



**Manager's Memorandum
October 15, 2024, Meeting**

To: Selectboard
From: Tony Ward, Town Manager
Date: 10-10-2024
Re: Selectboard meeting 10-15-2024

Below are notes for agenda items for the October 15th meeting

7. Managers Update

- A. I anticipate discussing a date for the Special Town Meeting. I anticipate recommending January 28th at 6:30 pm for the Special Town Meeting. This will be on the November 12th Selectboard agenda.
- B. The Selectboard will be meeting on October 29th, November 12th, and November 19th. The 29th meeting will be a workshop with the Planning Board. The Selectboard will not meet on November 5th due to the election. Their regular monthly meetings will occur on November 12th and 19th.
- C. At an all-staff meeting, we recently recognized the work anniversaries of 4 employees that reached milestones. Julie Koceika was recognized for 5 years of full time service; Beth Latsey for 20 years of service; Pam Griffin for 25 years of service and Melissa Poree for 25 years of service. I anticipate annually recognize employees at their years of service milestones (5,10,15,20,25,30,etc.).
- D. Sebago Fiber continues working with Sebago and Raymond towards installing fiber optic internet. Naples and Casco are still in the COLAB and continue participating in the dialogue. I anticipate Sebago Fiber coming to a last 2024 or early 2025 Selectboard to discuss their plan for the area and discussing future partnerships for fiber optic internet and Town's capital commitment to this development.
- E. The Town is currently receiving a substantial number of requests for absentee ballots for the November 5th election. As of this writing, approximately 15% of the active voters (2,690) have requested absentee ballots. The Town currently has 3,434 registered voters. I will provide updated numbers at the Selectboard meeting.

Workshop

8. Public Hearing on State of Maine General Assistance Maximums

Included in your packet are the State guidelines for GA maximums. The Town traditionally accepted these maximums levels for each level outlined. The Town could increase the maximum levels, but not lower these levels. The Town would still get reimbursed at 70% of the State maximum levels. The Town of Casco is included in the Portland HMFA area. While this is an amendment to the Town’s General Assistance Ordinance, State law authorizes this ordinance be approved by the Selectboard and not through the legislative body (Town Meeting) as most ordinances.

Below is the synopsis of the changes:

GA item	2023-2024	2024-2025	% Change
Overall Maximums	\$1,367 (1) to \$ 3,201 (5*)	\$1,451 (1) to \$3,332 (5*)	6.14% to 4.1%
Food Maximums	\$212 (1) to \$1,751 (8)	\$292 (1) to \$1,756 (8)	37.74% to 0.28%
Housing Maximums Unheated	\$1,223 (0 bedroom) to \$2,839(4 bedrooms)	\$1,319 (0 bedroom) to \$3,007(4 bedrooms)	7.85% to 5.92%
Housing Maximums heated	\$1,352(0 bedroom) to \$3,171(4 bedrooms)	\$1,434 (0 bedroom) to \$3,300(4 bedrooms)	6.07% to 4.07%
Electricity w/o Electric Water	\$85.50 (1) to \$139.50 (6)	\$85.50 (1) to \$139.50 (6)	0%
Electricity w/ electrically heated water	\$127 (1) TO \$251.50 (6)	\$127 (1) TO \$251.50 (6)	0%

I did not include the General Assistance Ordinance because only the appendices related to maximums changed. The ordinance is Chapter 55 and can be located on the Town’s website under ordinances.

Old Business

9. The Selectboard will discuss discrepancies between Town and Library property lines, deeds, and other land-related discrepancies.

Jensen Baird is still working with the library’s counsel regarding developing an overlay zone to elevate the described problems. I have met with a representative of the library during this period to keep the lines of communication and cooperation open.

I anticipate having a draft of the overlay before the Planning Board by the end of October and a joint public hearing in November. I am working with the library and Selectboard to coordinate the group meetings previously requested.

