

Town of Casco

Minutes of the May 19, 2015 Selectboard Meeting

Members Present:

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

Staff Present:

Town Manager David Morton and Administrative Secretary Bob Tooker

Approval of Agenda:

Mary Fernandes amended the agenda to clarify that the Selectboard is to approve minutes for the April 28, 2015 Selectboard meeting.

The Selectboard moved (Fernandes), seconded (Peaslee) and voted to approve the agenda as amended for the May 19, 2015 Selectboard meeting: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Approval of Warrants:

The Selectboard moved (Fernandes), seconded (Peaslee) and voted to approve bills and signed warrants: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

Approval of Minutes: (April 28, 2015)

The Selectboard moved (Fernandes), seconded (Peaslee) and voted to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2015 Selectboard meeting: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention.

Town Manager's Update: (David Morton)

The Town is applying to the Innovative Readiness Training program to provide labor for recreational improvements to the Memorial School property, possibly saving the Town up to \$400,000.00. The Town is also investigating the Innovative Readiness Training program as a source of labor for construction of a new Town Office. The Selectboard Subcommittee is reviewing costs for a new Town Office. The timing is critical as loan costs remain reasonable and competition for such work is high. There will be two articles representing two concepts for a new Town Office on this year's Town Meeting warrant for citizens to vote on. The Casco Fire Chief has reasserted Casco Fire and Rescue's interest in using the current town office building as a storage facility. Investigation, engineering and planning continues on the Pleasant Lake/Parker

Pond dam project. This year's Town Meeting warrant calls for funds to address final design and engineering costs subject to Town Meeting funding approval. Construction is planned for the fall of 2016. In the interim, water levels will be held approximately eight inches lower than target levels to relieve pressure on the dam. A Town Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 10, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at Central Fire Station. The School Administrative District 61 budget ratification vote is scheduled for Tuesday, May 26, 2015 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Casco Community Center. Included in that vote is an article regarding the purchase of a parcel of land adjacent to Songo Locks Elementary School. An election of town officers will be held on Tuesday, June 9, 2015. Open seats include Selectboard, Open Space Commission, and SAD 61 School Board.

Committee and Staff Reports: none

Selectboard Comments:

- Holly Hancock noted that she asked Town Manager David Morton to look into the schedule of Route 11 paving and construction work.

Public Participation:

Guest speaker Kevin Roche, Executive Director of ecomaine, provided an update on ecomaine activities and possible waste hauler permitting. Topics included finances, membership, coverage areas, market conditions, strategic plans, types of waste, waste handling methods, statistics, projections, and waste volume, etc.

Kevin explained that Casco is a part-owner of ecomaine and that the Town's agreement requires that Town waste goes to ecomaine, adding that competition among waste facilities results in haulers occasionally taking waste elsewhere in violation of the Town's agreement. Consequently, ecomaine is willing to administer the permitting of commercial waste haulers who must agree to take Casco's waste to ecomaine as a condition for a permit to do business in Casco. Users of the Casco/Naples transfer station would be exempt from permit requirements because transfer station waste is forwarded to ecomaine. David Morton added that legal counsel confirmed that the Selectboard is authorized to approve the ecomaine licensing program if it chooses to do so.

Old Business:

1. Discussion regarding a new Town Office facility.

This agenda item was moved to New Business under Review of Draft town meeting warrant for June 10 Town meeting.

New Business:

2. Review of Draft Town meeting warrant for June 10 Town meeting.

David Morton explained that work is continuing on Planning Board articles and that a draft will be distributed to the Selectboard for review. David added that warrant articles include an addition to the current Town Office building, new construction of a Town Office building on the property of the current Town Office building, and amendments to the Animal Control ordinance revised by legal counsel. David added that unfinished articles pertain to land use, and that 1) financing options and annual cost estimates for the construction of a new Town Office; and 2) an outline from the Town Planner regarding zoning changes intended to make them easier for voters to understand are also included in the package.

David questioned the Selectboard as to whether members wanted to include their thoughts or votes in the warrant, adding that the article concerning construction of a new Town Office would require a Selectboard vote and possibly Finance Committee review. Holly Hancock commented that she was present for most of the Finance Committee hearings and felt comfortable with its recommendations.

