



Town of Casco
Selectboard Minutes
October 8, 2019

Selectboard Members Present:

Mary Fernandes, Holly Hancock (Vice Chair), Calvin Nutting, Tom Peaslee (Chair) and Grant Plummer

Staff Present:

Town Manager Courtney O'Donnell and Administrative Secretary Bob Tooker

1. Review and Approval of the Meeting Agenda

The Selectboard moved (Fernandes), seconded (Hancock) and voted to approve the agenda for the October 8, 2019 Selectboard meeting: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

2. Approval of Bills and Signing and Approval of All Open Warrants

The Selectboard moved (Fernandes), seconded (Hancock) and voted to approve bills and sign and approve all open warrants: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

3. Approval of Minutes (*September 24, 2019*)

The Selectboard moved (Hancock), seconded (Plummer) and voted to approve the minutes of the September 24, 2019 Selectboard meeting: 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention.

4. Manager's Update (*Courtney O'Donnell*)

- Commented on recently attending the Maine Municipal Association Annual Conference.
- The Transfer Station Council will be meeting on Thursday, October 10 at 7:00 p.m. at the Naples Town Office.

- Provided an updated list of easements related to plowing private roads. Will provide another updated list prior to discussion at the October 29, 2019 Selectboard meeting.
- Waiting for a completed site plan from the Crooked River Snowmobile Club for a structure to be built on Town-owned property. The site plan will come before the Selectboard in open session for the purpose of finalizing the lease.
- The Open Space Commission is hosting a site walk on Town-owned property on State Park Road on Sunday, October 13 at 10:00 a.m. The Commission invites the public to attend and provide feedback and input about the property.
- Casco Fire & Rescue is holding an open house at Central Station on Saturday, October 12 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The public is highly encouraged to attend.
- The Town Office will be closed on Monday, October 15 for the holiday.
- Called attention to a critical home repair program through Habitat for Humanity of Greater Portland that aims to reduce repair costs based on income.
- Commented on 1) numerous complaints from abutters related to filling and other issues on property owned by Wayne Ward; and 2) the history of violation notices and actions taken by the Town.

5. Committee and Staff Reports

None.

6. Public Participation: Agenda Items Only (*limit of two minutes per speaker*)

None.

7. General Assistance Public Hearing

Tom Peaslee opened the public hearing at 6:39 p.m.

Courtney O'Donnell explained that the State of Maine sets maximum amounts for General Assistance on an annual basis to adjust for inflation in various categories of assistance including food and housing. Courtney stated that although towns may set higher maximum amounts than the State, the State will not reimburse towns for amounts set over and above the

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maximum amounts set by the State. In response to inquiries from the Selectboard as to why Casco is included in the Portland category instead of the Cumberland County category along with other nearby Towns, Courtney stated that she would look into it. There were no comments from citizens during the public hearing.

Tom Peaslee closed the public hearing at 6:43 p.m.

The Selectboard moved (Fernandes), seconded (Plummer) and voted to approve General Assistance Ordinance Appendices A – F and Appendix H for the period of October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

8. Oil Contract FY 19-20

Courtney O'Donnell stated that the Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG) process allows the Town to lock in a heating oil rate of \$2.44 per gallon with Dead River Company. Courtney stated that as a result of missing this opportunity last year, the Town paid higher rates for heating oil.

The Selectboard moved (Hancock), seconded (Fernandes) and voted to go with the Greater Portland Council of Governments for the heating oil rate with Dead River Company: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

9. Budget & Finance Committee Discussion

Courtney O'Donnell emphasized that any proposals she makes during the budget and Finance Committee discussion are 1) proposals only; 2) entirely up to the Selectboard; and 3) subject to ongoing discussions at future Selectboard meetings. Courtney stated that there will be significant changes related to the set-up of budget accounts and that she is looking to make changes in the budget process in an effort to be more transparent.

Courtney stated that the Finance Committee 1) oversees and recommends the budget for Town Meeting after it is originally put together by the Town Manager; 2) struggles for members and quorums at meetings; 3) serves in an advisory capacity only; and 4) should only be addressing finance issues and not issues related to Town business. Courtney added that after reviewing Selectboard minutes leading up to the last Town Meeting, it appears that the Selectboard has been largely deferring its authority to the Finance Committee and accepting its recommendations with minimal input.

Courtney stated that she would like to see the budget process go entirely through the Selectboard so that Selectboard members fully understand the budget in detail, the account

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changes and what the Town will be asking the voters to approve, especially because changes related to the set-up of budget accounts will result in the budget looking very different at the next Town Meeting. Courtney stated that although there are numerous ways to go about this, one simple way would be to discontinue the Finance Committee for at least this year and have the Selectboard develop the budget during workshops that could be attended by the public and members of the Finance Committee.

Holly Hancock stated that given the past experience of Finance Committee members, it might be helpful for them to attend joint workshops to learn the new budget process and help determine whether a Finance Committee is needed. Courtney stated that if Finance Committee members were to participate in joint workshops in an official capacity, then she would recommend requiring a quorum.

Mary Fernandes stated that this new approach would increase transparency and Selectboard understanding and control. Grant Plummer stated that moving forward in this direction would be a good change. Tom Peaslee agreed.

