

## Town of Casco

### **Minutes of the May 26, 2015 Selectboard Meeting**

#### **Members Present:**

Grant Plummer, Mary Fernandes and Tom Peaslee

#### **Staff Present:**

Town Manager David Morton and Administrative Secretary Bob Tooker

#### **Approval of Agenda:**

**The Selectboard moved (Fernandes), seconded (Plummer) and voted to approve the agenda for the May 26, 2015 Selectboard meeting: 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.**

#### **Approval of Warrants:**

**The Selectboard moved (Fernandes), seconded (Peaslee) and voted to approve bills and signed warrants: 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.**

#### **Approval of Minutes: (May 19, 2015)**

**The Selectboard moved (Fernandes), seconded (Peaslee) and voted to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2015 Selectboard meeting: 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.**

#### **Town Manager's Update: (David Morton)**

None.

#### **Committee and Staff Reports:**

Town Manager David Morton commented that the Tax Assessor will provide a report to the Selectboard at its meeting on June 23, 2015, adding that the Code Enforcement Officer and the Recreation Director will also be reporting soon.

#### **Selectboard Comments:**

- Mary Fernandes expressed her hope that the Town Committee policy will be ready for Selectboard review at its June 23, 2015 meeting.

**Public Participation:** None.

**Guest presenter Bruce Nadeau of RHR Smith and Company regarding the annual municipal audit:**

Bruce Nadeau reviewed its audit of municipal finances and the budget for fiscal 2014, including revenue, expenditures, assets, liabilities, deferred income, fund balances and appropriations. Bruce commended Town staff members, pointed out financial strengths and potential concerns, and offered advice regarding “peaks and valleys” with respect to certain types of revenue. For fiscal 2014, the Town’s general fund equity position increased by \$102,771 from 1,823,767 to \$1,926,638.

**The Selectboard moved (Plummer), seconded (Fernandes) and voted to accept the audit report: 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.**

Grant Plummer expressed that although he was very happy with RHR Smith and Company’s services, he was not comfortable voting on an extension of its contract until two other Selectboard members are present.

See Addendum 1 entitled Auditor Overview for Select Board Meeting May 26, 2015.

**Old Business:**

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

David Morton expressed his hope that the Selectboard will approve the draft Town meeting warrant along with any amendments it deemed necessary at tonight’s Selectboard meeting. David added that Article 24, an article to approve an expenditure of up to \$600,000 for costs of design, construction and equipping of a new Town Office building, and Article 25, an article concerning a petition to add an addition to the existing Town Office building, each require a voting recommendation from the Selectboard. David reminded the Selectboard that it could also include its voting recommendation under any article.

Mary Fernandes pointed out that the Town was only requesting \$8,500 under Article 7, Street Lights, and asked David to comment on how much money the Town had saved. David replied that \$8,500 was down from \$14,500 as a result of efforts by the Selectboard, Finance Committee and a light-by-light review conducted by the Energy Committee that resulted in the elimination of 30% of the Town’s street lights.

Mary also asked David to comment on savings reflected in Article 8, which requests \$240,000 for recycling, solid waste and sanitation. David replied that over the past eight years, bulky waste costs have been reduced from \$280,000 to \$100,000 via the coupon system, and that the Transfer Station budget has been reduced by nearly \$100,000 as a result of reduced operating costs by ecomaine and local operational improvements.

Mary also mentioned that requested funds in Articles 11 and 12 for road maintenance, reconstruction, paving and improvements included paving of the final segment of Libby Road. David clarified that the Libby Road project accounted for \$280,000 to \$350,000 of these funds. Grant Plummer added that this was a “bare bones” budget for these types of road expenditures.

In response to an inquiry from Grant, David explained the differences between the draft Town meeting warrant reviewed by the Selectboard at its last meeting a week ago and the current draft.

**The Selectboard moved (Plummer), seconded (Fernandes) and voted to recommend a “yes” vote on Article 24: To see if the town will vote to approve an expenditure of up to \$600,000.00 for costs of design, construction and equipping of a new Town Office building at 635 Meadow Road in Casco, with such amount to be raised by a general obligation bond borrowing up to \$600,000.00, hereby authorized, with the bonds and any notes in anticipation thereof to be issued with or without call provisions and with such dates, maturities, denominations, interest rate(s), redemption provisions and other details as the Municipal Officers shall determine: 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.**

Ray Grant of Casco, who initiated the Article 25 petition, inquired as to whether he would be allowed to distribute a handout at the Town Meeting. David Morton assured him that the Town supports informational handouts in support of or opposition to any article, and offered that the Town Office would be happy to print copies for him. In response to another inquiry from Ray, Grant Plummer stated that the proposal for a newly constructed Town Office building calls for an approximately 4,700 square foot building.

