



## TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 6, 2009

Fern Larochelle, Jr., At Large 2010  
Roger Cote, At Large 2011  
Michael Bowie, At Large 2009  
Gina Mason, District 1 2010  
Janet Henry, District 1 2009  
Dale Crafts, District 2 2010  
Norma Wells, District 2 2009

CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE TO THE FLAG. The Chairman, Michael Bowie, called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance to the flag at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL. Members present were Councilors Wells, Bowie, Henry, Mason, Crafts, Larochelle and Cote. Also present were Stephen Eldridge, Town Manager; Verla Brooks, Park Ranger; Gerald Samson, Assessor/CEO; Gerald Kamke, Treatment Plant Supervisor/Planning Board Vice Chair; Dr. Shannon Welsh, Superintendent of Schools, Prudence Grant, School Committee Chairman; John Potvin, Planning Board Chairman; Walter Morse, Budget Advisory Board; Lori Pomelow, Budget Advisory Board; Jeff Ganong, Budget Advisory Board; John Wierzbicki, Budget Advisory Board; Carroll Curtis, Conservation Commission Chairman; and approximately 20 citizens in the audience.

### PUBLIC HEARING - NONE

### CONSENT AGENDA

**VOTE (2009-1)** Councilor Wells, seconded by Councilor Larochelle moved to approve the CMP Pole Permit for Memorial Street and the American Legion Post 158's Games of Chance Application for a Casino Night. **Order passed - Vote 7-0.**

### COUNCIL ORDERS, RESOLUTIONS, & ORDINANCES

#### POLICY FOR DISPOSITION OF REAL PROPERTY

Mr. Eldridge indicated Attorney Therriault had not yet reviewed this policy. The Council unanimously agreed to move this item to a future agenda.

#### FORECLOSURE PROPERTY POLICY

Mr. Eldridge indicated Attorney Therriault had not yet reviewed this policy. The Council unanimously agreed to move this item to a future agenda.

#### JONATHAN LABONTE FROM THE ANDROSCOGGIN LAND TRUST ANDROSCOGGIN RIVER ISLAND (MAP R7, LOT 26)

Jonathan Labonte, Executive Director for the Androscoggin Land Trust presented maps showing their conservation work and service to 19 communities. He said they often work with landowners who continue to retain ownership, but partner up to provide recreational or conservation work. He pointed out they incorporated their Land Trust in 1989 and had recently opened up an office in 2006 in Lewiston. He mentioned that they have previously worked with the Packard Littlefield Farm in

Lisbon successfully implementing a plan, and the Catherine Breton estate, securing land on that preserve to lease to area farmers.

Mr. Labonte said he wanted to understand what Lisbon's vision was for this island and offered that it would make a nice spot for boaters to stop and have lunch or take a break and enjoy the view. He said they often install picnic tables, benches, and other items needed for recreational use. They offered to work together to find volunteer stewards who watch the area and report vandalism or cleaning needs as warranted.

Councilor Cote had concerns about accountability and liability issues and asked who would be responsible. Mr. Labonte said if the Land Trust owned it, it would fall under their liability and event insurance, but that this could be something to wrestle with under shared ownership.

Councilor Mason asked what the value of this land was and what the intent of the potential purchaser was. Mr. Eldridge said the assessing card read \$1,500 and that the owner pays \$35 a year. He said Mr. Wagg wanted to protect his interest since he owns the island close by. Councilor Larochelle wanted to obtain Mr. Wagg's input on whether he would be in favor of using this island for a recreational facility. Councilor Cote asked for public input as well. Councilor Henry recommended working together, with Ms. Brooks and the Land Trust, to produce something Lisbon could become proud of in the future.

#### FERRY ROAD PROPERTY (MAP R7, LOT 39)

**VOTE (2009-5)** Councilor Wells, seconded by Councilor Mason moved to not accept the piece of property at this time. **Order passed - Vote 7-0.**

#### 2009-2010 MUNICIPAL BUDGET GUIDELINES

Mr. Eldridge said each year at this time as we start down the road to putting our budgets together, Council needs to make recommendations on pay increases for non-union employees and any other items the Council would like to include. He said, just to update everyone, the Departments heads have already been working on their budgets; Mr. Eldridge said he directed them to hold the budget flat. He indicated they were coming in at less or the same amount as last year. Mr. Eldridge said he expected a \$300,000 to \$400,000 shortfall on the revenue side, which is about a mil. He said assuming that the referendum question on excise tax does not pass, which would be another issue all together if it did pass; he indicated Lisbon would lose 50% of its excise tax revenue, which is another \$500,000 loss. He said he gave direction to his Department Heads that Lisbon would hold the line and that he did not want to see a tax increase.

