



Manager's Memorandum
April 15, 2025, Selectboard Meeting

To: Selectboard
From: Tony Ward, Town Manager
Date: 04-10-2025
Re: Selectboard meeting 04-15-2025

Below are notes for agenda items for the April 15, 2025, meeting

5. Managers' Update

- A. The road postings are being removed on April 14, 2025, on asphalt roadways. Road postings are not being removed on Town gravel roads due to their conditions. Staff and I will monitor 18 gravel roads (6.22 miles of roadway) and remove the postings when viable. The 18 roads are Birch Terrace, Bramble Hill Road, Camp Cedar, Dadmun Drive, Edes Fall Road, Fountain Hill Road, Freeman Road, Jim Small Road, Lord Road, Millstream Terrace, North Pine Hill Road, Pavilion Road, Pinkham Road, Riggs Road, Stone Road, Terrace Lane, Varney Road, and West Fountain Hill Road.
- B. We anticipate opening Casco Community Park on Monday April 14th. We will reassess on the morning of the 14th to ensure the park can handle use without causing damage.
- C. The Finance Committee has a lone workshop scheduled for April 15th at 5:00pm. The workshop is being held at the Casco Community Center, and they expect this is the last solo workshop. A joint meeting between the Selectboard and Finance Committee is scheduled for April 22nd at 5:30 pm to finalize the proposed budget.

The Finance Committee also recommends utilizing different methods of communication about the proposed budget (when finalized). The two discussed methods of communication would be to conduct a Town Hall meeting about the budget prior to the Town Meeting or develop a written synopsis of the budget highlighting any significant changes along with the reasons for the changes. The Town Hall meetings provide an opportunity for questions from the residents about the budget but may have limited participation or attendance from the residents that attended the budget meetings. The written synopsis would reach more residents but limits further dialogue or reasoning for the proposed budget.

Staff and I believe the second option reaches more residents, but we will follow the direction determined by the Selectboard.

- D. The RFID tag system was installed on April 8th and 9th. Naples' staff and casco staff anticipate the system going live on May 1st. Both Towns staff received initial system training on April 9th. Naples anticipates the issuing of placards process on April 15th. I anticipate Casco beginning the issuing of placards on April 21st. Residents must swap out their current coupons for these placards and their account will be credited the remaining tonnage. We are delaying the issuance of placards to ensure that we communicate with our residents before the issuing of placards.

The discussion about having a singular reset/issuing date will occur at the Casco Naples Transfer Station Council. I do not anticipate this occurring in 2025 but will be for future years.

The restriping of the transfer station is also occurring. Once the rescheduling is finalized, it will be posted on our web site, social media, and newsletter.

Workshop

6. The Selectboard will conduct a workshop with the Library Trustees related to proposed easements.

The Trustees of Casco Public Library filed a request for a Contract Zoning Agreement (CZA) with the Planning Board and this will initially be discussed at the April 28th Planning Board meeting. The details of the CZA will initially be discussed at this level and will ultimately be presented at a future public hearing.

The workshop will focus on an easement agreement that will supplement the Contract Zone Agreement. The draft easement agreement is in the Selectboard packet. The focus of the Easement Agreement is documenting conditions as "they currently exist on the Library Property and Town Property and that it shall establish that the party responsible for originally installing a feature thereon shall, in most cases, remain responsible for maintaining the same, regardless of on whose property that feature is located as of the Effective Date hereof."

Legal counsel is reviewing the document and has not provided guidance at the time of this memorandum. Any guidance provided by counsel will be forwarded to the Selectboard prior to the meeting.

Old Business

7. The Selectboard will discuss proposed Senior Tax Credit Ordinance.

Included in the Selectboard packet is a draft Senior Tax Credit Ordinance. The language in the draft is slightly different than the Selectboard's original dialogue. The necessity for these minor changes is based on legal review and compliance with Maine law.

The impact on the FY26 budget would be minimal as currently written. If the ordinance was approved at June's Town meeting, the first round of credit applications would occur by May 15, 2026. This would provide the Town exact number needed for funding in FY27. The Town would have additionally collected \$25,000 from FY2026 that remains in a special revenue account. The first tax credit would not occur until October 2026.

8. The Selectboard will discuss Selectboard goals for FY25.

The Selectboard discussed FY25 goals in mid-2024, but no goals were finalized. Chairperson Connelly requested the Selectboard revisit this discussion.

I would recommend the Selectboard conduct a retreat in June with an independent moderator to assist in defining goals for FY2026.

9. The Selectboard will discuss the status of the storm water plan and carry in boat launch.

The Town contracted with Northeast Civil Solutions to review existing conditions and develop drainage plans, create proposed design, and prepare for stormwater permit with Maine Department of Environmental Protection. Northeast Civil Solutions has surveyed the Town property and is in the process of developing drainage plans & design for future submission for stormwater permitting. They anticipate having preliminary plans for review in early May but are still working on wetland delineation and this may alter the anticipate schedule. They are still on schedule to complete the project by year's end and have Dep permits by year's end.

