

WISCASSET SELECT BOARD,  
TAX ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR  
MARCH 16, 2021 VIA ZOOM

Preliminary Minutes

Present: Kim Andersson, Chair Pam Dunning, Vice Chair Kathy Martin-Savage, Jeff Slack,  
Sarah Whitfield and Town Manager Dennis Simmons

Pam Dunning called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

1. Approval of Treasurer's Warrants

a. **Kathy Martin-Savage moved to approve the payroll warrants of March 5 and March 12, 2021. Vote 5-0-0.**

b. **Kathy Martin-Savage moved to approve the accounts payable warrants of March 9 and March 16, 2021. Vote 5-0-0.**

2. Approval of Minutes

a. March 2, 2021: **Kathy Martin-Savage moved to approve the minutes as amended. Vote 5-0-0.**

b. March 9, 2021: **Kathy Martin Savage moved to approve the minutes as amended. Vote 5-0-0.**

3. Special Presentations or Awards – none

4. Committee Appointments

- a. Sharon Jacques, Budget Committee
- b. Donald Oyster, Ordinance Review Committee

**Kathy Martin Savage moved to appoint Sharon Jacques to the Budget Committee and Donald Oyster to the Ordinance Review Committee. Vote 5-0-0.**

5. Public Hearings – none

6. Public Comment on Non-agenda Items

Ed Polewarczyk asked where he could obtain a copy of the draft solar ordinance which is the subject of a public hearing on March 22. He was advised that the Clerk's office had a copy and that one would be emailed to him.

7. Department Head or Committee Chair

a. Susan Robson, Waterfront Committee, Pier Vendor Permit Applications: Susan Robson reported that five pier vendor applications had been received. **Sarah Whitfield moved to approve the pier vendor applications of Frank Sprague, Sprague's Lobster; Wiscasset Chamber of Commerce; Todd**

**and Elke Jubinville, The Potters Shed; Sal Matori, Maine Bay Bowls, LLC; and Ronald Leeman, Forgotten Recipes. Vote 5-0-0.** Duane Goud asked about the possibility of reducing Frank Sprague's deposit because the money is just sitting there for the entire summer, and Pam Dunning said she will look into it.

b. Department Head Monthly Reports: Kim Andersson congratulated the Parks & Recreation on the receipt of a \$15,000 contribution. Kathy Martin-Savage said she appreciated all the reports.

#### 8. Unfinished Business

a. High School Ad Hoc study committee question for town warrant: Kathy Martin-Savage moved to place the following question on the June Town Meeting Warrant: "Shall the Town authorize the Selectmen to form an ad hoc committee to study the financial impact of the Wiscasset School Department discontinuing to offer grades 9-12 and offer those students tuition at a local school of their choice."

Sarah Whitfield opposed the motion on the basis that the wording was negative, and the language of the question should look at the future, not about closing school, but about the future of the school, both expansion and status quo. It should offer alternatives. Kathy Martin-Savage disagreed saying that it was not only about closing but also about looking at the financial impact of tuitioning grades 9 to 12 students to the school of their choice. Kim Andersson said the intent of the motion was not reflected in the wording and agreed with Sarah Whitfield in the change of wording. She said the present wording is misleading and negative and that the board didn't know all the options that the town had.

Whitfield offered the following: "Shall the Town authorize the Selectmen to form an ad hoc committee to study the future of the Wiscasset School Department including all options for expansion, consolidation, or continuing the status quo."

With regard to the current wording of the warrant question, Jeff Slack said he had asked that wording not be broadened because if the motion were too vague and the committee were not directed, it would be hard to get anything done. Sarah Whitfield said that was not the spirit of the discussion.

Pam Dunning said options are to vote or not vote on the motion or change it to a larger scope of inquiry by the committee. She said all options should be examined, such as what the town would save by closing the school, what it would gain with expansion. Kathy Martin-Savage said the motion was step one in the process of gathering information. Kim Andersson said although the board may understand the intent of the motion, the townspeople would read it as voting to close the high school. She added that broad language should be used because the board didn't know all the options. Sarah Whitfield said the motion wording was too broad and it would be a waste of time to look at only one issue – the board should be looking at the future. After further discussion, the vote on the warrant article failed: **Vote: 2-3-0** (Andersson, Dunning and Whitfield opposed).