Mary Fernandes added that the existing Town Office building was intended for storage and not human beings, and that she wanted to see Ray Grant’s plans that would not exceed \$350,000. Grant Plummer added that only a sketch plan had been distributed. Ray replied that his plans have gone astray, but that he was working on them. Ray questioned the difference between finished garage space and the finished interior of a new building. Grant added that the issues of storage needs and longevity would remain, adding that he wanted to make the right decision for the long term, that today’s minimum energy code is an absolute must for the future, and that the existing structure wasn’t built to any kind of standard. Ray expressed his opinion that energy concerns with respect to adding to the current Town Office are acceptable and that even if the Town spent \$50,000 on a new storage facility, the Town would still save \$200,000 under his proposal.

**The Selectboard moved (Fernandes), seconded (Plummer) and voted to recommend a “no” vote on Article 25: To see if the town will vote to have the existing town office refurbished and add an addition no greater than 3,000 square feet and at a cost not to exceed \$350,000.00: 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.**

**The Selectboard signed the Town meeting warrant for the June 10 Town meeting.**

## **New Business**

2. Review of requests for abatement of Taxes due to poverty or infirmity. (Requires executive session subject to Title 1 M.R.S.A., subsection 405, paragraph 6, part F., and pursuant to Title 36 M.R.S.A., subsection 841 (2).)

Before adjourning to executive session, Grant Plummer encouraged the Selectboard be on the lookout for the School Board's recent recommendations concerning elementary schools, as well as the results of today's school budget vote. David Morton added that he asked the Superintendent of Schools to forward a copy of the report to him.

**The Selectboard moved (Plummer), seconded (Fernandes) and voted to adjourn to executive session subject to Title 1 M.R.S.A., subsection 405, paragraph 6, part F., and pursuant to Title 36 M.R.S.A., subsection 841 (2): 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.**

**The Selectboard adjourned to executive session at 7:32 p.m.**

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

**The Selectboard moved (Plummer), seconded (Fernandes) and voted to deny 5262015-A and extend the period-of-time for payment of 2013 and 2014 property taxes to March 31, 2016.**

**There being no further business, the Selectboard moved (Peaslee), seconded (Fernandes) and voted to adjourn: 3 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.**

ATTEST:

Robert C. Tooker  
Administrative Secretary

## **Addendum 1**

### **Town of Casco Auditor Overview for Select Board Meeting May 26, 2015**

For fiscal 2014 the Town of Casco's general fund equity position increased by \$102,771 from \$1,823,867 to \$1,926,638. (See page 16 of the draft)

In fiscal 2014 the town implemented a new revaluation. The original tax commitment of \$8,443,280 for fiscal 2014 was \$544,518 more than in fiscal 2013. Fiscal requirements for RSU 61 increased by \$481,571 while Cumberland County assessment increased by \$31,645 for a combined property tax assessment need of \$513,216.

In fiscal 2014 the town set overlay at \$144,805 in anticipation of a large portion being utilized for abatements needs regarding the reveal (see page 45 of the draft). However abatements totaled \$269,494, while supplemental assessments were \$60,042 resulting in a net need of \$209,452 or \$64,647 more than the budgeted overlay.

The Town's increase in equity position was the result of a \$215,423 positive revenue variance (see page 42 of the draft) comprised of revenues above expectations in auto excise, revenue sharing, tree growth, interest on taxes/liens and proceeds from tax sales (reflected in unclassified). Expenses were under budget by \$88,565 (see page 45 of the draft) however that included utilization of slightly more than \$201,000 of carryforward equity yielding a net need from current year revenue of \$112,435 (201,000-88,565). Combining the \$215,423 positive revenue variance less the \$112,435 need to cover fiscal 2014 expenses results in the \$102,771 gain for the general fund overall.

The town did gain equity, however it was due primarily to higher than expected revenue of \$215K. Anticipated abatement expenses exceeded overlay less supplemental tax assessment by \$64K. The tax assessment increase of \$544,518 left the municipal increase of \$31,302 after the need for RSU 61 and County assessment are factored in. With deferred revenue liability calculation for fiscal 2014 increasing by \$72K (671K FY13 to 743K FY14) the town experienced a net loss of available tax revenue of \$24,102 (31,302-72,000) to address day to day operations.