the personnel in the Municipal Building. There was a discussion about when Wiscasset employees first joined unions. Pamela Dunning made the motion that the town of Wiscasset vote to raise and appropriate \$30,328.12 to fund the remaining of the year for the Town Assessor position. Motion was seconded by Robert Fairfield. Motion passed 5-0.

Having no further business, Robert Fairfield made the motion to close the meeting. Motion was seconded by Judith Colby. Motion passed 5-0. Meeting closed at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Pamela Dunning.