David stated that also included in the warrant is \$32,000.00 in funding for final engineering and design work, a bid package and bid review for the legally required Pleasant Lake/Parker Pond dam project. The \$64,000.00 cost of this work will be split equally with Otisfield. The Town is working closely with Otisfield, the Pleasant Lake/Parker Pond Lake Association and the Department of Environmental Protection to temporarily lower the target level of the lake to relieve pressure on the dam and prevent it from over-topping as the dam lacks the physical ability to release water as it needs to.

Holly Hancock questioned whether funds should be set aside in the capital improvement budget for eventual dam construction costs. David Morton replied that it would be a good idea, adding that another option might be to include those costs in a bond in conjunction with costs for a new Town Office if voters approve it, adding that next year's anticipated construction costs for the dam are \$200,000.00 to \$400,000.00 to be split equally with Otisfield.

Calvin Nutting clarified that engineering and construction costs do not include a possible estimated \$3,500.00 reimbursement to the Pleasant Lake/Parker Pond Lake Association.

Ray Grant of Casco inquired as to whether anyone thought about cost saving efficiencies that may result from combining dam construction costs with a nearby State construction project. Grant Plummer replied that the Town was in contact with the State regarding permitting, but that Ray's idea had not been considered. Grant added that it would be a good idea to notify the State to find out if it had any work that may line-up with the dam project. Holly Hancock added that there are a number of entities that may have funds available to contribute to the project.

Grant Plummer clarified that about a third of the \$64,000.00 for engineering and design work on the dam was for costly geological coring and drilling necessary to develop a design.

The Selectboard discussed the pros and cons of setting aside funds versus bonding, potential annual costs, and the possible use of the capital improvement budget for the dam project. In response to an inquiry from Tom Peaslee, David Morton clarified that fire and rescue equipment and road maintenance costs are always included in the capital improvement budget.

David Morton proposed that the Selectboard further review the articles in the draft June 10, 2015 Town Meeting warrant in preparation for completion of the warrant at the next Selectboard meeting on May 26, 2015, after which the warrant will be posted on the Town website and presented at the Town Meeting. Grant Plummer added that an article concerning Town plowing of private roads needs to be included in the warrant.

3. Discussion regarding updating the Town personnel policy.

David Morton explained that with the exception of several amendments, the Town personnel policy has not been significantly updated since 1994. David suggested that the policy be submitted to Town counsel for recommendations for the Selectboard to consider. Holly Hancock distributed the Progressive Discipline Policy created for Casco Fire and Rescue, which offers a positive approach to employee performance improvement as issues arise, further adding that she would like to see something similar included in the policy.

In response to an inquiry from Grant Plummer regarding Holly's review of the policy, Holly replied that "it's pretty good" except that something similar to the Progressive Discipline Policy was missing. Holly volunteered to develop an updated draft personnel policy after the current policy is reviewed by Town counsel. Grant expressed his opinion that the Town should move forward quickly to bring the Town personnel policy up to 2015 standards.

4. Review of uncollectable tax write off recommendations.

This agenda item was postponed to the next Selectboard meeting.

Mary Fernandes inquired about updates to the Town Committee policy. The Selectboard discussed a variety of issues related to the current policy, including what constitutes a committee, qualifications for certain committee appointments, elected positions, open positions, minimum membership, inactive status, a potential advisory/advocate or ad hoc committee role as an alternative to inactive committees or committees that fail to meet minimum membership criteria, possible new committees, etc. Grant Plummer emphasized that these discussions were in no way intended to eliminate any valuable work provided by members of the community.

In response to inquiries from Holly Hancock and Grant Plummer, David Morton clarified that the Solid Waste Board is a joint Board between Casco and Naples, the thought process being that a member of the Selectboard ought to participate in order to better represent Casco.

In response to an inquiry from Mary Fernandes regarding residency requirements for committee participation, David Morton clarified that the law does not require residency, adding that it's up to the Selectboard to decide. Moreover, David added that elected officials must be a resident of Maine. David agreed to edit the policy for review by the Selectboard based on recent discussions.

There being no further business, the Selectboard moved (Peaslee), seconded (Nutting) and voted to adjourn: 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

ATTEST:

Robert C. Tooker
Administrative Secretary