Councilor Wells asked Mr. Eldridge to confirm that said even with these revenue shortfalls he was planning to bring to the Council a budget that had no increase to the tax rate. Mr. Eldridge answered, that was right. Councilor Wells pointed out that this would be awesome. Councilor Bowie asked if the other Councilors had any initial guidelines to start with.

Councilor Henry asked if the shortfall was because of all the foreclosed properties. Mr. Eldridge said there was less money coming in on excise tax since people are not spending money on cars. In addition, he expected to see State cuts because they are trying to come up with some awesome amounts of money and nobody knows where they are going to get that, and thought that revenue sharing would be an area the State might hit on. He indicated Lisbon did not have the surplus to off set the budget like past years; there may be a little bit to put in, but nowhere near the \$300,000 or \$400,000 Lisbon put in last year. Mr. Eldridge said Lisbon was lucky right now, that fuel costs had gone down. He pointed out that Lisbon would be loosing some debt service and saving money on

insurances by the end of this year. At this time, he said, data is being entered into the computer for printing budget sheets. Ms. Ricker and he will go over each department individually, he said, and then they will sit down with Department Heads, based upon what Lisbon's revenue projections are, and then come up with a budget for the Council.

Councilor Crafts said Lisbon really need to look ahead because revenues continue to fall and by the looks of things they are going to continue to fall in the State. He said even President elect Obama believes that we are not anywhere near the bottom. He said we are not looking for an economic turnaround for probably a couple of years and then it could be longer, who knows; its pretty scary – the shortfall, he said, so we need to really be careful about what we do with this budget. He said we have to think ahead because it could get worse next year.

Councilor Wells asked Mr. Eldridge if he had taken into consideration the cut to revenue sharing because of the town's evaluation. He said he had not sat down with Mr. Samson yet, but that he had anticipated some shortages there.

Mr. Eldridge asked the Council what they wanted to do about setting wage increases. He pointed out that he needed guidance for non-union employees and asked what direction the Council recommended. The other item that he was looking at was mileage. He said currently the IRS's rate is .55 a mile, but that is high with the price of fuel down. The State's current rate is .44 a mile, he said, and recommended Lisbon drops its rate to .44 a mile. Councilor Wells asked if this rate was in writing anywhere. Mr. Eldridge said he did not believe there was anything in writing and pointed out that this rate would be for the upcoming year so it would start in July 2009.

Councilor Wells said approximately 70% of our employees were union and under contract, so Lisbon is looking at the fact that those employees have a union contract that says they are going to get a 3% increase or 2 ¼% increase or whatever is in their contract, correct? Mr. Eldridge said there were two union contracts; one of which did not come up for negotiation this year, which is already in place at 3%, and the other contract is set at 4 ½%, which is split into two parts- 2% as of January 1<sup>st</sup> and 2 ½% as of July 1<sup>st</sup>. He said the other contracts have not been finished yet.

Councilor Larochelle asked if Department Heads would have to figure out how to make their budgets work in order to remain flat using this percentage. Mr. Eldridge said that was correct. Councilor Larochelle asked if it was safe to say that Lisbon would be looking at between 2 ½% to 3% to be compatible with the union. Mr. Eldridge said that would be in line with what the union increases were, absolutely. He said some of the managers had surveyed 17 towns, some towns in this region and some north, and that the average of all those came to 3.5%; he recommended 3%.

Councilor Bowie said you could look at this a couple of ways. If you actually went and did a study on the cost of living increase, he said, you might find this year that it could be a negative number. Mr. Eldridge said he had not pulled the North East's index. Councilor Bowie said the cost of living increase could be zero this year, and based on what that is then maybe you give zero percent.

Councilor Henry said she is reimbursed .36 per mile. She felt .44 a mile was a little high compared to the national average. Councilor Crafts said the State was .42 per mile last year.

Councilor Wells said Lisbon should go back because Lisbon had 70% in the union, and there were some increases in all, to a 3% increase for non-union employees and direct Department Heads to figure out how to make that work.

Councilor Cote said in all fairness, that just because they are non-union employees, they are still valued employees, and that the Council should respect that. Councilor Larochelle asked if the Council had to vote on this percentage. Councilor Bowie said the Council was just giving Mr. Eldridge guidelines and that everything was subject to change as the Council goes through the budget.