10. The Selectboard will discuss changing the Town's three (3) health plan options for employees.

As previously discussed, Maine Municipal Employee Health Trust (MMEHT) is ceasing their offering of the POS A plan, and this is the Town's primary health plan. MMEHT and staff are recommending that the Town identify the former POS C plan (now known as Acadia) as the primary insurance for the Town. The difference between the POS A and Acadia are:

Item	POS A	Acadia
Definition	Point of Service requires PCP and in-network only Maine	Preferred Provider Organization and in-network national
Maximum coinsurance	\$1,000 Single/\$2,000 Family	\$1,500 Single/\$3,000 Family
Maximum copays	\$5,500 Single/\$11,000 Family	\$5,000 Single/\$10,000 Family
Physician office Visit	\$10 copay PCP/\$20 copay specialist	\$10 copay PCP/\$20 copay specialist
Covered surgical procedures	100% after \$100 copay	100% after \$100 copay, but anesthesia covered at 90%
Home Health/Hospice Care	100%	90%
Skilled nursing facility	100% with 100-day limit	90% with 100-day limit
Oral Surgery	100%	90%
Prescription 30-day	\$4/\$10/\$30/\$50/\$60	\$10/\$20/\$40/\$60/\$150
Prescription 31-90 day	\$8/\$20/\$60/\$100/\$120	\$20/\$40/\$80/\$120/\$150

The rates for 2025 will not be set by the MMEHT Board of Directors until October 25 and we should receive the formal 2025 rate sheet on November 4, 2024. The open enrollment for our employees begins on November 15, 2024. Based on current rates, the difference between POS A and POS C (Acadia) for our staff would be a reduction in the Town's insurance payment of \$50,132.16 and a savings of \$12,533.04 for employees. If the current POS C increases 10%, the Town would still see a reduction of approximately \$22,100 and the employees see a reduction of approximately \$5,500.

11. The Selectboard will discuss a Senior Tax Credit ordinance.

This item will continue to be discussed in the future. The complexity of these programs and each Town’s programs varies drastically. Included in your package is a description of the State of Maine Tax Fairness credit along with the application. This program is currently available as is the State of Maine Deferral Program. Links to these programs can also be found on our web site under the tax-collector tab or at <https://www.cascomaine.org/tax-collector>

The State provided the below information regarding the use of Tax Fairness Credit.

2023 Returns with a Casco Mailing Address and PTFC

Taxpayer age category	#	Total PTFC
Under 65	169	\$114,008
65 or older	119	\$87,612
Total	288	\$201,620

New Business

12. The Selectboard will discuss Town fees.

Town staff began discussions about the current fee structures, and they believed the fee structure needed reexamination and updating. This discussion coincided with discussions of the FY25 budget and some residents voicing their perspective of further examinations of the Town fees.

The Town was fortunate because Tom McCarthy volunteered to assist us in analysis related projects as a volunteer. Tom analyzed neighboring communities and compared them to Casco. In addition, he met with staff to determine the amount of work hours occurring with associated fees. In addition, our intern conducted some ordinance analysis related to specific ordinances and this information was forwarded to Mr. McCarthy.

Included in your packet is a draft recommendation of fees for your review and analysis. Mr. McCarthy will additionally provide a PowerPoint synopsis of the draft document. Mr. McCarthy, the staff, and I understand that if these fees are implemented they must occur in an incremental manner. Some of these changes require ordinance modifications; some fees would be new and require an educational facet; and others could be implemented immediately.

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13. The Selectboard will discuss the proposed strategic surveys options proposed by GPCOG.

The Town has not received the proposal to date.

14. The Selectboard will consider appointing the Town Manager to Eco Main Board of Directors.

Since October of 2021, I represented the Town of Casco on Eco Maine's Board of Directors. As a community owner, you are provided with a seat on this Board of Directors. Eco Maine is requesting that I be reappointed to the Board of Directors for another three-year term.

15. The Selectboard will consider legal action for Helen Allen Lane.

As previously discussed, the Town received numerous complaints about dogs continually barking on Helen Allen Lane. Both the Code Enforcement Officer and Animal Control Officer have dealt with the dog's owners and obtained not voluntary compliance. Staff and I are seeking guidance on the Selectboard's willingness to pursue legal actions for the ordinance (Chapter 7, Article 1, subsection 7-4) violations that are occurring.

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