



**TOWN COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 2, 2010**

Michael Bowie, Chair District 2 2012  
Gina Mason, Vice Chair District 1 2010  
Fern Larochele, Jr., At Large 2010  
Roger Cote, At Large 2011  
Mark Lunt, District 1 2012  
Dale Crafts, District 2 2010  
Lori Pomelow, At Large 2012

**CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE TO THE FLAG.** The Chairman, Michael Bowie, called the meeting to order at the Lisbon High School and led the pledge of allegiance to the flag at 6:00 PM.

**ROLL CALL.** Members present were Councilors Bowie, Mason (arriving at 7:50 PM), Crafts, Larochele, Cote, Pomelow and Lunt. Also present were Stephen Eldridge, Town Manager; David Brooks, Police Chief; William Bauer, Water Commission Chairman; School Committee members: Prudence Grant, Traci Austin, Kathy Yergin, Pete Reed; Budget Advisory Board Members, Donald Fellows, Richard Graham; Michelle Turmelle, Ethics Panel; and approximately 34 citizens in the audience.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

SCHOOL GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND

The Chairman opened the public hearing. There were no comments. The Chairman closed the public hearing.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**VOTE (2010-23)** Councilor Larochele, seconded by Councilor Pomelow moved to approve the minutes of January 5, 2010, Town Manager's Contract Renewal, and a Forfeiture Approval. **Order passed - Vote 5-1. (Opposed: Cote)**

**COUNCIL ORDERS, RESOLUTIONS, & ORDINANCES**

SCHOOL GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND ORDER

Councilor Bowie asked for a report from the Budget Advisory Board. Mr. Fellows said I represent the Budget Advisory Board as its Chair. Tonight I would like to inform you of a recent decision of the Budget Advisory Board made regarding the School's General Obligation Bond. On Tuesday, January 19, the board formally met at the Town Office with the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Green, and discussed the proposed bond in the amount of \$350,000. He spent considerable time explaining the purpose and the financial effect of the bond to the School. I will not repeat that explanation of the bond here as the matter has been sufficiently aired at a public information session, Council Meeting, and tonight's public hearing. After several questions, the board formally considered the matter and the members present subsequently voted unanimously 5-0 to support the issuance of the bond and favorable endorsement in any upcoming election. Since that time the public hearing has been held tonight, although nobody was commenting, the School District will incur significant curtailment of state allotment funds next year, as you know. The curtailment varies upon which budget figures we use and who's quoting what, is somewhere between \$600,000, \$800,000 or \$1,400,000 on the outside; it is significant. While I cannot speak for the entire Board, I can speak for the members that are present, that's me, we still solemnly support the positive endorsement of the Board as it goes forward.

Councilor Bowie said, gentlemen, we have before us a General Obligation Bond Order for \$350,000 to take to the public. Do we have a motion?

**VOTE (2010-24)** Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Crafts moved to adopt the General Obligation Bond Order.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**Order passed - Vote 6-0.**

#### COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION FOR BALLOT

**VOTE (2010-25)** Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Lunt moved a Yes recommendation on the ballot question for the bond.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**Order passed - Vote 6-0.**

#### WARRANT FOR SPECIAL TOWN MEETING AND BOND REFERENDUM ELECTION

Mrs. Lycette said this also set your polling locations and hours. Councilor Bowie said the polling locations are the MTM Center and the Town Office. Mrs. Lycette said this recommendation here is for the current existing polling locations at the MTM Center and the Old Lisbon Elementary Gym at the Superintendent's Central Office Building. Councilor Larochelle said MTM is okay, but would it be worth moving the location to the Town Office, would that make it easier; in the past we have used the Town Office. Mrs. Lycette said I think the choice is yours. Councilor Larochelle said I don't think it will be too crowded to use the Town Office and I don't think there will be a difficult flow of people to manage so what do you think? Mrs. Lycette said, on the other hand, I think some consideration should be given to being consistent with the voters so that they know where they are going. Moving it back and forth at times is confusing; I am not sure. I would leave it where it is at the Superintendent's Office and at MTM. That way it will be real clear, real consistent, and they know where they are going.

Councilor Larochelle said what times are you recommending. Mrs. Lycette said we are recommending from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM allowing the most voters the ability to vote before they go to work in the morning and after they come home in the evening. Absentee ballots will be available 30 days prior to this election.

**VOTE (2010-26)** Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Pomelow moved to approve the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting and Bond Referendum Election.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**Order passed - Vote 6-0.**

Councilor Bowie said that means absentee ballots are available around March 6. Mrs. Lycette said, yes, and those who want to come in and fill out an application or call the office to request one can do so and when the ballots arrive, we can mail them out right away.

APPROVE MUNICIPAL BUDGET CALENDAR

Mr. Eldridge said you should have a draft of the upcoming budget calendar. I scheduled a presentation on March 16 at a Council Meeting and then on March 18, which we would begin hearing from our Department Heads short presentations on their budget needs. At each of these meetings, the Budget Advisory Board will be attending, so we will be here at once and hear the same thing the Council is hearing. Of course, not knowing how the process will go in terms of timing, we can adjust this as concerns come up.

Councilor Bowie said we are scheduling the public hearing for April. Is that so we hear input in the middle of the process, should we wait until the end of the process, or should we do it at the beginning? What is Council's wish? Last year we did it at the end, didn't we? Councilor Larochelle said, yes, it was more of a final budget. Councilor Bowie said, right, so we had come through what the Budget Advisory Board's opinions were, and we had the School's opinion, and we had a final budget that we brought to the public and they had their chance to comment on what they thought. Then we could consider those comments before we made any final vote. Councilor Larochelle said my concern is that last year we allowed for public input all the way through the process and this year we were talking about doing a little bit more control as far as the workshops; with that being said then maybe it would be better to have some input before we get to the end. That's only a recommendation, that's all.

Councilor Pomelow said I think this is the way to deal with the school budget as well so can we get some input from them on when they would like a public hearing on that, too. Councilor Bowie said we certainly could. Councilor Pomelow said does anybody from the School Department have a recommendation. Councilor Bowie said does anybody from the School Department have a recommendation on when they would like to see the public hearing. Jill Denniston said we could not hear what you are saying so we have no idea what you said. Are there dates you are talking about, because we did not hear them or I did not.

Councilor Bowie said there will be a presentation on the 16<sup>th</sup>, Council will meet between March 16 and roughly April 27 to review the town and school budgets with the Budget Advisory Board. Currently it is scheduled for April 27 for a public hearing on the town and school budget. Then Council would continue to meet and go through any recommendations and come to a final vote in late May so we can take the school budget to a referendum vote around June 8. That's the current schedule set up.

Councilor Larochelle said would it be possible to leave that public hearing as is since it was defined that way and possibly somewhere, more towards the middle, have another public hearing at the town office during one of our meetings for some input. That way there, we can allow people to have some input without actually changing that public hearing. That would allow people, instead of having an open discussion during our workshops, to be able to come forth and express any concerns before we try to finalize our budget. Councilor Bowie said we could do whatever Council would like.