Councilor Henry asked if keeping the budget flat would mean Mr. Eldridge was looking to lay off people. Mr. Eldridge said he could not answer that question. He said all the Department Head budgets came in so far under what they had budgeted last year; part of the reductions came from less budgeted for fuel costs. Councilor Henry said a lot of companies and the State were looking at restructuring and major lay offs. Mr. Eldridge said he was hopeful this would not happen in Lisbon and that Lisbon residents expect to maintain a certain level of service, which is what his budget is going to try to maintain.

Councilor Crafts said he personally thought that the level of service at the Police Department was, well, he said, there is plenty of money there to help. He said from his research and from what he could see is that our Police Department is extremely large. He said he had received four calls over the last few days from people complaining and asking why we have three police cruisers set up Sunday morning stopping cars. I understand, he said, there are a lot of criminals out running around Sunday morning on their way to church. He said he had a problem with the size force we have and thought it was time to shrink it in these economic times. He said he did not want to see anybody lose their job, but that it was not his job as Councilperson to try to keep jobs; my job, he said, is to answer to the taxpayers. He said that taxpayers could not afford increases with layoffs and loosing homes. He said there was plenty of fat there and that Lisbon could probably pick up a few hundred thousand dollars there to help balance the budget. Councilor Cote said he echoed that statement.

Councilor Cote said considering the fact that Lisbon is a bedroom community, trying to promote this town the best it can, with a revitalization committee, all kinds of programs, and to have the daily reaction from the Police Department to the community is not the direction Lisbon should be going in. Councilor Wells questioned why he was calling this a negative reaction. She said if there were three police cars, all with someone pulled over, that she would ask the question, "What did they do wrong?" She said because normally our police cars do not pull over people if people are abiding by the rules. Councilor Crafts said they did where he lived before. He said every corner you turn they had one sat up with radar. He said that he did not want to drive around town worrying that he did not pay attention for five seconds, when every other street is only five or ten miles an hour, because there were police cruisers sitting on every corner. He said he did not want to pay for traffic cops. Councilor Wells said, "...I haven't seen a police cruiser in this town sit on a corner with a radar gun for I don't know how long." Councilor Crafts said he noticed one right at the end of her street the day before Christmas. Councilor Wells said she would love it if they did sit at the end of her street once in a while because a bunch of those trucks go cruising on in at 45 MPH and that there were too many kids for that. Councilor Wells said she and Councilor Crafts were never going to agree on this. Councilor Crafts said, "That's funny, because the year before last you came to me and said the Police budget was too large and that you and Charlie were willing to cut it the following year, but when it came down to budget time." Councilor Wells interjected, "I am not sure I ever said that, no." Councilor Crafts said, "You did say that, absolutely." Councilor Bowie said, "Okay." Councilor Crafts asked for one more second, because, he said, Councilor Wells wanted to know what was going on with pulling people over. He said we had a 60-year-old man pulled over for not wearing his seat belt. Councilor Wells replied that the man should have had one on because it was the law. Councilor Crafts said that he had a problem with that, because what happens is that legislators pass all these laws and then the Town of Lisbon has to enforce them. Lisbon has to pay to enforce all these laws, he said, and that he was getting tired of doing the job for the State.

Councilor Henry said she did not understand why employees take their retirement from Maine Municipal Association once they retire, yet they still stay on as officers here and get raises. She asked, "How does that work?" Councilor Larochelle said a lot of this is going to be addressed in the upcoming budget season. He indicated that as the budget rolled out that they would have plenty of time to talk about a lot of this. Mr. Eldridge said Department Heads will be here to answer

questions and so everybody including the public will have a clear understanding about how departments operate and what their needs are.

## OTHER BUSINESS

### A. 2009-10 MUNICIPAL & SCHOOL CAPITAL BUDGET REVIEW WITH PLANNING AND BUDGET ADVISORY BOARD

Dr. Welsh highlighted several parts of the School's Capital Improvement Budget. She presented their 5-Year Building, Grounds & Equipment Plan (see attached) to the School Committee in November. The School Committee considered it in early December 2008 so it could be submitted to the Council by early January 2009. She said she came prepared to answer questions.

Dr. Welsh said she created a 5-Year Building, Grounds & Equipment Plan as required by the Charter. She said they were looking at facilities and improvements related to Lisbon's fields, the Middle and High School, replacing school busses at one to two per year, replacing the 1998 Red Jeep, plus the purchase of a zero turn mower, and other equipment. She said a consistent replacement plan helps to keeps the budget from spiking up one year and dropping the next.

