

WISCASSET SELECTBOARD
TAX ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
FEBRUARY 20, 2024
IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM

Present: James Andretta, Pam Dunning, Terry Heller, Vice Chair Bill Maloney, Chair Sarah Whitfield, and Town Manager Dennis Simmons

The chair called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Approval of Treasurer's Warrants

- a. **Terry Heller moved to approve the payroll warrants for February 9 and February 16, 2024. Vote 5-0-0.**
- b. **Terry Heller moved to approve the accounts payable warrant for February 14, 2024. Vote 5-0-0.**

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. **Terry Heller moved to approve the minutes of January 16, 2024. Vote 3-0-2 (Dunning and Whitfield abstained).**
- b. **Terry Heller moved to approve the minutes of February 6, 2024, as amended. Vote 3-0-2 (Andretta and Dunning abstained).**

4. Special Presentations or Awards – none

5. Committee Appointments

- a. **Pam Dunning moved to appoint Patrick Sandefur to the Climate Action Team. Vote 5-0-0.**
- b. **Pam Dunning moved to appoint Stephen Williams to the Airport Advisory Committee. Vote 5-0-0.**
- c. **Pam Dunning moved to appoint Terry Heller to the Appearance of the Town Committee. Vote 5-0-0.**

6. Public Hearings

- a. March 5, 2024, Town Meeting Articles

Pam Dunning moved to open the public hearing at 6:06 p.m. Vote 5-0-0. Karen Sullivan asked, relative to the affordable housing ordinance, if there was any guarantee that the 30-year covenant would ensure that housing would be well maintained for that period of time, whether it would result in a drain on town resources and if the town would check to ensure that the housing remains affordable for the 30-year period. Emily Rabb, Wiscasset Town Planner, said the Planning Board would require a site plan review which would set standards and a covenant to ensure long-term affordability. The ordinance requires periodic checks as well as covenants. If the developer obtains a grant from Maine Housing, that

organization will also track the covenants and ensure that if there is a turnover in the rentals, the original terms will be carried out to ensure affordability. Dennis Simmons said the ordinance and a summary sheet about the ordinance changes are available on the town website. **Terry Heller moved to close the public hearing at 6:11 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.**

7. Public Comment on non-agenda items – none

8. Department head or committee chair

a. Wiscasset Climate Action Team – Town Climate Resolution: Cassandra Rose, chair of the Wiscasset Climate Action Team (WCAT), presented a non-binding resolution to the board for its approval. The team has worked since 2023 to prepare Wiscasset to join the Maine Community Resilience Partnership and to qualify the town for a \$50,000 grant to support climate resilience projects. By passing the resolution, Wiscasset will become a more competitive applicant for many federal programs that help towns with resilience, clean energy, and efficiency projects and will qualify Wiscasset to apply for many other state grant programs which could provide funding to partially support the town's project to move the wastewater treatment plant out of harm's way. Sarah Whitfield clarified that none of the work so far has cost the town any money and that the resolution is non-binding. **Terry Heller moved to approve the Town of Wiscasset Climate Change Action Resolution. Vote 5-0-0.**

The discussion which followed centered on possible uses for grant or matching grant money. The deadline for a decision on a project is March 29. Regarding funds for the waterfront, Shri Verrill advised using the funds from the partnership as matching funds for other grants and listed possible grant sources. She will assist in writing the grant when a project is decided upon. Discussion following the presentation included the possibility of obtaining grants or matching funds for the wastewater treatment plant, the generators at the town office and community center, solar panels, Fore Street flooding, and electric vehicle charging stations. Emily Rabbe, Planner and Regional Coordinator, indicated that additional funding will be available soon and there is the opportunity to coordinate with other towns in applying for federal grants. Dennis Simmons recommended that the board delay applying for grants for heat pumps until Johnson Controls finishes its work and makes a recommendation. It was the consensus that the grant application should prioritize the waterfront, including more than just Fore Street.

b. Waterfront Committee – Pier Vendor Permit Application revision – Susan Robson, Chair of the Waterfront Committee, reported that the application had been updated and changes had been made in the fee schedule. She said the policies now match the application. A renewal application has been created for current vendors and the applications can be filed online. **Terry Heller moved to approve the Pier Vendor application and policies for 2024 as recommended. Vote 5-0-0.**

c. Department Head monthly reports – Airport: Simmons reported that fuel sales were down in January, there were 141 operations in January and there is a problem with the lights on both ends of the runway; however, they are owned, and will be repaired, by the FAA.

9. Unfinished Business

a. Firearms discharge discussion – Sarah Whitfield said an article in the Bangor Daily News on this subject was misreported. She added that before any action can be taken on the subject of firearms, the matter would first be assigned to the Ordinance Review Committee to investigate and make a

recommendation. Any change in the ordinance would require a public hearing before being put on the Town Meeting ballot.

Leslie Roberts said that although she had no problem with hunting, she did object to hunters shooting in the cove below Castle Tucker. She pointed out that other towns have restrictions and she asked that hunting be prohibited in the cove. She submitted letters from nearby residents and language suggested by the Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife.

Sarah Whitfield said the town cannot regulate hunting but can have a firearms discharge regulation. Doug Kulis, Maine State Game Warden, said that under state law a municipality cannot charge a fee or regulate hunting, fishing, or trapping, but it can have a firearms discharge ordinance. Such an ordinance would be enforced by the town's police. Dennis Simmons will check with Maine Municipal Association on case law regarding regulating firearms within the town limits. Discussion of state and municipal regulations, public safety laws, and areas prohibiting shooting was followed by two hunters who spoke against restricting hunting. **Pam Dunning moved that the Ordinance Review Committee investigate ordinances of other towns and come back with a recommendation. Vote 4-1-0 Andretta opposed.**

b. Tax Map Conversion and GIS Internet Proposal – Dennis Simmons said that he had had favorable recommendations from towns that had worked with CAI Technologies and asked that the board approve accepting the proposal without going through the bid process. **Pam Dunning moved to authorize the Town Manager to go forward with the CAI proposal and skip the RFP process. Vote 5-0-0.**

c. Wawenock Block Update: Sarah Whitfield said she had received a report that work on the Wawenock Block was ongoing and continuing to progress.

d. Set date for joint workshop with Waterfront Committee and Climate Action Team: March 12 at 6 p.m. was tentatively set for the meeting. The date will be confirmed later.

10. New Business

a. Code Enforcement Officer appointment: Bruce Engert has been working under an interim contract and Simmons recommended his appointment. **Terry Heller said she was excited to move to appoint Bruce Engert Code Enforcement Officer. Vote 5-0-0.**

b. Monthly Financials

- H.M.Payson Statement of Accounts
- Year to date department expense/revenue reports

c. Renewal of Farmers' Market Authorization – Wiscasset Farmers' Market – **Pam Dunning moved to approve the application of Wiscasset Farmers' Market for the sale of alcoholic beverages. Vote 5-0-0.**

11. Assessors Business

12. Town Manager's Report

Dennis Simmons reported that he had met with Wright Pierce in a pre-construction meeting to replace the culvert on the Ferry Road site. The contract will be signed next week. A temporary bridge beside the

existing structure will provide one-way access with traffic lights. The work should be completed by the end of April, at which point the project will be taken over by the state DOT.

Capital budgets will be distributed on Wednesday, March 21.

13. Other Board Business

At James Andretta's request, the alcohol policy at the Community Center for catered events was clarified; BYOB is not allowed and alcohol may be served only by a licensed entity.

14. Adjournment

Pam Dunning moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.