

Town of Casco

Minutes of the March 26, 2019 Selectboard Meeting

Selectboard Members Present:

Holly Hancock, Mary Fernandes, Grant Plummer, Calvin Nutting and Tom Peaslee

Staff Present:

Town Manager David Morton and Administrative Secretary Bob Tooker

Approval of Agenda:

It was moved, seconded and voted to approve the agenda for the March 26, 2019 Selectboard meeting: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Approval of Warrants:

It was moved, seconded and voted to approve bills and sign open warrants: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Approval of Minutes: (March 12, 2019)

It was moved, seconded and voted to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2019 Selectboard meeting: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Town Manager's Update: (David Morton)

- The Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) will be paving in the Casco area, including parts of Route 302 and Route 121. Concerns about these projects should be directed to MDOT engineer George Morrell at (207) 592-2329.
- Roads are still posted for heavy loads. Waivers or permits may be requested from Town Manager and Road Commissioner David Morton at (207) 627-4284 one or two days before needed.
- Due to softening roads, the Town will try to avoid plowing gravel roads during snow storms. In the event of a large amount of snow, efforts will be made to assure that gravel roads maintained by the Town are passable.

- Folks who live on private roads with a public easement should be aware of impending deadlines for compliance with 1972 minimum road standards in order to continue receiving plowing services from the Town. Please contact David Morton at 627-4284 with any questions.
- Recent articles in the Portland Press Herald indicated that there have been some problems in the Town of Alfred with well contamination resulting from the use of sludge on agricultural fields. The use of sludge at the time was permitted and regulated by the State of Maine. The Town is in the process of notifying property owners adjacent to areas where the Town is aware of the use of sludge. The Town has no additional information regarding this issue.

Committee and Staff Reports:

None.

Public Participation:

None.

Guest Speaker: Peter Wright, President, Bridgton and Rumford Hospitals

Peter Wright provided an overview of current conditions and goals for Bridgton Hospital and Rumford Hospital. Peter stated that one of the hospitals’ strengths is their ability to provide high quality care at lower costs while knowing where to draw the line in terms of referring patients to other facilities for more specialized care. Peter 1) noted that these hospitals could not exist without local communities; and 2) emphasized their strong focus on serving local communities, developing partnerships and listening.

Peter stated that although no hospitals in Maine received a five-star rating from The Leapfrog Group, a national health care ratings agency, Bridgton Hospital received a four-star rating as well as being rated in the top ten percent of critical access facilities for rural communities nationally. Peter encouraged anyone with questions, comments or concerns to reach out to him at any time.

New Business:

1. Discussions with tax payer who has problems with tax foreclosure.

It was moved, seconded and voted to accept tax payments towards 2017 and 2018 taxes on account 984 to remove the property from foreclosure: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

2. Review of a tax write-off for the former bank building owned by the Town of Casco.

David Morton stated that 1) according to the Assessor, a tax-exempt property is taxable if it is used by a taxable entity; and 2) because a hair salon leases space in a building owned by the

Town, the Assessor declared the building to be taxable. David explained that instead of the Town paying taxes to itself, an option would be to write off the taxes.

It was moved, seconded and voted to write off taxes on account 2213 in the amount of \$2,122.12: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Old Business:

3. Selectboard comments.

- Holly Hancock noted that Cumberland County's 2019 tax assessment is included in the Selectboard's information packet. David Morton stated that the Town's Cumberland County taxes increased by about \$16,000.
- David Morton commented further on the Town of Alfred's problems with well contamination resulting from the use of sludge on agricultural fields. David stated that 1) use of the sludge was approved by the State of Maine; 2) the Town had no ability to regulate it; and 3) the State deemed it to be safer than other products.
- In response to a request from Grant Plummer, Holly Hancock tentatively added a review of this season's plowing services from C. Pond Plowing to the April 23, 2019 Selectboard meeting agenda.
- In response to an inquiry from Mary Fernandes, Holly Hancock stated that a Selectboard executive session will be held at the Town Office on April 4, 2019 to fine tune the Town Manager job description in anticipation of a second round of interviews. David Morton stated that announcements will be made about any future executive sessions related to the hiring of a new Town Manager.
- Holly Hancock stated that a Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for tomorrow night, Wednesday, March 27, 2019.

It was moved, seconded and voted to adjourn: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

ATTEST:

Robert Tooker
Administrative Secretary