Dr. Welsh said the facilities plan in detail as outlined on the attached document presented to the Council, which describes the proposed bond project. She said in 1999 Lisbon applied to the State for a State Funded Project and at that time, they ranked our Elementary Schools, as needing the greatest amount of work and through that process Lisbon was able to build the Lisbon Community School that opened in 2004. She said they applied for the High School's project again in 2004-2005 and Lisbon placed 27th on the list out of approximately 160 projects. She said the State had enough money to fund 20 of those projects. She said they strongly believed Lisbon would be in the next round of funded projects, however in 2007 the State announced application delays until 2008, after delaying them again in 2008 the State announced that they did not intend to accept applications at all because there was simply no money available at this time or in the foreseeable future.

Dr. Welsh said it might be many years before the State even starts the application process and as shown through the Lisbon Community School, we were approved for funding in 1999 and opened in 2004, that it is a five-year process once you are approved for funding. She said we have been trying to get State funding since 1999 to address the High School issues and the State recognizes it as a significant need. At the same time, Lisbon has to go through the reaccreditation process through the NEASC (New England Association of Schools & Colleges) every two years.

The benefits of accreditation are that parents, community members, and students are assured that there is a quality education program, a vehicle exists to correct deficiencies in school, and that the transfer credits between High Schools will be more likely accepted should the family move. Admissions offices in the area report that it is a disadvantage not to come from an accredited school. In 2005 Lisbon High School went through its reaccreditation process and was granted approval for ten years, however, Lisbon was placed on warning status due to our facility needs. It was noted that by 2010 Lisbon would have to have indicated in its five-year report that those facility concerns have been addressed. The antiquated heating system, roof, electrical, and wiring issues were among their concerns, along with an inadequate gymnasium.

The School Committee looked into obtaining State funding for repair projects, but nothing is available. Dr. Welsh said she and the School Committee did not see any other funding available and recommended Lisbon locally look at doing something. She said they were confident that the building itself structurally was in good condition, however, the first step to be done is for an engineering firm to come in and take a look at it structurally to reassure all of us that it is indeed in good shape and worth investing in. The State looked at this building three times, she said, and

believed the brick foundation was in very good condition, except for one area in the cafeteria, and that for the most part the two and one story wings were in good condition.

Dr. Welsh said she and the School Committee were recommending that an engineering firm do a new versus renovation analysis. They would check to see what the quality of the construction is and whether it needs to be upgraded and to analyze what the costs and benefits are for retaining and renovating the building versus building new. This analysis would be the first step. She indicated that the engineering firm would also look at program review, since some programs are being held in the modulars and in shared spaces, like the music room within the cafeteria. Lisbon needs a space for its music program, she said. Program review looks at what is lacking in our current facility and what needs to change. Clearly, Lisbon would want to eliminate the modulars, which holds four classrooms. Lisbon needs to do something about the gym and music space. She said the engineering firm would survey the site, along with obtaining reports from a geotechnical engineer, soil scientist, wildlife biologist, and traffic engineer. Dr. Welsh said she understood Gendron & Gendron would be doing a traffic study at the intersection by Rite Aid and Food City in November 2008, which had been extended until spring. She asked whether there was a way to reroute school traffic at the intersection of Route 9 so that there was not as much of a stand still at this corner; she indicated that this would take a traffic engineer to analyze and make recommendations on.

Dr. Welsh said the Middle and High School heating and ventilation systems need to be replaced. She said they were looking at different systems from burning coal, pellets, woodchips, corn, or wheat depending upon what's readily available at any given time, or perhaps geothermal systems; she indicated they were wondering whether Lisbon could create one system that could be used in both facilities to conserve resources. The total for this work is \$500,000. This breaks down into two parts: a) \$375,000 for the new versus renovation analysis, program review, design concept and schematic design, site survey analysis and report, geotechnical engineering analysis and report, soil scientist analysis and report, wildlife biologist analysis and report, and traffic engineering analysis and recommendation, and b) \$125,000 for alternative energy sources for the Middle and High Schools. She said this is more work than what would typically be done up front on a project like this, but Lisbon's past practice indicates residents typically want to know this level of detail before deciding whether to invest or not. If residents decided not to look more deeply into alternative resources, then Lisbon could go with oil burners and a typical vitalization system standard in older schools, however newer schools are moving towards pellet burners or geothermal systems, which takes a little more research to ensure a quality design. She indicated that the School Committee wanted to present both parts to the residents of Lisbon to see if they would support both sections in a referendum vote.

Dr. Welsh said she was hoping the referendum vote would take place in late winter or early spring this year. She said between now and November, Lisbon could have all the analysis work done, hold public hearings for gaining information, hold public meetings to share information on the architectural and engineering designs, and then hold a referendum vote on the full project, thus having construction work done and completed by September 2011. Dr. Welsh said what they had learned from NEASC is that as long as the community is addressing these building needs, which would show up in the report to them in 2010, then Lisbon retains its accreditation status.

