**Town of Wiscasset**

2024 Wiscasset Ordinance Changes Explained

On June 11th, voters in Wiscasset will be asked to amend four ordinances: Budget Committee, Shoreland Zoning, Recreational Vehicles, Flood Plains. Additionally, voters will be asked to amend the ordinance book Glossary. All of the proposed changes, except for the Budget Committee, deal with recreational vehicles.

Voters are being asked to amend Article I Town Officials, Section 2 Budget Committee as follows:

* change the committee from a committee that is elected to one that is appointed by the selectboard. The main reason for this change stems from the fact that people seldom (never in the past four years) take out nomination papers and run to be elected, as now required. Each town meeting several people are elected by write-in. Most of the time these people decline to be appointed. It is then up to the selectboard to appoint members to the committee. Under the current ordinance, these appointments expire each year at town meeting. Once that happens, the entire process starts over again. The change would allow the selectboard to appoint all members of the committee for three-year terms, thus eliminating the annual expiration of most all of the committee at the same time. This should make for a more consistently appointed committee in the long term.
* The second change in the ordinance is to bring the ordinance’s budget process in line with our current referendum town meeting. The current language was drafted around an open (in person) town meeting. The change allows for the process to apply to either a referendum or an open town meeting.

The final three ordinance changes and the Glossary change all apply to the use of recreational vehicles as temporary dwelling units. We currently have three ordinances that regulate the temporary use of recreational vehicles as dwelling units: Article X Section 4, Flood Plains Ordinance, Article X Section 7, Recreational Vehicles and Article XII, Shoreland Zoning. Each of these Articles contain different regulations on how long a recreational vehicle can be used as a dwelling unit

* Article X Section 4 states a recreation vehicle may be a dwelling unit for “fewer than 180 days”
* Article X Section 7 states a recreational vehicle may be used as a dwelling unit “temporarily” but does not define what “temporarily” is making it an arbitrary number that is difficult to enforce.
* Article XII Shoreland Zone states that a recreational vehicle may not be on-site for more than 120 days.

The purpose of the proposed changes is to make all three ordinances more consistent: all three ordinances shall state that a recreational vehicle may not be used as a temporary dwelling unit for more than 120 days annually. It further clarifies that a recreational vehicle that is not used as a temporary dwelling unit may be stored on private property year-round, as long as it is located outside of the flood plain or shoreland zone. Those will be restricted to the 120-day requirement. We were told by the state those requirements had to remain in the ordinance.

The last change is to the Glossary. We currently have two different definitions of a recreational vehicle, one in the Glossary and a different definition in the Flood Plains ordinance. This change makes the definition the same across both ordinances.