Councilor Larochelle said I would recommendation adding a public hearing to one of the dates we already have there at one of our meetings. Councilor Bowie said to be named later. Councilor Larochelle said exactly. Councilor Bowie said so you are saying leave the schedule the way it is and sometime towards the end of our deliberation process, after our first public hearing, we would open up one of our meetings to additional comments. What are Council's thoughts on that? Okay. That sounds okay to everyone.

Councilor Bowie said I would entertain a motion to approve the budget schedule.

**VOTE (2010-27)** Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Cote moved to approve the Municipal Budget Calendar as written:

December 15, 2009..... Council Meeting/Municipal Capital Budget  
 January 5, 2010 ..... Town Council Meeting – Set Budget Financial Guideline  
 January 19, 2010 ..... Council Meeting  
 February 2, 2010..... Council Meeting  
 February 16, 2010..... Council Meeting  
 March 2, 2010 ..... Council Meeting  
 March 16, 2010 ..... Council Meeting/Municipal Budget Presentation  
 March 18, 2010 ..... Thursday/Council Meeting/Budget Advisory Board/Department  
 Presentations (Library, Finance, Tax Collection, Conservation)  
 March 23, 2010 ..... Tuesday/Budget Budget Workshop/Budget Advisory  
 Board/Department Presentation (Technology, Public Works, and  
 Fire Department)  
 March 25, 2010 ..... Thursday/Budget Workshop/Budget Advisory  
 Board/Department Presentation (Recreation, Solid Waste-Transfer  
 Station, Administration-Town Manager)  
 March 30, 2010 ..... Tuesday/Budget Workshop/Budget Advisory Board/Department  
 Presentation (Police Department, Town Clerk, Economic  
 Development, and General Assistance  
 April 1, 2010 ..... Thursday/Budget Advisory Board/Town Manager/Finance  
 Director  
 April 6, 2010 ..... Tuesday/Council Meeting/School Budget/Budget Advisory Board  
 April 13, 2010 ..... Tuesday/Council Meeting/Budget Review/School/Budget  
 Advisory Board  
 April 20, 2010 ..... Tuesday Bond Referendum  
 April 27, 2010 ..... Tuesday/Public Hearing Town/School Budget, LCS 7PM  
 May 4, 2010..... Tuesday/Council Meeting  
 May 6, 2010..... Thursday/Council Meeting Budget Workshop  
 May 11, 2010..... Tuesday/Council Meeting Budget Workshop (if necessary)  
 May 18, 2010..... Tuesday/Council Meeting  
 May 25, 2010..... Tuesday/Council Adopt Budgets?  
 June 8, 2010..... Validation Referendum (10 days after adoption)

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

**Order passed – Vote 6-0.**

**WILLIAM VAN TUINEN - LAND APPRASAL**

*Item postponed to the end of the meeting*

Mr. Eldridge said I do not think he is here yet, because we are way ahead of schedule. We need to wait awhile.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Eldridge said one of the items not on my report you have in front of you is a letter of agreement from Dirigo Engineering. Mr. Bauer is here tonight if you have any questions on that. They have already voted and approved the contract. We met with them today to go through it with MDOT and with Ryan Leighton. Since it is town money that's paying for this, and it has already been approved by the voters, it's recommended that the Council take a look at it and if they have any comments or question they could ask Mr. Bauer.

Councilor Bowie said I understood you to say that Ryan our Town Engineer has been involved in these discussions. This is for the Upland Road piece. Mr. Bauer said Route 9. Councilor Bowie said Route 9 section to Upland Road. Mr. Bauer said, yes. Councilor Bowie said our portion of that is roughly about \$700,000. Mr. Eldridge said between \$500,000 and \$700,000, yes. Councilor Bowie said comments from the Council on this. So I am assuming that Council agrees it's okay with what's been done so far and we are ready to keep moving forward, right.

Councilor Larochelle said as far as Ryan is working, I believe, in hand with the Water Department I would assume, because Dirigo was the one who did the initial engineering on the rest of the project so this is just a continuance of all that so we are all set. Mr. Bauer said, yes, we met today and it went smoothly. Councilor Bowie said if Council is all set with that then we will keep moving forward.

Mr. Eldridge said D. D. Dyer is coming to the Town Office February 11 through the 13. He will work through a Saturday and have Sunday available to get the Town Office all insulated. Everything is in place. Also, the architect went through the contract and met with Ryan and me to take a look at all of the things that he had recommended and he is very comfortable with the whole thing.

Mr. Eldridge said as you all know, we have hired Jessica Maloy. She will be our Finance Director. She will tentatively be coming on board the week of February 11. She is rearranging childcare so she is not quite sure.

Mr. Eldridge said I attended a rail service meeting at AVCOG and Dale and I were copied on the letter today about the rail service. There is some positive stuff going on and, hopefully, we will continue to see that moving forward to get the rail service from Brunswick to Lewiston.

Mr. Eldridge said I have been approached by Captain Josh Jacques who wanted us to participate in a program they have going on throughout the country that is a Community Covenant Ceremony. We tentatively set March 23 and we will be the first town in the State of Maine to do something like this. It's just a really nice program and they do all the work. We support our troops and do whatever we can for their families. They are all pretty excited about Lisbon doing it. Rosie Bradley and I will be organizing all the participants, the Legions, representatives from the School Department, and have all our local, federal, and national people there as well so it will be a nice event. That's all I have.

## AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

*See, also, Audience Participation after Land Appraisal at end of this meeting.*

Councilor Larochelle said it would be nice, since we are ahead of schedule here, and I know Mr. Green has some information he could share, I was wondering if he would be willing to, give a quick overview of what the community is trying to put forth with the bond funds. I know there are probably a few people in the audience that would appreciate the information. I am not sure if he has an assistant in the audience who would do that or not, but it would be good if he could give us an overview of the improvements that would be happening with the bond.

Mrs. Austin said passed out an informational sheet. We are using Stimulus money along with asking to use payments from the modular's we are recommending we move, which is about \$25,000, plus we have a bond expiring this year so we are asking to use that payment in our budget to do work on the High School to move forward with correcting some of the NEASC concerns. The Facilities Committee is recommending that we replace some of the windows of what used to be the Senior Wing, I don't know who is there now, but the North Wing to improve energy efficiency as well as getting some of the rotting windows corrected. We are moving the primary entrance so that it is handicapped accessible and so that we can securely lock down our building when we need to.

Currently, you have a handicapped entrance at the end of the corridor that has to be unlocked and manned after night games so this will move the front entrance and make it handicapped accessible. We are going to put keyed doors so that it is automatic lockdown so that we do not have to worry about our staff physically locking those doors. In addition, we are recommending that we replace and insulate the gym roof. We are concerned about the peeling paint; we were told that was what the problem is, lack of insulation. That work is estimated to be about \$613,000. This will take away a lot of the NEASC concerns, because, also, we plan on moving the art room underneath the gym, which was a concern. We are working hard to remove ourselves off from probation. We do not believe we will be immediately removed, but with all this major work being done I believe this NEASC Committee will be elated at the progress we will be making.