In essence, the building is in need of significant repairs, she said. The windows need to be replaced, the roof needs to be repaired, she said, and the ventilation system needs to be replaced. Lisbon put a new boiler into the High School in 2000, she said, but the system carrying the heat into the classrooms does not work. Part of the building is either too hot or too cold. She said the gym replacement is a big concern. They recently started a committee to talk about the current use of the municipal and school fields in town, she said, and when that group was talking they strongly recommended Lisbon look at replacing the track around the football field because it is in such poor condition, which would be included in this project as well. All of this work would be done for \$500,000 if the residents approve, then the full project would go out to the residents for a referendum vote in November 2009. Dr. Welsh said this information is on the Union30.org website.

Councilor Larochelle said this was somewhat interesting because when he became a Councilor they were working on the town garage, which seemed like a very valid project and it was at the time. He said the Council really realized that the town sometimes does not like to spend money, which in hard times is very hard to do, and that they understood. He pointed out that the downfall, which is that all of the problems identified by the engineering reports are still there. He said there is no time to fix them, that in the near future, if there were any money at all, it could go towards repairing the town garage because there is no other funding available and that a bond probably will not go through. The question he had with all this, he said, is that with the \$500,000 expended for engineering and if that all goes through and then the full project gets voted down, where does that leave Lisbon with our accreditation or are we better off taking the \$500,000 and putting it into the school. He said then we know we at least are moving forward with repairs. He said he would love to go back now to the town garage project and apply those engineering funds towards addressing some of their issues. It is a band aide, he said, he realized, but unfortunately in this economy although it's nice to plan and say this is what Lisbon needs to do, but if this goes out to vote in 2009 and its voted down, then Lisbon will still have a school that needs to be repaired and no money to fix it. He asked if they had weighted in where that \$500,000 would be better off spent. The problem, he said, if it is voted down then what does Lisbon do at that point.

Dr. Welsh agreed that was a significant concern because of the economy at this point, but that the problem was that Lisbon has such significant needs. Lisbon waited in order to get the State to pay for it, she said, and it has been a long process. There are so many deferred maintenance needs of major concern, she said, it is safe, it is healthy, and it is as clean as we can keep it. She said with the \$500,000 Lisbon could start with the heating system and so Lisbon invests in a good heating system and between the two schools that would take up this money and then the windows are left and all the heat escapes or the roof leaks and does significant damage to the building as well. The challenge is what gets fixed first, she said. The windows were over \$200,000 five or six years ago, she said, but fixing that will not make a difference to NEASC. She said Lisbon should get rid of the modulars, which was looked at last year, but again that was \$250,000 at a minimum. The problem is that we have such significant needs, she said, and then the gymnasium has not been addressed.

Dr. Welsh said Lisbon has to do something with the gym. She said they thought about the possibility of spending \$500,000 a year, but it could take a good ten years to get the work done and at some point you would have to do a major project like the gym, which is going to be two or three million dollars; so it's hard to know what to do first. Councilor Larochelle said this was a tough call in this economy and if you go to the voters with a large bond, it could be a very tough sell unless there is a big carrot there to help go it through. He said if it is voted down, we are almost guaranteed to lose our accreditation because there is no money at that point to fix it, but if Lisbon were fixing a few things as it went along then at least Lisbon would be making progress. Looking back at the town garage project, Councilor Larochelle said, we identified all the problems but the downfall was after we identified them we didn't have any funds to fix them so we just have a lot of problems that we know are there and we have no means of fixing them.

Dr. Welsh said that maybe Lisbon could look at doing these in four or six phases over four or six years to help with the tax base. One of the other challenges they face, she said, is that the federal government is looking at stimulus packages. She pointed out that school construction projects qualify if they are shovel ready, which means that Lisbon would have to do the \$500,000 worth of engineering work so that the plan and design is ready to qualify for those funds. She e-mailed Senator Collins, Senator Snowe, and Representative Michaud to inform them that Lisbon was on the State funded list, that the State funded 20 projects leaving Lisbon behind, but seventh on the next list. She told them she thought that Lisbon could try to be shovel ready, but that she was concerned local residents at this time may not have the funds in this economy to fund what needs to be done. She said she described the challenges Lisbon faces with accreditation that Lisbon had invested in its buildings over time, but that the school's facilities were delayed for so long because Lisbon had to address the elementary ones first before getting to the high school ones, which in part is why Lisbon

is where it is. They have been asked to consider Lisbon as a project, she said, and they know that Lisbon is working towards trying to be shovel ready. She said they know that a lot of the back work to identify what the needs are has been done and that Lisbon would like to be placed on the list for consideration. To our advantage, she said Senator Collins spoke with the students at the high school and took a tour; together they talked about Lisbon's challenges at that time. She said she was hopeful that if there is any money available at the federal level that the allocation going to Maine would include Lisbon's project, but Lisbon has to be shovel ready.

