

Wiscasset Waterfront Committee Minutes

Monday March 19, 2001

Present: Chairman Don Jones, David Brown, Ken Cooper, Phil DiVece, Joseph Piccirillo, and Harbormaster Bill Sutter.

Guests: Judith Foss

The meeting was called to order at 7:15pm. A quorum was present. The minutes of the February 19th meeting were approved without change. It was agreed to return to a 7pm start time beginning at the next meeting. Newly appointed member Phil DiVece arrived and was warmly welcomed. The Waterfront Committee had now returned to full strength of five members.

The Harbormaster reported that the float at the Old Ferry Landing had been pulled from the water and was safe from ice damage. One complaint had been received by the town that it had been left partly blocking the launch ramp. Ken Cooper and the Harbormaster both disputed that. The Harbormaster also reported that local Marine Wardens had been contacted to facilitate the return or disposal of unclaimed lobster traps at the Waterfront Park.

Judith Foss of Stafford associates reported that marine developer Davies Allan of Westport was interested in building a marina off the Creamery Pier. The committee asked her to invite him to the April 9 meeting to discuss details of his proposal. Foss further reported that Ford Reiche CEO of Safe Handling, Inc. was prepared to run a passenger excursion train out of Wiscasset this summer if the town backed the idea. The committee recommended that he be asked to address the town at a regularly scheduled April selectmen's meeting to gauge public support. A further consideration is the schedule of track maintenance planned by MDOT this summer on the Rockland Branch. Foss agreed to work out details with Reiche to meet with the selectmen.

Foss also touched on the probability of resistance in the fishing community to efforts to bring cruise ships to Wiscasset. The committee agreed that the issue might be sensitive, but that cruise ships were an important part of a comprehensive waterfront development plan, and should be vigorously pursued.

The committee took note of lack of opposition to Port and Harbor ordinance changes offered at the February 22 public hearing. The committee was content with the grouping of the proposed changes into four warrant articles for the March 24 Town Meeting.

The members then turned to a discussion of the letter from the MDOT outlining a new federal grant program called the Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program. The grants are designed to build or upgrade public or partnered private facilities for transient recreational boats over 26 feet long.

The committee agreed to recommend to the selectmen that an application be submitted to fund major maintenance improvements to the waterfront facilities. The committee revised, for submittal to the selectmen, a rough draft prepared by the chairman and recommended four maintenance items costing \$48,000. Town match of 25% would be required. The four items were replacement of the fender pilings on Memorial Pier and the boardwalk, replacement of stringers and planking on the boardwalk, replacement of the remaining wooden ramp with an aluminum one, and installation of the previously purchased pumpout facility.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm. The next meeting will be on Monday April 9, 2001 in the map room at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted
Donald Jones, Chairman