Mrs. Austin said we, also, have a second avenue of applying for state funding for capital improvement projects and we are all keeping our fingers crossed that we will become part of that short list. That application will be due in June. Our architects and engineers are just about at the end and they told us they were 92% complete so that will be sent off; any questions?

## APPOINTMENTS

### ORDER 2010-29 BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW (4)

Mr. Eldridge said you have four applications in front of you. We still are looking for a fifth full time member and two alternates. At least, with the four we have a quorum. We can start down that process if we do a re-val. We will have people in place so we will keep plugging to get a fifth and two alternates.

Councilor Bowie said we have Robert Begin, J. Michael Huston, Dorothy Fitzgerald, and Clyde Cavender for applicants.

**VOTE (2010-29)** Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Cote moved to appoint Robert Begin, J. Michael Huston, Dorothy Fitzgerald, and Clyde Cavender to the Assessment Review Board.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None.

**Order passed – Vote 6-0.**

Councilor Bowie said welcome aboard; appreciate your support. I hope that we will not have to utilize your services too much.

## COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS

Councilor Larochelle said I want to thank everybody for coming tonight to the public hearing for the school bond. Hopefully, this is our first step in moving forward towards doing a lot of the improvements that really need to be done to the school. If you did come for the public hearing tonight, make sure you come out to vote, because we do need that “yes” vote on the bond to make it happen. If you want repairs done, make sure you get out and vote “yes”; not that I am forcing anybody for a “yes” vote, but I appreciate it.

Councilor Bowie said we are going to take a 20 to 25 minute recess while we try to get Mr. Van Tuinen here since we are way ahead of schedule. We will have a slight recess here and, hopefully, he will show up.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION - NONE**

The Chairman announced at 6:30 PM that the Council would stand in recess until the presenter for the Land Appraisal arrived.

The Chairman reconvened the Council Meeting at 6:45 PM.

WILLIAM VAN TUINEN - LAND APPRASAL

Councilor Bowie said we discussed this at our last meeting that we wanted a gentleman to come back and talk to us. There was some concern with why we can get things done so cheaply, or reasonably. Council I know had some questions and concerns so William is here to give an overview and explanation of his approach and then answer questions.

Mr. Van Tuinen said I was contacted by Pat and asked to provide a proposal to the town on setting up a land schedule to be utilized with your mostly in-house revaluation effort. Doing a revaluation is a great deal of effort in many different ways. The software that you are utilizing in your office is a software product that I have a substantial amount of experience using. Just about every revaluation I have done, I completed using the Trio Software. I have a lot of experience with the particular software that you have. I have a substantial amount of experience setting up land schedules and coordinating those land schedules with building appraisals to reflect local values in different communities that I have worked in. The proposal that I have given to you is not, I want everybody to be clear, is not for me to do all the data entry. It's not for me or one of my staff members to sit at your computer and enter that this property has two acres of this type of land, site improvements, and it's in this or that neighborhood or zone, but rather to set up the framework that this is done in. It would be your responsibility to do the data entry. It would be my responsibility to provide the assistance for the framework for that data entry to be done in and to test the land schedules against lots of sales data that, hopefully, is available in various sections of town. I will go through in a little bit of detail of what that all involves. The Trio software works within a particular framework and it pulls that framework together to value the land. Part of the framework is land schedules. Schedules that say a home site up to the first acre or half acre, whatever is appropriate, in various zones or areas in town, will be valued at this unit value. Additional land might be valued at a different unit value. You can have a large number of land schedules. The software has a lot of power in terms of allowing you if you need them to have a large number of land schedules. The land valuation system works also with a matrix of zones or uses. Maybe you have a residential zone in town that has a certain lot size and certain things can be done and certain things can not be done. That zone would be part of a matrix and based on entering a neighborhood, an area with somewhat similar characteristics of the property, based on a neighborhood delineation and a zone the software directs itself to the land schedule that is appropriate based on what you set up to value the land in that neighborhood and zone. It's somewhat of an automated system. The person who might be doing the data entry can do the data entry without understanding everything about the software. You designate all the properties between lot 12 and 50 are within a certain neighborhood and a certain zone and that data can be entered. That's not going to be my job. That's going to be your town staff job, but to set up the matrix of how that's going to be entered so it comes up with statistically valid verifiable values will be my job under the proposal I have made to you.

Mr. Van Tuinen said that is what I interpreted Pat's request for a proposal to be and that is what I have provided to the town, which is to look at all the land sales and to look at a lot of the land and building sales. It is not like you can value land on one hand and buildings on another hand. Most of the sales that you have are going to be combinations of land and buildings selling as a package. Pat and I will have to work together and coordinate things so that both hands know what they are doing. It works as a package for a valuation that is reasonable with sales. The methodology that you use with any software when you are doing a mass appraisal system, when you are doing a tax appraisal system, is sales ratio analysis where you develop your schedules. You look at how the sales and various areas of town, various types of property, what they are coming in at, and you start

with your best guess estimate of what is going to work for a land schedule and a building schedule and you test it against the sales with the sales ratio study. That lines up the sales that have occurred in a particular of town and a particular type of property, what the proposed assessed values are compared to the sales prices. You fine tune it and test it again until you get the best fit that you can obtain where you are really looking at two things. You are looking at your ratio. I don't know what your goal is, whether you want to be at 90%, 95%, or 85% percent of value. That's Pat's job and the town's job, I am just going to help you achieve the goal that you want to achieve, but you do that by testing your proposed assessed values against sales and you look at the overall ratio. If you want to be at 90% of value or 95% of value then you want to make sure that you are at that level of value consistently. You have three sales, this is very simplistic, but if you have three sales and one is assessed at 50% of value, one is at 100% of value, and one is at 150% of value, you have a perfect ratio. You have three sales and they average 100% of value, but they are all over the place. The way you measure whether they are all over the place or not is called the coefficient of dispersion, sometimes it's called equality rating. With that particular three-sale combination I gave you, I think, the quality rating would be 35 or so, it would be high. The lower the coefficient the tighter the fit so if you had another three sales and one was at 90%, one at 100%, and one at 110%, and have the same ratio 100% but it's a much tighter fit. The whole idea of the sales ratio study is to bring things in at a reasonable ratio of assessed value to sales price with that tight fit and that is the kind of work I propose to do with your town officials. It is one of these things where it requires us to work together, to think together, and coordinate things together. It would not just be me. It would be me trying to use my work experience and ability to pull these kinds of things together, having done it for a long time, melding that with the efforts of your staff. That is, basically, what my proposal is. I would be happy to answer questions.