Councilor Henry asked what happens if Lisbon loses their accreditation because voters do not fund the bond. Dr. Welsh said that Bonney Eagle High School had been placed on probation and their residents stepped up to the plate and addressed their facility issues. The disadvantage is to the children, she said, because when they are applying to get into college the admissions office recognizes students from accredited schools because it indicates the school meets a certain level of expectation or preparedness. Every high school in Maine at this point is an accredited high school, she said, so what it says is that Lisbon would not be. However, NEASC recognized the work that Lisbon had been doing, the work that Lisbon has attempted to do, which is why Lisbon was placed on probation since they recognized the elementary school needed to be taken care of first. NEASC also recognized that Lisbon had tried to get State funding for the project in order to help the town. She said that Lisbon would have clear documentation though budgets and applications that the town was worried about the high school. She pointed out that probably an argument could be made that the economy had presented a challenge at this point, but nobody knows how NEASC will respond to that. She pointed out that Lisbon received great reviews on its programs, but NEASC also recognizes the constraints that having a music program in the cafeteria or modular classrooms or an undersized gym can present.

Councilor Cote said the State has assisted in bringing forth the problem and asked whether they could cut us a little slack on the accreditation. Dr. Welsh pointed out that the accreditation process is a national organization and that the State does not have any influence with them. NEASC is an independent national group that goes around accrediting high schools across the nation.

Councilor Wells asked how many years the pay back would be on the \$500,000 bond. Dr. Welsh indicated 20 years. Councilor Wells said Lisbon would be looking at bonding twenty years worth of engineering services that ten years from now would have to be done again possibly. She said it seems that every time we need to build something we have to do an engineering study and it just seems like an awful long time to be bonding something that might not be any good ten years from now. She said if the bond goes through and you do the engineering study, but the town votes not to build a new high school, then we are at this for the next ten years - we are going to be starting over at square one when we are still paying for the first set. She said her other concern was that twenty million dollars to build a high school is a huge amount of money and pointed out that maybe they should be going to the tax payers first to see if residents are willing to even consider funding the high school project once the \$500,000 bond for engineering services is approved. Dr. Welsh said she didn't want the twenty million dollar figure out there because she felt it was very high, estimating probably a brand new school building might be thirty million, but renovation work could be much less than twenty million. Dr. Welsh said the problem is that until the engineers get in here and take a look at everything she could not put a handle on it. She said she could ask the residents if they would be willing to fund the analysis so that we could come back for a referendum project, but that she didn't want to put a dollar amount on a referendum project because she didn't know what it would be. She said she understood a gym might cost between one and a half to three million dollars depending upon what you put in there. She pointed out that architects have been hesitant to give her any type of ballpark figure. Councilor Wells said even if Lisbon looked at half of that and went with a ten million dollar project it would still be \$800,000 a year or a two-mil increase. She said she was questioning, since Councilor Crafts had just predicated that our economy was going to worsen in the next couple of years, whether Lisbon should not be asking voters what they are willing to do first before putting a bond question out there. Councilor Wells said that is one scenario to present, but it could start at ten million. She said the reality is that that is a two-mil increase to their taxes in

a slow economy that is hard for anybody to swallow even though everyone can truly understand the school's need, but it is no different from public work's need, which is still an issue the town has to deal with. She said she was wondering whether Lisbon should be putting this out in question format first instead of bond format first. Dr. Welsh responded. If you ask me, she said, would I be willing to support a million or five million dollars for roads, I would have to say that I don't know enough about what the conditions are or what roads need improving or why they need improving so I don't know enough to make an educated mark on my ballot. She said part of the challenge Lisbon faces is getting information out about the school's condition and educating residents about what the school's needs are, and then giving them an estimate. She said needed estimates.

