

WISCASSET SELECTBOARD  
TAX ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR  
6 P.M. DECEMBER 19, 2023  
IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM

Preliminary Minutes

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. **Pam Dunning moved to approve the payroll warrants of December 8, FY24 and December 15, FY 24. Vote 5-0-0.**

b. **Terry Heller moved to approve the accounts payable warrants of December 12, FY 24 and December 19, FY 24. Vote 5-0-0.**

3. Approval of Minutes

**Terry Heller moved to approve the minutes of December 5, 2023. Vote 5-0-0.**

4. Special Presentations or Awards – none

5. Committee Appointments/Resignations – none

6. Public Hearings

a. Liquor license renewal: Renn Restaurant Group DBA Back River Bistro - **Pam Dunning moved to open the public hearing at 6:02 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.** There was no discussion. **Terry Heller moved to close the public hearing at 6:03 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.** **Bill Maloney moved to approve the Liquor License for Renn Restaurant Group LLC dba Back River Bistro. Vote 5-0-0.**

7. Public Comment – none

8. Department head or committee chair

- a. Monthly Reports
- b. Financials
- c. HM Payson

9. Unfinished Business

a. Wawenock Block Update: Dennis Simmons reported that there had been an issue with flashing due to the storm and the open windows which reportedly had been boarded up. Other than that, no activity seemed to be taking place.

## 10. New Business

### a. Economic Development Director

Consider approving an Economic Development Committee Directive: Simmons said there had been mixed reactions to the Economic Development Committee Directive which Aaron Chrostowsky had developed. The directive describes the Economic Development Committee as an advisory committee that would recommend short and long term economic and community development goals, policies, and strategies. The committee would focus on the 2008 comprehensive plan. The committee would be made up of no fewer than five members with a background in relevant fields. After discussion, it was recommended that Chrostowsky be chair of the committee. Bill Maloney will be the board liaison. **Bill Maloney moved to go along with the ad hoc committee with Aaron Chrostowsky as chair and with a minimum of five members. Vote 5-0-0.**

b. Annual License for sale of Consumer Fireworks, Big Al's Outlet: Simmons said that the advice of the town attorney and Big Al's attorney were included in the selectmen's packets. Whitfield noted that nothing had changed in the past year. Katie Bryant asked that the following be included in the minutes:

"Big Al's is illegally storing fireworks on JB's Way, which makes the company ineligible for a town license, as we explained in our letter dated 11/28/23 and emailed to the Select Board on 11/30/23.

"We request that Big Al's license application be denied until there is no longer illegal activity at JB's Way, or at least that the issue be tabled until the Law Court's ruling on the 12/7/22 arguments is announced.

"Finally, because I've only taken a minute of your time, I'd like to request an opportunity speak again, or respond with clarifications, if necessary, after further discussion."

**Terry Heller moved to approve the annual license for sale of Consumer Fire Works, Big Al's Outlet Inc., DBA Big Al's Fireworks Outlet.** Mrs. Bryant was informed that the town's attorney's response was the same as last year and a copy was online. **Vote 5-0-0.**

c. Old Ferry Road Contract: Simmons had contacted contractors who had not returned bids on the contract, and the reasons given included complications with winter work on relocating a bypass. One of the contractors he had contacted, T. Buck Construction in Turner, had expressed interest in the contract contingent on funding. Funds available included \$1.3 million in FEMA funds, \$500,000 from Maine Department of Marine Resources, \$12.5 million from DEP and \$525,000 allocated by the town. Simmons asked the board for approval of his intent to award the contract to T. Buck Construction. **Pam Dunning moved to authorize the Town Manager to issue a notice of intent to award the Ferry Road contract to T. Buck Construction for \$1,861,219 contingent on approval of the Army Corps of Engineers and Maine Emergency Management. Vote 5-0-0.**

d. North Point Fill Area Cleanup Contract – omitted

e. March 5, 2024, town meeting warrant: Simmons said County Planner Emily Rabbe and the ORC had revised the ordinances in line with LD2003, which will appear on the March primary ballot. In the event

the question is voted down, changes could be reworked in time for the question to appear on the Town Meeting warrant in June to meet the state's July 1 deadline for compliance with LD2003. Also included in the revised ordinances are a change to the solar conversion ordinance allowing small solar systems on Route 1 and a change in the retirement for EMS which would match the Police Department's retirement plan and help with recruitment. An additional question would allow the sale of Scout Hall. Bill Maloney asked that Article 6, the sale of Scout Hall, be withdrawn from the ballot and be put on the June ballot. **Bill Maloney moved to approve the Town Warrant as submitted with Article 6 removed. Vote 5-0-0.**

11. Assessors Business – N/A

12. Town Manager's Report

Simmons reported that Bill Maloney, Rob Lalli, Bill Olver, and he had toured the wastewater facility in Oxford. The facility is a Membrane Bioreactor (MBR) system which is part of the biological treatment process and uses microfiltration to separate solids within the biological reactor. It is the first such system in Maine. Simmons said this could be an option for Wiscasset and would appear less intrusive in the area where it is being built.

Simmons has been working with Olver and MEMA for a FEMA scoping grant that will help pay to evaluate alternative systems such as an MBR system, conduct evaluation of environmental attributes, soil conditions, geotechnical evaluations, and other characteristics for feasibility of possible relocation sites, develop engineering reports, complete the environmental review, and applications process.

A budget schedule has been posted, departmental capital requests are being evaluated and Simmons is working on the capital plan.

Simmons recently attended two FEMA courses centered around Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and Flood Mitigation Assistance programs.

On December 13, Simmons, Sean Tiney (FAA), Tim LeSage (MDOT) and Dave Nadeau (Stantec) conducted an inspection of the airport runway construction project. A punch list of items still needed is being developed so that the work can be finished, and the grant closed out.

13. Other Board Business

There was a request to obtain an update on the plans for the Pleasant Street extension and to discuss the possibility of electrical vehicle charging stations.

14. Adjournment

**Bill Maloney moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 p.m. Vote 5-0-0.**