Councilor Larochelle said thank you that explains a lot. I am not real experienced with the idea of what valuation or revaluation is. What I am hearing, regardless of whether you are doing Lisbon, Portland, or Bangor, if you are using Trio software the scheduling has to be done, regardless, because the software only works if you put in the information for it to work by so this scheduling is not something that is unique. It is something that has to be done before a valuation begins. It a necessary step in the starting process of the valuation.

Mr. Van Tuinen said I have worked with it a lot. I am used to it so much that I have a predisposition to be favorably inclined to it, but it is like a spreadsheet. If you go out and you buy a spreadsheet, you can do anything, but you still have to know how to input the information into the spreadsheet. If you just buy the software, it does not do anything for you. You have to know how to use it. You have to know how to set up the formulas, how to set up the tables, how to make the calculations, and you have to know something about the data in there. If you are putting rotten data in there, then you can do the best analysis in the world, but it is of limited utility.

*(Councilor Mason arrived)*

Councilor Larochelle said initially it seemed like it was an alternative means to do a valuation on land, but from what I hear it's not an alternative, it's the more basic way. Can you actually say that out of all the re-vals that you have helped with is the scheduling process you use pretty much the same process done in all your valuations. Is this one of many different ways of setting up your schedules or is there actually only one.

Mr. Van Tuinen said there are some preferences that certain professional people in the field have. Not everybody wants the same type of land schedule. Someone might feel that this approach is a little better than this alternative approach. Just for an example, on rural land. My preference is generally, to value rural land as if it was vacant and then to add a site improvement value for lots that have onsite septic and well. That is just my preference. It is not the only way to do it. Some other people might say we will value a rural lot at a unit value that includes those site improvements and we will make a vacancy allowance for the lots that are not improved to represent a vacant lot is worth a little less than a developed lot with private septic and water. Neither one is right or wrong. It is a preference that some Assessors feel more comfortable with one approach. It

is what they are used to. Other Assessors feel another approach is better. Trio accommodates a lot of flexibility. You can formulate the methodology to fit the situation of the town both in terms of how much development is going on, is it a sleepy rural area where not a lot of development is going on, or is it a fast growing area where certain things like the amount of frontage a parcel has is very much linked to its value. I do not know what the situation here is, but you tailor it to fit the needs of the community, and the values in the community.

Councilor Larochelle said in the past we have looked at a revaluation by somebody in the cost range of \$320,000 or less. When we were presented with the idea of doing it in-house in a sense with help from third party, much like yourself, who would do the valuation with a number under a \$100,000, say \$80,000 pt \$90,000, which is about a third of the cost, I guess, the concern a lot of people had was, are we shorting ourselves? Is the valuation that we are going to do going to be fair and equal and achieve the right goal? A valuation you only do so often, so you do not want to short yourself. The idea of spending \$300,000 to get a proper valuation and spending less is going to get less of a valuation that is kind of the concern, but from what I am hearing the idea of doing it in-house is not easier. I realize that for that \$80,000 to \$90,000 dollar figure that it would cost us to do this in-house, there is a lot of internal work that needs to be done. You are actually giving us a quote for setting a foundation for our internal people to be able to put the numbers in to try to set the valuation. In your own opinion do you think the process of the way we are going about it, not only is just more reasonable, but actually at the end of the day, is going to be a fair valuation or re-valuation. I don't believe, always, the idea about outsourcing everything is always the best way either. I think sometimes handling stuff internally; we have a little more control over. I am not worried about doing it internally; just, I think, the people at the last meeting had concern that at the end of the day with the process that we are doing do you think is going to be a fair valuation? I know you have been doing it a long time and I respect everything you said tonight and I really think you have the grips on it. I think that what you are doing is the base line on it, whether we hired somebody or not. It is a step that we need to do to move forward. I don't want to put you on the spot at all, but the idea of towns doing it internally like we are doing do you feel that usually ends up being a fair valuation.

Mr. Van Tuinen said boy is that ever a tough question. I don't know exactly what your capabilities are, what you budgeted for certain phases of the job, and I don't know whether you are doing most of the data entry from existing records that will just be reviewed a little bit in the field rather than being inspected and that's all critical. One town that I have worked for quite a while now is the Town of Skowhegan. I have worked there since 1990. The only way that I can answer your question is to try to give you an example. At the same time I started there, the town undertook a revaluation. I was not hired to do the revaluation. I was hired to do the tax assessment work. The revaluation was completed in 1999 and I have maintained that system since 1999. I have had to do three or four updates in that amount of time. For quite awhile, probably up until 1998, 1999, things were pretty sleepy and the market wasn't growing very much from year to year. In fact some of the issues that we had were reducing some of the values in some areas. When we had the revaluation, we did not have many sales in our downtown, then a few sales occurred and they universally indicated we were a little high and we made some downward adjustments. Then the values in Skowhegan, as they have in many areas, started to take off and in order to certify a reasonable amount of value we had to do some major updating of our values. That's particularly important because we have a lot of industrial property. There is no way in the world that you can justify being at 100% on a Papermill or a hydroelectric plant if you are not at 100% of value on everything else so we have to somewhat act defensively to keep our values where we can certify 100% or we are going to have to adjust down a lot of our tax base. I have had to do some updating and I have done a reasonably good job at that. Statistically it looks very good. I have an acceptable coefficient of dispersion, but in my heart of hearts I know it's not nearly as good as it would be if we did another revaluation and we re-inspected all of the property in town. It's now been 19 years since our last revaluation. The Town of Skowhegan doesn't even have any building permits. I am sure when somebody builds a house or a garage and its obvious we pick all that stuff up, but there is no way we know if somebody has remodeled the kitchen or three rooms in the house. Then there is, also,

the thing that when you observe certain things going on incrementally, even though I have been in Skowhegan for 20 years now, if I go by somebody's house and I see that there is a new roof on it that, that is just taking care of what they own, that's just routine maintenance. If I go by it and I see that they have painted it I am inclined to say the same thing. If I go by it, and I may not even notice that there is new replacement windows. It just does not incrementally impress you that that house over 20 years has been transformed from an old house less than average condition to an old house that is in better than average condition. Depending upon what you are doing and how you are doing it, I mean, that I have done reasonably well and the statistics look pretty good, but I know that there are people who own properties that have been improved and are under valued simply because those improvement have not been picked up through a re-inspection program or a total revaluation effort. I, also, know some properties, and every once in awhile and it hits me on the head, somebody calls up and says hey I really need you to take a look at this house. It's getting pretty rough and I don't have the money to fix it up and its gone down over the last 20 years and unless they called to have me inspect it I wouldn't realize that it had gone down hill and it would be valued too high because our record reflects the condition that it was in 20 years ago. I don't know exactly what your plan is and how you are going about it. I don't think you're planning a total re-inspection program. You can do a lot as I have done a lot in Skowhegan, but there is no way, if you work with data that you already have in hand that you are going to pick up some of the positive or negative changes in the value of certain properties that have occurred that are not observable from the outside. I can't give you a short answer, but I think I have given you a very honest answer.