Councilor Bowie said he was not sure, but that the Council would have to bring the referendum question out through the School Committee's recommendation. Councilor Crafts said that if residents voted for the \$500,000 bond that this would have to be a little bit of an indicator that they are willing to go along with the school. He said if they are willing to spend the \$500,000 you would think that this would be your best indicator so probably that is the first thing that needs to go out there to see if voters are willing to even do that. If they shoot that down, then you have the message, he said, and if they pass it, then you have some hope. Councilor Larochelle said he agreed that it was important to show what the other side of the picture is, which is along with the \$500,000 bond is a ten million dollar price tag so voters would be buying information to tell them how much they are going to have to spend. He said with that bond question there really needs to be some type of figure about the other side so residents can identify what the big picture is. Councilor Mason said all that is subject to change with the economy so there is nothing solid.

Dr. Welsh said they have a series of public hearings planned and informational flyers to distribute to educate the community because if voters still say no that Lisbon cannot afford it, then Lisbon will have to go back and rethink the budget. She said getting this out to the community in February or March would give Lisbon time to go back and rethink its budget.

Councilor Bowie asked Dr. Welsh what she was looking for at this time. Dr. Welsh said they were looking to vote on the \$500,000 services bond by either late winter or early spring (February/March) and pointed out that if voters said yes, as Councilor Crafts indicated earlier, this would give some indication taxpayers were willing to move forward with the rest of it.

John Collins asked if an extension could be granted from NEASC and pointed out that, he would rather build a new building for \$25 million verses repair a 60-year old building that might not last another 50 years. Dr. Welsh said NEASC does not typically give extensions and pointed out that the engineering study would help answer this question. She said if Lisbon shows NEASC that it is moving forward with the question and taxpayers vote it down then a case can be made that the economy is the reason that it did not happen; this shows NEASC that Lisbon has attempted to take action, which is what they want to see, she explained. If it is voted down and Lisbon has to put money into the local budget to begin this work, she said, then that is the explanation Lisbon needs to make to NEASC and ask for their understanding.

Councilor Larochelle said the Council had been approached a couple of times before about a community center. He asked whether there had been any thought given to making this gymnasium a community center/gymnasium project. He pointed out that a combined community center /gymnasium could win a lot more support and funding. He said this has been mentioned to the Council a couple of other times by residents in the audience who felt that there might be a strong community support for it or at least more willing to do it if it were more community based and available all year around. This is happening in many communities, he said, so he was just wondering if that could maybe address some of the other issues facing Lisbon. Dr. Welsh said Jeff Ramich had great plans for a community center behind the Middle School and that there was a lot of excitement surrounding it, but that was a much more expensive project and with the amount of work that needed to be done on the school itself it was more than the School Committee could take on. Councilor Larochelle said he attended the Recreation Committee meeting last night and asked

them for any insight on such a project. He asked how this might affect the Recreation Department and its impact on long term planning. Again, he said, it is not the idea about whether the money is needed, but whether you can sell the idea that needs to be needed. There are people in this room that would raise their hand now, he said, to help get the community to actually go for a bond for a community center/gymnasium that would not raise their hands just for a gymnasium. He said again that when it comes to the selling approach the big picture involving a lot more people might actually be more supported even though the dollar figure will be a little bit higher in the end. He said he wanted to throw this out there since the Council had been approached multiple times with it. There is no funding available for a community center by itself, but integrating the school's need for a gym with the recreation department's need for a community center may be a lot better sell.

Dr. Welsh said when the Council does the warrant for the services bond, the Council could ask some advisory questions at the bottom that might ask if voters if they would be willing to fund some additional amount for creating a community center instead of simply a gymnasium to get some direction about what the community is thinking. Councilor Bowie said the interesting point though in looking at something along that is that, he said, I don't mean this in a bad way, but if you take it out of the hands of the school and make it a community thing, there is grant money and other types of things that are available to fund these types of things as opposed to it having to be all raised by the taxpayers so if you entertain a larger community center someplace with a full size gymnasium with the four locker rooms and whatever, the town side can go out and look for grants that will subsidize a good portion of that. I know of a community, he said, that built a ten or fifteen million dollar community center out of nothing but grant money and right now all they have to do is maintain it and keep it up. Again, he said, I don't mean this in a bad way, but if you take it out of the school and have your gymnasium for the community where the school uses it and they get first come first serve so to speak or whatever, there is other opportunity to get funding to go do that. I think that may also behoove us to look at some of that, he said, in this type of economic times. Councilor Mason said she wanted to add that the revitalization committee is trying to address this issue and that there were grants available as Councilor Bowie said, but that as a town and as a community Lisbon would have to go ahead and research this. She said through Lisbon's community visioning sessions the Revitalization Committee is trying to get this kind of feedback from the community. She said Lisbon needs to know what residents want to see in five or ten years. This would be a good opportunity for any folks interested, she said, like Mr. Ramich for one, to come to some of those visioning sessions and maybe share some of his thoughts along with the other members of the community. She said another visioning session would be scheduled soon. She said that a community center/gymnasium is something that has been brought up several times. She said this was a very good point.

