

WISCASSET SELECTBOARD,
TAX ASSESSORS AND OVERSEERS OF THE POOR
DECEMBER 20, 2022
IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM

Preliminary Minutes

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

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Approval of Treasurer's Warrants

a. **Terry Heller moved to approve the payroll warrants of December 9 and December 16, 2022. Vote 5-0-0.**

b. **Terry Heller moved to approve the accounts payable warrants of December 13 and December 20, 2022. Vote 5-0-0.**

3. Approval of Minutes

Terry Heller moved to approve the minutes of December 6, 2022, as amended. Vote 5-0-0.

4. Special Presentations – none

5. Committee Appointments – none

6. Public Hearings – none

7. Public Comment – none

8. Department head or committee chair

a. Department Head Monthly Reports

9. Unfinished Business

10. New Business

a. Monthly Financials

- HM Payson Statement of Accounts
- Year to date Expense/Revenue Reports

b. License to sell consumer fireworks, Big Al's Outlet Inc. DBA Big Al's Fireworks Outlet, 300 Bath Road. **Terry Heller moved to approve the sale of consumer fireworks for Big Al's Fireworks Outlet Inc.**

Tom Bryant, an abutter to Al Cohen's fireworks storage building on J.B.'s Way, asked that the subject be tabled. He said that Al Cohen was in violation of the law because he had not obtained a retail license for the fireworks stored on J.B.'s Way as ordered by the court. He said the selectboard could not approve a license for an applicant who is in violation of the law. He asked that the approval of the license for Big Al's Fireworks on Bath Road be postponed until the illegal activity on J.B.'s Way is terminated.

Town Manager Dennis Simmons said that according to the State Fire Marshal, there was no violation on J. B.'s Way. The current regulations do not cover storage facilities, but that is being addressed. The selectboard must rely on the Town Attorney's advice that the application can be approved because there is no violation. **Vote 5-0-0.**

c. Approval of Central Maine Power Pole Permit application on Lowelltown Road (aka Bradford Road) (work order No. 801000512466).

d. Municipal Quitclaim Deed to Sandra L. Adams for Map U18-005-024. **Terry Heller moved to execute the municipal quitclaim deed for Map U18-005-024. Vote 5-0-0.**

e. Correspondence: A letter from Rob Lalli was read thanking the board for the premium pay his department members received from the American Rescue Plan funds.

11. Assessors Business

a. Tax abatement Personal Property for Dwight & Lorna Harrington on account number 315 for \$82.57. **Terry Heller moved to approve tax abatement for personal property account #315 in the amount of \$82.57. Vote 5-0-0.**

12. Town Manager's Report

Dennis Simmons reported that due to a decrease in the town's experience rating, the Worker's Comp premium for 2023 will be 26.6% less than 2022, and he thanked the employees for their efforts in maintaining a safe and healthy work environment.

The electronic community sign has been repaired and is once again displaying important town information.

The TextMyGov program has gone live. The widget explaining how to sign up for town notifications and to obtain town information is on the town website. General notifications will include things like a town office closure due to weather, a special select board meeting or a special town event. Emergency notifications may include something like a road closure due to an accident or a severe weather alert. Simmons said to learn more, one should go to the town

website and on the widget click “more info” and then click “learn more.” He added that this is a work in progress and as feedback from the public is received, improvements and additional information will be made. Robin Plourde is the main contact for the program.

Robin has been working on getting the town’s webpage updated with current and missing information. She is also working with the website designer on ways to improve the site to make it more user friendly and easier to find information. She will also be working on getting information out on the town’s Facebook page.

13. Other Board Business

Broadband Presentation

Mark Ouellette of Axiom made a presentation to the board on the fiber optic system that Wiscasset, Woolwich and Dresden have been considering, either jointly or individually, to address the lack of affordable, reliable, and future-proof internet for their citizens.

He discussed the need for a municipally owned utility and its associated fiber optic network, the mission of the three communities to provide affordable, high-speed, state-of-the-art fiber optic connectivity and the goal of the report which was to create a community-owned regional high-speed internet network by 2024, establish the feasibility of an individual town approach that will allow each community to move forward independently if they so choose, and be a communications document for conveying the rational and fact-based approach to citizens of the three communities.

The discussion which followed covered pricing, financing, lifespan of equipment, town or private ownership, and depreciation as well as benefits and risks. Consolidated Communications will be on the January 3 agenda.

14. Adjournment

Bill Maloney moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Vote 5-0-0