Councilor Bowe said are there any other questions or comments.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Jill Denniston said who sets up the valuation, I mean, the square footage of the house and then it's going to be valued this much. Who decides this? I mean, who is going to set up the valuation of how much the house is worth for taxing. Where does that come from?

Mr. Van Tuinen said this may require somebody else to step in and answer this question. My proposal to the town is limited to setting up a land valuation schedule that will reflect in the assessed values that are manifested from the market place that you can look at sales and say, gee from this area of town generally a two acre lot sells for about \$20,000 to \$30,000 or \$25,000 to \$28,000. We will try to set the values that are reflective of that. Pat Dow is your Assessor. He will, and I will try to help him do this, because it is necessary to coordinate the land values and the building values so that they come in together where they should come in relationship to land and building sales. The whole idea of the valuation is to develop appraisal schedules, and I have talked just about the land schedules a little bit ago, but the other appraisal schedules are building schedules where in general we estimate the replacement cost new of a home. Taking into consideration the quality, size, story height of a home, and then we adjust that valuation for depreciation and depreciation has three components. Many times the three components are not relevant. Sometimes they are. Many times in a neighborhood, that is a pretty good neighborhood, and a house that is a reasonably livable quality house, the only thing you have to adjust for is a physical depression of the property. That is no longer new; it's got to be depreciated compared to a new house, because it's old and it has a little bit of wear and tear. Sometimes you have to make an adjustment for functional obsolescence; something that's internal to the property. I have a big old barn attached to my big old house. Even though I do a little farming, I raise some animals, sell lambs to everyone who wants to place an order, and I'll sell you some lamb so I use the barn, but it's a great big old barn. 100 years ago everybody in my community farmed; it served a function. I'm about the only guy in the neighborhood that raises anything. There is some functional obsolescence. Nobody is going to build that gigantic barn with that gigantic hayloft. Sometimes there is a locational obsolescence, both economical and external obsolescence. You might have a neighborhood in town that's just not the most desirable neighborhood. Maybe it has a lot of truck traffic. Maybe it's somewhat of a blighted area and houses do not sell as much as they do in another neighborhood where the houses are better maintained, there is not as much traffic, noise, or better maintained. That kind of an external effect on value the Assessor would try to take into consideration. That's the basic approach. It's done the same way I described relative to the land.

Where you measure how the assessed values stack up to sales. Sales ratio study where you are looking at the level of value that you are at and how closely you are across the board to that average ratio.

Dorothy Fitzgerald said at the last Town Council meeting the presentation that Mr. Dow gave and then he left before questions were asked, it appeared that, and you keep talking about the Trio Software, and putting things on the computer and everything. The feeling I got from the presentation is that, I am a realtor and I have been one for many years. You can't use your sale. The sale of your property is not divided up by your land and your buildings and you don't see it on the finished product. But anyway, you have to drive through a neighborhood, though a town, to get a feel for this and get a feeling for the different neighborhoods. You can not do this sitting behind a desk in Skowhegan or wherever. You have to note the neighborhood because there will be one neighborhood where the homes are valued at maybe \$100,000 or \$150,000 and another neighborhood where the homes are valued at \$250,000 to \$300,000. Yes, even here in Lisbon. So, you just can not do it all behind a desk. The feeling that I got from the previous presentation was that it was all going to be done off site with a computer. Am I wrong?

Mr. Van Tuinen said I think you are wrong. Maybe things were not explained fully as maybe they could have been explained. I certainly agree with you. You have to get out in the field. You have to ride the town a little bit. I certainly won't know the neighborhoods here without driving. I would try to coordinate my time with Pat's who I believe is probably becoming more and more familiar everyday with the Town to have a reasonable neighborhood delineation so that the unit values that we use for land fit the neighborhood and if there are some economic adjustments that need to be made for certain neighborhoods, because they are illustrated by sales that indicate maybe very few properties sell and when they do sell they sell for a low price, then we would try and reflect that in the valuation of those neighborhoods in town.

Dorothy Fitzgerald said I do not quite understand what you mean by the sales and adjusting that way because you are looking at when you see a sales price, which comes through the registry of deeds on the tax form. That's the finished product with the land and building, and, of course, the appraisal has already been done, but you don't see that so I can't see how you are going to adjust it. I don't understand your approach.

Mr. Van Tuinen said what I have tried to indicate is that its important that your staff and I work in concert that I just don't develop land schedules and Pat develop building schedules that don't work together. That's not the way I want to go. I'm sure that's not the way Pat want to go. I have a lot of experience doing revaluations and I have a lot of experience with the particular software that you have, I think I know the ins and outs, probably as well as anybody knows them, but we have to work together so that the package of not just land value or building value, but the total appraised value of a house that sells with a lot is in line with what the total sale of that house is and we primarily do that by testing our appraised values lumping land and building together for the land and building sales to the sales prices. We compare the assessed value to the total package sales price. I have tried to emphasis that I can't just do the land without coordinating my effort in getting Pat and me on the same page that it all works together.

Dorothy Fitzgerald said I have a question for the council. Evidently there were two bids that came in for the reevaluation. I am a little disappointed that we only have one presentation tonight. I was hoping to have both presentations to see how each company was going to do a valuation so I was hoping to have a presentation from both of them. Nothing disrespectful, but I would like to have a presentation before you people make a decision; is this possible.

Mr. Eldridge said the other bid price is \$35,000 so you can't afford that. Councilor Bowie said Mr. Main.

Richard Main said I have known Mr. Van Tuinen since the early 1990's. I have known him professionally, talked to him at conventions and conferences, and we have talked over the phone about different issues. I have watched his work. He not only works in Skowhegan, but he works in a number of other communities. He has done probably as many revaluations, total, partial, land only, buildings only, as any firm in the industry has done. The other proposals are much higher. I know that, and this isn't a negative, but one of the other parties has a full time very good position as Assessor and does this as something on the side. When businesses work in economic situations such as this to keep people at work they tend to keep things as close as they can so they don't lose money. However, when you are working full time you can afford to lose something so you are going to put in a full value in your proposal. When you go up to \$120,000, which one of them is, you are getting up there where I don't have it calculated out, but if you have 3,200 parcels in town that is \$100,000, a revaluation company will charge us well over \$100 per parcel so when you think about the cost you need to remember that they are talking about having a full value for themselves. They provide a good product, just as Mr. Van Tuinen does and they are walking away with full salaries because of the work that they do. I have been involved for 27 years, both on the local level meaning as a Selectmen/ Assessor and I currently am employed by the City of Lewiston. I see some of these questions. Mr. Van Tuinen is doing it probably more as a favor to us than anything else. The product will be a good product. It will be something better than we have now. I know of properties that are valued at 200% almost of what they should be valued at and others that are valued at 10% or 20%. If you add them together they might come near a 100%, but again, its skewed all over the place. These need to be looked at. They need to look at the values. He is taking a first step and saying let us work at this one, take a little chunk at a time, let us do it, get it done with, and get on with our lives.

