

WISCASSET SELECTBOARD,  
TAX ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR  
January 16, 2024  
6 p.m. via Zoom

Present: James Andretta, Terry Heller, Vice Chair Bill Maloney, and Interim Town Manager Aaron Chrostowsky

Absent: Pam Dunning and Chair Sarah Whitfield

Vice Chair Bill Maloney called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

1. Appointment of Interim Town Manager: At the Vice Chair's request, Aaron Chrostowsky gave a brief history of his experience in town government. **James Andretta moved to approve Aaron Chrostowsky as Interim Town Manager, January 16, 2024, to January 30, 2024. Vote 3-0-0.**

2. Approval of Treasurer's Warrants

a. **James Andretta moved to approve the payroll warrants of January 5, FY24 and January 12, FY 24. Vote 3-0-0.**

b. **James Andretta moved to approve the accounts payable warrants of January 3, FY 24, January 9, FY 24 and January 16, FY24. Vote 3-0-0.**

3. Approval of Minutes

**James Andretta moved to approve the minutes of January 2, 2024. Vote 3-0-0.**

4. Special Presentations or Awards – none

5. Committee Appointments – none

6. Public Hearings:

**James Andretta moved to open the public hearing for Commercial Waste Hauler License for Dave Kelley DBA Reliable Waste Solutions at 6:04 p.m. Vote 3-0-0.** There was no discussion. **Terry Heller moved to close the public hearing at 6:05 p.m. Vote 3-0-0.** **Terry Heller moved to approve the Commercial Waste Disposal Hauler License for Dave Kelly DBA Reliable Waste Solutions. Vote 3-0-0.**

7. Public Comment – none

8. Department Head or Committee Chair

a. Department Head Reports: Terry Heller thanked Rob Lally and the public works crew for their efforts during the recent storm.

b. H. M. Payson: Bill Maloney noted the increase of \$93,317 since the last report.

c. Financials: none

9. Unfinished Business

- a. Wawenock Block Update: Bill Maloney reported that an email had been received relative to 63 Main Street. A few windows are being framed in, brick is being delivered next week and that work will then begin immediately. Work on the eastern elevation has been completed.
- b. Personal Property Tax Discharge: **James Andretta moved to approve personal property discharge for Account # 60-Paul Harris and Melanie Burns for \$172.32. Vote 3-0-0.**
- c. Economic Development - Ad Hoc Advisory Committee: **James Andretta moved to table the ad hoc committee for economic development until the next agenda. Vote 3-0-0.**

#### 10. New Business

- a. Contract for Assessor's Agent Services. **Terry Heller moved to approve the contract for the assessor's agent services. Vote 3-0-0.**
- b. Discussion: Firearms discharge ordinance: Leslie Roberts reported that a small group of hunters has been hunting in the cove below Castle Tucker about 20 feet from the walking path. Recently, the hunters were out before dawn and were rude when asked to hunt elsewhere. Roberts had spoken to the game warden who said that permission to hunt was questionable. Police Chief Hesseltine said Roberts had contacted him in the past and he was surprised that there was no ordinance prohibiting the discharge of firearms in the town. He added that the game warden had said it was legal to hunt in the cove. Roberts said she had contacted the Inland Fish and Wildlife Service who indicated that the town could restrict the discharge of firearms within the town. **Terry Heller moved that an ordinance for firearms discharge be referred to the Ordinance Review Committee. Vote 2-1-0** (Andretta opposed).
- c. Review and Draft Audited Financial Statements for FYE June 30, 2022: Fred Brewer gave a detailed review of the financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2022. **James Andretta moved to authorize the Town Manager and Selectboard Chair to sign and approve the Audited Financial Statement for FYE June 30, 2022. Vote 3-0-0.**
- d. \$20,000 from ARPA funds for GIS mapping: **Terry Heller moved to approve \$20K for ARPA funds for GIS mapping. Vote 3-0-0.**
- e. EMS Bad Debt: **Terry Heller moved to approve write-off of \$35,843.56 in bad debt and send same to collection. Vote 3-0-0.**
- f. Retirement Funds: Aaron Chrostowsky explained the warrant article pertaining to retirement funds which will be added to the Special Town Meeting warrant. **James Andretta moved to approve the Special Town Meeting Warrant for March 1, 2024, including the proposed amendments. Vote 3-0-0.**

#### 11. Assessors Business – NA

#### 12. Town Manager's Report

As I mentioned in our last meeting, Aaron is willing to step in as interim town manager during my two-week absence. To "dot the T and cross the I" I am asking that you approve his appointment and to do so at the beginning of your meeting so that he may participate in discussions.

