



TOWN OF WESTPORT ISLAND
6 Fowles Point Road
Westport Island, ME 04578

Office of the Select Board, Board of Assessors, & Overseers of the Poor

Town of Westport Island
Selectboard, Assessors and Overseers Meeting
Convened at Town Office, 6 Fowles Point Road, Westport Island, ME 04578
June 20, 2023

Present:

Select Board: Jeff Tarbox, Donna Curry (Ross Norton absent)

Citizens: Jim Cromwell (Road Commissioner), Adam Webber, Bailey Bartlett, Gary Webber, Lisa Jonassen,

Via Zoom: April Thibodeau, Julie Casson

Guests: none

Meeting Convened: Donna called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm

Business Conducted:

1. Warrants:

- a. Donna motioned to approve the Payroll Warrant #111 for \$21,608.90; Jeff, 2nd; vote: 2-0
- b. Donna motioned to approve the Accounts Payable Warrant #112 for \$3,390.37; Jeff, 2nd; vote: 2-0

2. Minutes:

- a. Donna motioned to approve the minutes of the 6/12/23 Select Board Meeting, Jeff, 2nd; vote: 2-0

3. Citizen's Issues: None

4. Roads: Jim reported that he would be calling his Crooker POC to get the schedule for the planned paving.

5. Correspondence:

Email has been exchanged with the town attorney, Jim Katsiaficas, regarding the course of action to pursue with the Longobardi violation. We are also waiting for the return of the Code Enforcement officer from a vacation to get his input.

6. Administrative Items

- a. Meeting schedule for July: Regular Select Board meetings each Monday at 7 PM, with the usual Select Board working sessions Monday 6-7 PM and Wednesday 3-5 PM
 - b. Town Meeting preparations:
 - i. Broadband Committee will be given time to speak after article 28
 - ii. Julie will speak on the shellfish ordinance
 - iii. Fire Dept is planning on providing refreshments, for donations
- 7. Other Legal Business**
- a. Status of Baker Road dispute
 - i. The mediation session on the 14th resulted in a tentative agreement that is being finalized by our attorney and that of the Greenleaf's. The agreement will be registered with the Court and have the same effect as if the matter had been decided by the judge.
 - ii. Several weeks ago, when there was concern that emergency vehicle might not be able to get through the intersection, the Sheriff was called and asked to provide assistance. One of the Chief Deputies visited the Greenleaf's. By the time he did the road was less obstructed, and more material has since been removed from the roadway.
 - b. Discussion of an initial policy for Town Office staff Health Benefits
 - i. Article 5 of the Warrant requests approval of \$60,750 to provide Health Benefits. **[The discussion incorrectly used \$61,500 as the number.]** The basis for that number was an estimated cost for family plan coverage from the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust, ratioed down by the percentage of hours worked by each staff member, with full time assumed to be 40 hours/week. From surveying other towns it has been learned that a more common base for full time, for municipal office employees, is 35 hours/week. And the amount requested may not be sufficient to retain staff. Retaining staff is believed to be critical. The figure of 600 vacancies now for town positions in the state was cited, and the Board found it very difficult to recruit this year without health insurance. If it isn't provided we may lose our current staff and their very valuable knowledge.
 - ii. The survey of other towns found a lot of diversity, not least in the town roles, which were not direct matches with ours. In the past year many towns have added health insurance to the benefits provided employees, but what the benefit looks like has also varied. The benefit is sometimes included in salary, sometimes is separate. Alna, for example, pays its Town clerk / Treasurer \$60,000 a year plus \$1500 a month to be applied to their health insurance which they arrange on their own, and they reported they were working 25 hours/week. Phippsburg is reported to have agreed at their recent town meeting to provide family plan coverage for town staff.
 - iii. The Board agreed that the cost for each employee should be covered. That would be an annual cost of about \$48000. With the current warrant article that would leave some additional funds to assist with covering families.

- iv. Donna moved that the amount requested be amended to \$70,354, which is what the estimated cost for family plan coverage with 35 hours as the basis for full time. If an individual opted out, choosing to go with another health insurance, they would only be paid ½ of the individual coverage. Jeff seconded, motion carried 2-0.
- 8. **Adjournment:** Donna motioned to adjourn; Jeff 2nd; vote 2-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM.

Minutes taken and prepared by Jeff Tarbox

A True Copy, Attest: _____