**Sarah Whitfield moved to place the following question on the town warrant: "Shall the Town authorize the Selectmen to form an ad hoc committee to study the future of the Wiscasset School Department including all options for expansion, consolidation, or continuing the status quo." Vote 4-1-0 (Martin-Savage opposed).**

## 9. New Business

a. New Business Licenses: **Kathy Martin-Savage moved to approve the business licenses for Francois Byasson McCoy, DBA Marston House, LLC, 101 Main Street; and Jean Beattie Flynn, DBA Sheepscot Bay Physical Therapy, 35 Water Street. Vote 5-0-0.**

b. Request from First Congregational Church-Sunrise Easter Service at Town Pier. **Kathy Martin-Savage moved to approve the request from the First Congregational Church for the Easter sunrise service. Vote 4-0-1 (Whitfield abstained)**

c. Maine Department of Transportation Utility Receivable Agreement. **Kathy Martin-Savage moved to authorize the Town Manager to execute the Maine Department of Transportation Utility Receivable Agreement for Federal Aid Project Numbers: NHPP-2250(900), NHPP-1889(200), and NHPP-2250(800) and State WINS: 22509.00 & 18892.00 and 18892.00 and 22508.00. Vote 5-0-0.** Simmons said the agreement covered finishing of the manholes and payment will not be due until 2022.

d. EMS uncollectible debt - \$69,674.88: **Kathy Martin-Savage moved to write off the uncollectible debt totaling \$69,674.88 and send the accounts to the collection agency. Vote 5-0-0.** This will affect this year's budget although the write-offs are for 2019 and 2020.

e. Proposal for Ancient Cemetery Improvements – Peter Wells: At Dunning's request, Dennis Simmons reported that under the town policy the Perpetual Care Fund can be used only for maintenance; under State law Title 1308, perpetual care funds can be used only for maintenance, although maintenance is not defined. Section 1305 says that if the town maintains two funds, the Town's fund of \$130,000 from lot sales could be used for improvements. Replacing a fence could be considered maintenance; however, an arch, entryway, benches, etc. would not be considered maintenance.

Peter Wells, landscape architect, who lives across from the cemetery and is witness its use, presented options for a new entryway and fencing. He showed drawings of four options using a combination of designs for entryways and steps and options for arches and fences. He advocated replacing the fencing which would define the area, give protection, deter vandalism and avoid cut throughs and unauthorized uses. Cheapest fence would be granite bollard and chain, most expensive stone wall.

In response to questions, Dennis Simmons said there is \$35,000 in the budget for a vinyl fence, although the cost may have increased, and if the amount were increased to \$40,000 and not used, the money goes back into the fund with no cost to the taxpayers. He recommended approving the highest amount for the fence and voting on it. Taking the fence down would be done by Public Works. Estimates for a vinyl fence is \$35,000, composite \$65,000 to \$70,000, metal \$50,000 to \$60,000.

After discussion it was decided to add \$40,000 for the fence to the \$138,882 in the budget. It was suggested that the fence not be torn down until a new fence is decided upon. Susan Blagden who opposes a vinyl fence said that there may be people in town who would contribute to the cemetery improvements. It was suggested that the Cemetery Committee be resurrected and involved in the

plans for the cemetery. Terry Heller said the Appearance of the Town Committee would be willing to assist.

f. Monthly Financials

- H.M. Payson State of Accounts
- Year-to-date expense reports

g. Budget Discussion

- **Kathy Martin-Savage moved to appropriate \$173,882 for the Department of Cemeteries. Vote 5-0-0.**
- Public Utilities: In response to a question posed at the budget meeting regarding private hydrants, Simmons said that the six private hydrants were installed on Point East property and when the Town foreclosed, the Town took over the hydrants. **Kathy Martin-Savage moved to appropriate \$317,930 for public utilities. Vote 5-0-0.**
- Revenues: **Kim Andersson moved to approve \$2,803,949 for Revenues. Vote 4-1-0 (Slack opposed).**

10. Town Manager's Report

Dennis Simmons reported that nomination papers are available for the Board of Selectmen, School Committee Budget Committee and Water District Board of Trustees.

Simmons attended Federal Discussion meetings via zoom with all four members of Maine's Congressional delegation. Presentation on pressing issues in Maine – COVID, funding for infrastructure and need for improved broadband were given.

Reminders of the next property tax due date on April 23 were sent out.

Simmons attended a meeting of Friends of Wiscasset Village; discussion centered on the Ancient Cemetery.

Chief Hesselstine and Simmons attended a Zoom meeting with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office on the county animal control program.

Simmons said that the sand/salt shed is off-limits to the public; however, a pile of sand is located outside just to the right of the entrance to the parking lot. Limit is two 5-gallon pails. There has been a problem with freezing, and Simmons and Ted Snowden will be working on a better solution.

12. Adjournment

**Kathy Martin-Savage moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.**