The Selectboard moved (Hancock), seconded (Fernandes) and voted for the Selectboard to be in charge of the budget process and invite last year's Finance Committee members to attend budget meetings as members of the public: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

10. Appointment to Transfer Station Council

Courtney O'Donnell stated that 1) Paul Edes's one-year appointed term as a Town representative on the Transfer Station Council has expired; and 2) Grant Plummer volunteered to be considered for appointment to the Council.

The Selectboard moved (Peaslee), seconded (Hancock) and voted to appoint Grant Plummer to a one-year term on the Transfer Station Council to be effective from October 8, 2019 through September 30, 2020: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

11. EMS Application for Relief: Case 951219

Holly Hancock abstained from participating in discussions during this agenda item.

The Selectboard moved (Plummer), seconded (Fernandes) and voted to approve the application for relief from emergency medical services costs for case 951219: 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention.

12. EMS Collection Policy

The Selectboard discussed the draft Collection of Ambulance Fees Policy. Courtney O'Donnell encouraged the Selectboard to continue reviewing the draft policy and stated that she will bring a clean copy to the October 29, 2019 Selectboard meeting for approval or further review.

13. Selectboard Meeting Policy

Courtney O'Donnell stated if the Selectboard feels that recent changes to the draft Selectboard Meeting Policy are minimal, then it could approve the draft policy as amended instead of waiting until the policy goes into effect at the end of the month.

The Selectboard agreed to vote on the Collection of Ambulance Fees Policy and the Selectboard Meeting Policy at the October 29, 2019 Selectboard meeting.

14. Donation Acceptance: \$5,000 to Casco Fire/Rescue

Courtney O'Donnell stated that the Selovie Foundation donated \$5,000 to Casco Fire & Rescue to be used at the Town's discretion. Courtney stated that the Selectboard could 1) vote to accept the donation and set it aside in the capital reserves account; or 2) vote to accept and spend the donation, which would allow Casco Fire & Rescue to spend it on something they did not plan for.

The Selectboard moved (Plummer), seconded (Fernandes) and voted to accept the donation and allow Casco Fire & Rescue to expend the funds: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

15. Selectboard Comments

- In response to an inquiry from Calvin Nutting, Courtney O'Donnell provided instructions to Selectboard members for renewing their Freedom of Information training on-line.
- Holly Hancock stated that Cumberland County is planning to transition from a calendar year budget to a fiscal year budget. Courtney O'Donnell stated that Cumberland County is putting together a six-month budget and a twelve-month budget beginning in January 2021. Courtney stated that the six-month budget will run from January 2021 through June 30, 2021

and that towns will be given the opportunity to pay the entire amount owed for the six-month budget or a pro-rated amount over a period of one to five years.

- Holly Hancock stated that a Casco Days membership meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 10 at 6:30 p.m. for anyone who participated in Casco Days in 2019 or who would like to participate in 2020. Holly stated that 1) a vote will be taken to make donations to non-profit groups in Casco; 2) by-laws will be reviewed; and 3) Casco Days board members will be elected.
- Holly Hancock stated that Mary Fernandes and herself will be attending a Maine Municipal Association workshop in Bridgton.
- Grant Plummer reminded the Selectboard of the need to develop short-term and long-term plans for the sand and salt storage facility.
- Mary Fernandes stated that State Representative Jessica Fay received an award for her work on a commission to study long-term care work force issues, which covers education, housing and attracting and maintaining a strong and competitive work force. Mary invited anyone interested to attend a public meeting of the commission on October 24 at 10:00 a.m. in Augusta.
- Tom Peaslee commented on road cracks on Quaker Ridge Road near the intersection of Quaker Ridge Road and Route 11.

16. Public Participation: Any Topic (*limit of two minutes per speaker*)

None.

17. Executive Session 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6)(F) – Poverty Abatement Request 91819

The Selectboard moved (Hancock), seconded (Fernandes) and voted to enter into executive session subject to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(F) to discuss poverty abatement request 91819: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

The Selectboard entered into executive session at 7:32 p.m.

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The Selectboard returned from executive session at 7:49 p.m.

The Selectboard moved (Hancock), seconded (Plummer) and voted to come out of executive session: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

The Selectboard moved (Hancock), seconded (Plummer) and voted to grant an abatement in the amount of \$1,582.50 pursuant to Title 36 M.R.S.A. § 841(2) for poverty abatement request 91819: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

18. Executive Session 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6)(F) – Poverty Abatement Request 93019

The Selectboard moved (Hancock), seconded (Fernandes) and voted to enter into executive session subject to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(F) to discuss poverty abatement request 93019: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

The Selectboard entered into executive session at 7:52 p.m.

The Selectboard returned from executive session at 8:06 p.m.

The Selectboard moved (Hancock), seconded (Plummer) and voted to come out of executive session: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

The Selectboard moved (Hancock), seconded (Plummer) and voted to request legal guidance about burden of proof for expenses and to table the decision on poverty abatement application 93018 until the October 29, 2019 Selectboard meeting: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

19. Adjournment

The Selectboard moved (Hancock), seconded (Plummer) and voted to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

ATTEST:

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Robert Tooker
Deputy Town Clerk

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