Councilor Larochelle do you feel that doing the valuation in-house, being as involved as you are with the town, is the way for us to go? Mr. Main said with the funds that you have available this is excellent.

Mr. Van Tuinen said if I could just make one or two more comments. I try to propose in response to what I understood the Town of Lisbon's need to be. I am not trying to impose anything on you. The way I was asked to make a proposal, the problem that I was asked to address in the proposal is we need help putting together a land schedule that works for the Town of Lisbon and that's what I try to respond to. I am not saying it is not as good as if you hired me for \$275,000 to do a revaluation and re-inspect every single property in the town. What I tried to do is just simply respond to what you asked for with what I thought was an appropriate solution to the problem that you wanted to solve. If I haven't anticipated some of the things that you wanted solved I am happy to go back to the drawing board. With what I understood, you want somebody to help figure out how to value the land in Lisbon in a way that is appropriate for Lisbon, reflect the market values in the Town of Lisbon or a uniform percentage of them, and coordinate well with the rest of the work that you are undertaking. That is what I tried to propose, that is what my proposal is, and that is what I thought you asked for.

Mrs. Denniston said what does a process like this take, a year, two years. Councilor Bowie said two years. Mrs. Denniston said when was the last time you guys were valuating houses around here. Councilor Bowie said it was probably 1986. Mr. Main said it was 1992. Mrs. Denniston said, so, we are due, okay, thank you.

Michelle Swatsworth-Turmelle said I am not trying to rehash this I am just a very numbers theological person so knowing that the reassessment was done before my home was built. I am on a street that has a cul-de-sac. There are 10 homes on it. They were built within a year of the last assessment date done. I am trying to understand, because my house has been updated. I had my home appraised five years ago. Since then I have done interior and exterior work, all of which I have pulled permits for, just so we are clear on that. One of my questions and concerns is around the fact that, and I am just using whole numbers, because for me that's easier, but the home, the lot was appraised, let's say, around \$30,000. The home when it was built was appraised, let's say,

around \$110,000 so that's a \$140,000 in total. Five years ago, I had it appraised, we will say, at \$180,000 so here I am thinking that I have \$40,000 since it was purchased. I went through my home in the last three years and I have spent probably two-thirds of that amount in upgrades and updates. Some of which you have talked about, windows, roof, doors, but we have added a garage and a deck. Now, with the market the way it is I know that my appraised value is no longer the appraised value, because that was before the market took a dive. My concern is and I am one of the homeowners on my street that has maintained my home, a few others have, and some are in the process of doing that, but I, also, know within the last five years there have been several homes sold that had no upgrades done. I know that the last home sold after the pipes burst so it was sold to get rid of it at a very low amount. My concern as a homeowner is how that is going to affect my current value, because you look at sales in my surrounding neighborhood, and I understand that you are only doing the land portion, but I need to see the big picture because the other is going to follow suit, because you are going on current market value. Well, we all know what the market is right now. It is very low. We have homes in Lisbon selling for \$60,000, \$70,000, or \$80,000. If the lots are equal in size for a town lot 100' by 100' and the home is selling for \$80,000 then \$30,000 of that is the lot. I am trying to understand then being that all of us look at a home as an investment some of us should be anticipating that we are going to be looking at a loss. Mr. Dow said, yes. Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said that's where I am sitting at and wondering as a homeowner, I understand how you explain it, but you want the teeter-totter more even. You want this to be more of a equality type thing, I get that. But, for those of us that have done very well at maintaining our homes are we the ones that are going to be penalized the most? Because, we have tried to maintain our home, done the most, done additions, and little things to it; then there are some things in the neighborhood and you tie in the economy, and that the fair market value now is not what it was five years ago. I am just trying to understand the numbers for these.

Mr. Van Tuinen said everybody who does this type of work is going to put the overwhelming emphasis on the most recent sales. The most weight on the most recent sales. That's not to say that you may have some areas of town where you have a road that will take a little longer to get at least some historical perspective, but the overwhelming weight will be put on sales that are reflective of current market conditions. There is an exception to that. Everybody who does this type of work doesn't set benchmarks, doesn't set guidelines based on the property that the pipes had burst and the bank had taken it over and they sold it in two days for a very low price. That type of distressed foreclosure sale is not going to be the benchmark. Those sales are unfortunately now too common, but they are not the benchmark that you use to establish assessed values.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said we have over 50 foreclosures, correct me if I am wrong, but we had a very high number last year because this came up so there is not a neighborhood out there I don't think that hasn't been effected by it. This particular home actually sat there for about a year. It was not a quick sale or anything like that. It was an unfortunate circumstance. My concern is that it is based off the current fair market value. Unfortunately, I don't think our town based on current fair market value, based on the lot cost, my concern is that I don't think it's going to change much from the way it was before, because of the way the economy has brought some of those prices down. I understand you want to balance things out, but at the same time there are those of us that have been putting a lot of sweat equity into their home and I am afraid that we are the ones who are going to be penalized.

Mr. Van Tuinen said Pat might have a lot more perspective on this than I do. I am a blank slate. I don't have opinions about values in Lisbon because I haven't worked in Lisbon. Every year the State of Maine through the Maine Revenue Services Bureau does a study on their own and they get input from the local Assessor of what the sales in the community are. They systematically compare those sales prices to the assessed values of the town. The reason they do that is to try to equalize the value among towns that are in the same school district, same county, so that they all pay into the school district and county on the same basis. They all receive benefits from the state, for example, educational subsidy, or revenue sharing, on the same basis. They cannot accept each town's value as face value because they realize some of them are very outdated and some of them are very up to

date. In the analyses that the state has done Pat, what is your analogy ratio, what is your average ratio? Mr. Dow said it is 56% and well into the two-digits for the quality ratings. They are all over the board. You in particular should be begging for a re-val.

Councilor Larochelle said that even before I got on the Council we were talking re-valuation. There were a lot of numbers thrown around. The two things I heard were that the best time to do a re-valuation is when the economy is where it is right now, because you can get to 80% or 90% of the valuation possibly without raising anybody's taxes. Just because we go from 56% to 100% of the valuation doesn't mean the taxes will go up. The reason I mention the idea of, you know, when you were describing your road with your house being say one of the highest percentages on valuation, by doing the revaluation we are doing your house should benefit the most from everybody's house because your house would balance downwards versus the other ones would balance towards the middle. The only reason I say this is a few years back I had built a new home in town and I had basically, moved out of a house that had everything the new one had, but the taxes on the new house were five times as much and I feel that the new one was valued at 100 or 150%. With the re-val, I think that number will come back down a bit so someone with a brand new house that is valued at today's market price or market price three years ago, when they do the valuation it's going to try to balance everything off. With everything you described on your road, your up keeping and the other people not, by this valuation it is not going to drop the value a far as resale, but what it will do is bring the valuation you are taxed on down to the point where most likely you will be the one on road that benefits. It seems really strange, but sometimes the more you do and you have the nicest house in the neighborhood are your taxes have gone up every time you get a permit, but when they do the valuation odds are that that is going to get all backed up to the point of being more equal with the houses around you. It may sound strange, but they take your house from say 60% of valuation to 100% of valuation and it is very possible that your tax may drop in that process.

Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said it is not my taxes that I am worried about. It is understanding the theory. If a lot was \$30,000 when it was built and I had, my home appraised and now the assessment comes out and you are talking fair market value and the homes have been selling for a lot less it makes sense with the economy that prices have gone down including the lot costs. I am trying to understand that if my lot costs \$30,000 16 or 20 years ago and it comes back at a fair market value now based on what the surrounding areas are and its \$25,000, how is that a benefit for me? How does that help me if I sell my home in five years?

Councilor Larochelle said I don't, again, not that I know a lot about valuation, but I think you are going to find that one of the most consistent prices that stays level is land prices and the building, construction, and what is on the property value changes a lot. Say eight years ago if you were looking to buy a buildable lot and you were driving through Lisbon today to buy a buildable lot, those prices haven't changed as much as the overall construction if you were to buy a standing house. I mean, that's what I know about properties. I do not think you are going to find even if you compare it to the neighbors around you that your initial land investment value has changed; if anything it's probably gone up. Land usually doesn't go down in value even in a bad economy, but I am sure that is why they use so many different averages. Again, there is a lot that goes into it. It's a process we have to go through, because if we don't do the valuation the state will mandate it and do it automatically. Hopefully, the process we have in place is the most reasonable one. One of the things about controlling this ourselves is that we can look and see when this is done to make sure that it does somewhat fit with the process. The people we voted in earlier, if, once the valuation goes through and you look at your numbers and you really don't agree, then there is going to be a mechanism in place for you to go and say these are all my numbers and this is what I think is fair and this is what it isn't. The group will have the ability to reflect that change as either good or bad. I think the whole process is in place, it is just the idea of how we get there. Unfortunately, we have tried many times in the past to get there and doing it in the big way that is unfortunately not going to work.

Mr. Main said there is one component that no one has talked about. We have talked about 56 or whatever it is, and 13 or 14 for improved parcels that the state says we are at, but the one component is the mil rate. I am hearing through what some of the questions are that have been asked is they are thinking that we are going to have a mil rate of \$25.50. Now, if you have the same budget this year as you had last year, with no increase in budget cost, and you had the same revenues, then the 56% percent will be increased to 100% percent and the mil rate would be somewhere around \$13 or \$14 per thousand instead of \$25 per thousand. No one has mentioned that and it is important for you to understand that when you start equalizing values that you need to remember that the mil rate is going to be adjusted. Now one comment that comes in, and then people are very nervous about this, is that they are going to be penalized for doing improvements to their home. Well, one of the other ways to look at it is that there are people out here that are in this community that have been for 10 years or more penalized, some to the point of paying twice as much in taxes as their neighbors or somebody else in the community. We need to move ahead with it. Get on with it. I think that if we delay, the concerns, the fear, literal fear, economic fear, which people have in this community will increase. We have to do it, get a base line, and keep it up. The Council has to provide the funds to do that on a regular basis.

Councilor Cote said we started out tonight looking at in total to come in and lay structure to do a land valuation and all of a sudden, it has turned into now valuating property. What are we truly voting on at this point? Are we voting on a contract to lay structure so our people can do a land valuation or to valuate our town? I think we have taken this in a whole different direction from what we originally started at. From what I have picked up, I understand is, that we want to put down the groundwork so that Mr. Dow can do a valuation. Why are we trying to take this in another direction from where we are? I would like to see us bring this back to what the real issue is. We are voting on something tonight that would lay structure to do that, not a valuation. Also, if we are going to do a valuation, and we are going to talk about valuation, I think, that we need to table this and bring it to a discussion of the Council so that we can have an open discussion about where we want to go with this. The only thing I take out of this is that we have gone in a whole different direction.

Councilor Cote said we have a gentleman that came in tonight that wanted to speak, but we were ahead of schedule and he wasn't able to be here thinking that the meeting was going to start at 7PM. George Upham never got an opportunity to speak and I would appreciate it if you would give him that opportunity.

Councilor Bowie said we are ready to roll on setting the land valuation. We did get the presentation from Pat at the last meeting on a step process to get us there so we will have with further discussion and go through things on the total valuation. I do think it is pertinent though for the public we do have here to be able to ask questions and try to gain more of an understanding. This is a very big issue in any community and the more things we can lay out up front to try to help people understand is good. I know it took a little bit of time to get through this, but I think it was very beneficial and, hopefully, the people who will watch this on Thursday will get some good input out of it.

Councilor Bowie said I am assuming there are no more comments from the public on this.

Richard Graham said I will make this brief. I know from the very beginning when we were talking about re-valuation and I am sure the Council is aware of what I would like to say. I hear a lot of talk about what's going to be fair and what's going to work for the Town of Lisbon and I am only glad to remind the Council that the Town of Lisbon is not the municipal building that sits out on Route 196 where the government entity it houses. It's the people that own the homes here and live here and own businesses here. I would urge the Council, as I am sure you will, keep that in the forefront of your mind as you go through this process. Councilor Bowie said thank you Richard; are there any other comments? Seeing none, we have an agreement in front of us for the value of \$8,000. So I

would entertain a motion if Council was up to that, or if Council is not up to that, please tell me what you would like to do.

Councilor Cote said I would like to table this for further discussion. (There is no motion on the floor to table.) I think that as a Council we need to talk about this and decide where we are going with it. I do not think tonight is the prime opportunity to vote on something of this nature without further discussion.

Councilor Bowie said so I guess I would ask, if its Council's preference, what else do you want to talk about. The last meeting we discussed this, we had an overview, and we were asked to bring in the individual and go over this and ask questions. I guess I would ask Council what is left unanswered that you don't feel comfortable with making a decision on tonight.

Councilor Cote said well, tonight we wanted to bring in someone that's going to set down the groundwork to do a land valuation for the town. Now, is this something we are ready to go ahead with and vote on tonight or are we interested in looking at other people who maybe wanted to put a bid in on it? Are we just going to go with what we have?

Councilor Bowie said to refresh all of the Council's memory, we did put this out to bid. We received three bid proposals. Mr. Eldridge said one didn't bid because of health issues. Councilor Bowie said two came back. The one that was brought before us was the one that was recommended by Pat Dow and the Town Manager based on knowledge, experience, and everything. I am prepared based upon what I have heard tonight, my questions have been answered, we had some good questions from the public tonight, and I think as Mr. Main has mentioned we need to start making progress in this endeavor. We have the opportunity as we continue to move forward to refine all of this. I am ready to go forward.