Item 9 (a) Update is in your packet.

Item 9 (b) On December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, you acted on a request to write off several uncollectable personal property tax accounts. While processing these we noticed one of the accounts listed on the agenda contained an incorrect account number, #30-Paul Harris & Melanie Burns \$172.32. The correct account

number is #60. The affidavit that you signed did contain the correct account number, but because your actual vote was #30 I am asking you to revote using the correct account number. Just keeps things clean.

Item 10 (a) Our contract for assessing services with RJD Appraisal expires in June 2024. Rob has submitted a new contract to extend services through 2027. Given their knowledge of the town and our very good relationship with them, I am recommending that we stick with them. I am asking you to approve the three-year contract.

Item 10 (b) Over the past couple of years, I have had several residents in the village area express concerns with hunters in and around the cove at Pleasant Street Extension. Hunters have been described as "belligerent", leave trash and debris and start hunting very early in the morning. The area is a popular area for walking and many homes are in close proximity to the cove. Municipalities cannot regulate hunting, that is reserved solely for the state. What municipalities can do, pursuant to 12 MRSA 13201, is restrict firearms discharges within their boundaries. You are being asked to task the ORC with drafting such an ordinance to set boundaries that restrict firearms discharges in that area, with the intent of placing it on the June Town Meeting warrant. In order to make the June meeting, we need to have the final draft by March 27<sup>th</sup>.

Item 10 (c) Fred Brewer from Wm Brewer & Company will be attending to review the FY'22 financial statements. Once these are accepted by the Board, we forward the information to RHR Smith. Smith has completed what they can of FY'23 audit and should be able to finish up fairly quickly once they have FY'22.

Item 10 (d) Implementing GIS mapping for property parcels in our town offers numerous benefits. It enhances spatial analysis, facilitates better land management, and streamlines decision-making processes. GIS mapping provides a comprehensive view of property data, aiding in efficient planning, disaster response, and infrastructure development. This technology fosters transparency, improves communication, and ultimately contributes to the overall advancement and organization of our community. I am recommending that we get into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and implement such a system. There will be a one-time set up fee and then a yearly hosting cost. The hosting cost will depend on how many add-ons we use but will start with the basics of about \$7,500 per year. I feel this is a great resource for the town and I am requesting an appropriation not to exceed \$25,000 from the remaining ARPA to implement the system. (We have about \$54,000 left in ARPA). Here is a link to Westport Island's site: [https://next.axisgis.com/Westport\\_IslandME/](https://next.axisgis.com/Westport_IslandME/)

Item 10 (e) Medical Reimbursement has reported \$35,843.56 in uncollectable EMS bills. They need to move them to bad debt so that we may send them to collections.

Item 12 - I have spent time since our last meeting working with the EPA on the Mason Station clean up grant. Robin is working on ordering the required signage for the site.

I have also spent time working with Maine Emergency Management on a FEMA scoping grant to help pay for evaluating sites for relocating the WWTP. The grant was completed and submitted 01/15/2024.

I submitted the first FEMA quarterly report on the progress of the Old Ferry Road culvert replacement. We are currently looking at a mid-February start time, with completion by April 1<sup>st</sup> or thereabouts.

During the January 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> storm, the high tide and storm surge brought the river levels to within inches of over topping the aeration tanks and there was some minor splash over from the wind. Saltwater in the aeration tanks is not good. It kills the "bugs" that do all the work. In preparation for Saturday's storm, the public works and WWTP employees spent most of the day Thursday erecting a giant "burrito" sand bag in the lower lying areas along the fence of the plant. It wasn't perfect or pretty, but it did the job. The water came higher than anticipated and a couple of low spots needed to be sandbagged, but what water did get in was easily pumped out. No saltwater entered the system.

Department heads have my initial thoughts on their FY'25 budgets. While I am away, they will be reviewing them and when I return, we will begin going over them for needed adjustments.

13. Other Board Business – none

14. Adjournment

**James Andretta moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m. Vote 3-0-0.**