The initial design work for the carry in-out boat launch is being conducted by Archipelago, but they cannot complete final design until the initial stormwater plan is designed. Archipelago needs wetland delineation and soil test pits prior to completing their preliminary design. He also anticipates completing this project by years end.

New Business

10. The Selectboard will consider a request to redeem foreclosed property located on map 2, lot 36 by the previous owner.

On January 4, 2024, the Town foreclosed on the property located at Map 0002, lot 0036 previously owned by Chester Watkins. On that date, the Town foreclosed on the FY 22 taxes for an amount of \$1,420.52. The previous owner also did not pay the FY23 or FY24 taxes. The Total amount owed, including interest & fees is \$5,032.40. Details on the taxes owed are included in the Selectboard packet.

The previous owner is requesting to purchase the property back for the taxes, interest and fees owed. Please see the e-mail request in the packet. Staff and I recommend permitting

Mr. Watkins to purchase the property of the back taxes. This action makes the Town whole on funds owed and is consistent with Maine law relating to foreclosed properties. Excess funds on a sale of foreclosed property would go to Mr. Watkins and not the Town.

11. The Selectboard will consider a construction overlimit permit and local bonding requirement for Maine Department of Transportation project #026228.00 (Crooked River Bridge Rehabilitation).

Included in your packet is a letter from Maine Department of Transportation (MeDOT) that outlines two key points. MeDOT is requesting a construction overweight limit be issued to the contractor for the above project. The second point is that if local roads are used, that the municipality may require a bond for their roads.

Upon speaking with George Macdougall, author of the letter, he advised that MeDOT does not anticipate any municipally owned roads would be used for this project. They anticipate only state owned roads be driven upon for this project. He additionally stated that in 12 years of experience, he never experienced a municipality require this bonding.

Staff and I , along with the staff from Naples, recommend the construction overweight permit be endorsed by their respective Selectboards.

12. The Selectboard will consider a date for the Annual Town Meeting.

The State election is scheduled for June 10, and this is when the election for Selectboard will occur. In recent history (last two years) the Town has conducted their annual Town Meeting on the first Wednesday of June and prior to 2023, the meeting was conducted the Wednesday after the elections.

The discussion dates for the June 2025 Town Meeting would be June 4th, June 7th and June 11th. The June 4th date follows recent patterns, and the June 11th would have the meeting conducted after elections. Chairperson Connolly wanted the concept of conducting the Town Meeting on Saturday June 7th to determine if this day of the week would increase participation.

13. The Selectboard will consider appointing Carolyn Drew to the Planning Board as an Alternate; Courtney Walsh to the Open Space Commission; Joe Armenti to the Zoning Board of Appeals and Timothy Walsh to the Veterans Committee.

The Town has posted several board, committee, and commission openings for the past few months. To date, we have only received one notice of interest for any vacancy. Staff and I would recommend the Selectboard appoint each of these members to the perspective volunteer opportunities. Staff and the Selectboard should be familiar with all the applicants since they already serve on other boards/committees. The applicants are:

- Carolyn Drew -Planning Board as an Alternate
- Courtney Walsh - Open Space Commission
- Joe Armenti - Zoning Board of Appeals
- Timothy Walsh - Veterans Committee

14. The Selectboard will consider legal services for the remainder of 2025 due to Jensen Baird's elimination of Municipal Law division of firm.

The Town recently received notification from Jensen Baird that they will no longer provide legal services in general municipal law. Included in this packet is the formal notification from Jensen Baird about their decision. In addition, they advised that Benjamin McCall is transferring his practice to Drummond Woodsum.

Included in the Jensen Baird notification letter is a request for the Selectboard to decide of retaining Town records. They request notification that the Town either have our records forwarded to Drummond Woodsum transferring with Ben or have them returned to the Town. Speaking with Ben McCall, Drummond Woodsum is willing to accept all his current clients and accept the transfer of current records/actions. If the Board decides to proceed in this direction, the only modifications in the Selectboard-attorney relationship would be different e-mail and telephone numbers.

As you are well aware, the three individuals that report directly to the Selectboard are the Assessor, Attorney and Town Manager. Thus, any decision relating to legal representation is solely determined by the Selectboard. The Selectboard must determine if they wish to transfer all legal representation to Drummond Woodsum or release a Request for Proposal for legal representation. The number of law firms with specialty in general municipal law are minimal in the greater Portland region, but the remaining firms are well known within the municipal realm.

15. The Selectboard will consider the District Budget Validation Referendum Warrant.

The Selectboard has no control over either of these articles, but Maine law requires they approve the items to be included in the validation process. The referendum vote is scheduled for May 20 between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm at the Crooked River Elementary School.