Councilor Cote said is this something the Council will be kept updated on. Councilor Bowie said absolutely. This is going to be kept up to date and well communicated. This is a talk that when you start the re-valuation process it is very important that we keep communication open and people apprized about how things are going, what type of progress is made, so, I would expect that Pat and Steve will keep this in front of the Council, put stuff on the website, and all of that stuff. There will still be some very important strategic decisions that Council will have to make during this whole process.

Councilor Larochelle said one of the things that I had a concern with over the last presentation was just the idea of knowing how this actually moves forward. That was answered. I think Mr. Van Tuinen spoke very well and I appreciate everything you said and you did clarify a lot of what my concerns were. I would like to make a motion that we move forward with the idea of making a contract because of what we are actually investing to get this process going. At least in that point in time we can actually see if this type of valuation process is going to work for us. In the whole scheme of things, it's a very little investment to get things going, I do believe.

**VOTE (2010-28)** Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Pomelow moved to accept the proposal to start the paperwork for the land scheduling to help with the land valuation not to exceed \$8,000 entering into an agreement with William Van Tuinen.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Mrs. Swatsworth-Turmelle said this is just for the land. Councilor Bowie said it typically takes two years. It depends; in-house it could perhaps take a little bit longer. It depends upon how quickly we can react to everything based on the timing of stuff being set up, how available our resources are, and how efficiently and effectively Council makes the decisions for going forward.

Donald Fellows said I just have one question and one comment. If I am correct, we as a town are being severally penalized for not initiating this process. At 56% percent, we are losing tree growth,

homestead exemptions, and veteran's exemptions. We have to be above 70% percent to even get the full value there so we need to get started.

Dorothy Fitzgerald said is it appropriate to know the amount of the bids. I know they were given out at the previous Town Council meeting. One bid was very high and you completely threw that out. Councilor Bowie said the current bid that we have a motion on is not to exceed \$8,000. Mrs. Fitzgerald said the other one you had been considering was how much? Councilor Bowie said \$35,000 I don't have that paperwork right in front of me. Mrs. Fitzgerald said I was hoping to hear from both of them tonight. I am a little disappointed.

Councilor Bowie said any other comments from the public. (None noted.)

**Order passed - Vote 5-1. (Opposed: Cote)**

### AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Councilor Bowie said we have a gentleman who didn't get a chance to comment, George Upham.

George Upham, from 170 Ridge Road said sorry I understood this would be at the end of your meeting. I have two contaminated wells. The state inspected my wells. I am on Route 9. In June, they found the wells were contaminated. They came in August and re-inspected the wells and both the wells up at my house are contaminated with salt and chlorides. At that time, Mr. Katz who works for the MDOT indicated that he thought the state would drill new wells for me. Since then I have talked to him and his supervisor and he says the state is not prepared to do this, they feel it is the Town of Lisbon's problem. In January, I did have a discussion with Bill Bauer in the Water Department. They are considering running water from the intersection of Upland Road and Ridge Road, further up to where I am at the top of the hill. I talked to the Town Manager and he is not aware of any plans, according to him, and felt that it was a state problem. In January here, again I said that Katz from the MDOT said it was a town problem. What I would like, if the Council could see if they could do for me, I would like to know who is going to assume responsibility for my two polluted wells and what is going to happen; am I going to get town water or am I going to get new wells and when.

Mr. Eldridge said I can talk to that. The money has been approved by the town to fund the project, whether the state and the town comes to an agreement on that particular project really doesn't matter, because the money from the town's perspective is there. The project is moving forward and the state and I and our attorney, will continue to argue the percentage. The state feels that we should pay 90% of the cost and they should only pay 10% of the cost. The funding for this comes from the Recovery Act. The project came in under-budget, not to overwhelm you with all that information, so there is an on-going argument, but in lieu of that, the townspeople voted to move forward and appropriate the funding through the bond. I have not spoken to Bill in reference to that, moving up beyond there, and I did not realize the Mr. Katz had told you that they couldn't drill wells there.

Mr. Upham said they didn't say they couldn't. He said that the state now doesn't feel it can; it's probably the 90% business. Mr. Eldridge said by state law we have to fix the wells; either it's the state or the town. The money is there. Whoever it comes to, in the end that they decide is going to pay for it, it will be done. Somebody has to fix it; we do not have a choice. Mr. Upham said, so, when. I have a house I had to take off a well and put on a dug well, which is fine this winter, but it won't be through the summer. Mr. Eldridge said we heard today the project will be starting in July. So, how much progress they make, it is a two year project, so I would expect the water lines from what I understand will be done in the first year and a half, but that something Ryan Leighton our Town Engineer is involved in overseeing that whole project. I sat in today and got some dates on that project from the engineer and MDOT was there.

Mr. Upham said so is Mr. Leighton who I should talk to. Mr. Eldridge said Mr. Leighton and Jim Ferguson, the gentleman from the MDOT who is overseeing that whole project. I can certainly give you his phone number tomorrow. Mr. Upham said I know Jim. Mr. Eldridge said, oh, you know Jim Ferguson. He is the person who is overseeing that Route 9 project. Mr. Upham said I will call him.

Councilor Bowie said one question, where exactly do you live. Mr. Upham said 170 Ridge Road. Do you know Buddy Campbell? Councilor Bowie said, yes. Mr. Upham said I am the next two houses going up Route 9. Councilor Bowie said, so, that is above Upland Road. Mr. Upham said, yes.

Councilor Bowie said our project isn't going above Upland Road. Mr. Eldridge said the question has been asked, it depends upon how the price comes in. Upland Road has not been bid out yet and that is an MDOT project with the town. We are trying to get a schedule next week to sit down with K & K, who was awarded the Route 9 project. They gave us a rough estimate of \$35 per foot to install the material. We are going to purchase all the piping ourselves. They will do the installation. We will sit down with them next week or the week after to firm up the cost of that with the engineer, Tim Sawtelle so we will have a better idea. If we come in with a price and we can extend it, I know Mr. Bauer has said he would like to extend it beyond Upland Road and possibly, and I don't know where you live, but up that far. It is still and unknown at this point.

Mr. Upham said there are other people that would be interested in tying into the water up there, too. Mr. Eldridge said I know Mr. Bauer asked if the project came in over-budget from what we expected what we would do and for that, he has to talk to the Council. The Water Department will have to talk to the Council if that does come true. Mr. Upham said could I be kept advised of the schedule. Mr. Eldridge said, yes. I have your phone number on a piece of paper right next to my telephone. As soon as I have more information, I will definitely have Mr. Leighton get in touch with you. Mr. Upham said thank you for your time.

## ADJOURNMENT

**VOTE (2010-30)** Councilor Cote, seconded by Councilor Larochelle moved to adjourn at 8:05 PM. **Order passed - Vote 7-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,

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Twila D. Lycette, Council Secretary  
Town Clerk, Lifetime CCM/MMC

*These Council meeting minutes were transcribed by Beth French and Twila Lycette.*