Dr. Welsh said if the voters approve providing these funds the School Committee will create a building committee immediately to start some of these discussions. This building committee would be the ones, she said, who would interview architects and engineering firms and make recommendations to the school committee. They would be the ones to explore what it would be like to have a community center, she said, and maybe even a group of them could look at the grant section so that by our referendum vote Lisbon could say here is our recommendation and here is an additional funding source to help. She said that if anyone is interested in being on that committee, to let her know. She indicated that they were not going to create a building committee unless they get the funds because there is not a lot of work to do right now. She said if the community says no, then Lisbon needs to figure out what else to do. Councilor Bowie said his point was that we could potentially go get the grant money and not have to go after the \$500,000. There is I believe an opportunity, he said if it is handled correctly that you do not need to go ask the taxpayers for the \$500,000 if we can go get grant money because we have this community center concept that we want to go after. Dr. Welsh said she would be interested in learning more about that because four or five years ago when they were first talking about this grant money was not available for it, which is why those plans died and then they moved towards looking at just doing it as part of the school's project through the State funded resources. She said she wanted to reinforce that the gym is a part of the

problem we need to resolve, but the heating system, lights, and roof are all problems as well that have to be resolved, and that it will take some money to research this as well.

Councilor Cote said the issues facing the high school were totally structure and relate only to the facility and asked if Lisbon were to lose its accreditation because of our facility would that not put us in a better position with the State to get funding. Dr. Welsh responded that when Bonney Eagle lost theirs the State did not step in and help them immediately, they felt that it was something the town should have been addressing and it should not have gotten to that point. Besides that, she said, the State is not accepting applications for many years. Councilor Cote said he was curious how the State would look at a school that is not accredited in this day and age and wondered if the State would look at us, as they obviously need to have their building repaired.

Councilor Wells said she was wondering whether Lisbon should be looking at having a roofing and window company give us estimates on repairs, thus giving us some number to work with during budget season and or possibly doing the repairs to the school at this time verses spending it on engineering costs. She said she was very concerned that Lisbon might spend it on engineering costs for a hopeful plan going forward and not on the needs that should be addressed at this point. While there is still the need for a new gym, she continued, and that has not gone away, it does give us more time to look at the possibility of a community center, which gives us a gym and maybe there are grants out there to help us bring that to fruition. She said this is just a smarter move at this time instead of trying to do a special vote for an engineering bond.

Jessica Ireton-Hewitt, a resident and local engineer, mentioned that there were benefits to doing the engineering work up front verses piece meal. She pointed out that Lisbon could get separate estimates for roof repairs and window repairs, but Lisbon would still be paying for engineering. She said it may not be \$500,000 up front, but Lisbon would be paying for it a little bit here and a little bit there, etc. Typically, engineering fees run a percentage of the total project costs. She stressed that there was definitely value to having the engineering work done up front, so that they are looking at the big picture.

Councilor Bowie said he had one more question. This will be broken down into two parts, alternative energy and the rest of the stuff, he said, but depending upon what you choose for your energy source what you go out and engineer or design may not match up with the other parts. He said he wanted to make sure the timing of the boat would be in such sync that you would not be having one group engineering the ventilation and heating system and another engineering energy systems only to find out that you cannot burn whatever they suggested through any of the schools. Dr. Welsh said it was broken down into two sections and one section will deal with this alternative energy source. If the residents vote for \$500,000, she said, then it would all be done together. Councilor Bowie said he thought he heard that there were almost two separate questions, one for \$375,000, and one for \$125,000. Dr. Welsh said if residents choose not to fund the alternative energy source and only the \$375,000 for architectural services, then Lisbon would more likely go with a basic heating system; one that does not take a lot of research and analysis. Geothermal for example, she said, means Lisbon would have to drill test wells to find out what the water and geological rock system is like so a lot of work has to be done to determine if its workable, but this system pays off in eight years, however it costs money up front to find out if is workable. If voters tell us they do not want to go down that path and want to stick with an oil furnace then Lisbon would not need the extra \$125,000.

Councilor Larochelle asked if the Planning Board and Advisory Board had reviewed this. John Wiersbicki from the Budget Advisory Board said say Lisbon approves the \$375,000 and gets all the engineering stuff done and then Lisbon goes ahead and sets out a contract to get the roof done, wouldn't Lisbon have to basically redo the engineering again. Councilor Bowie explained that the original analysis done up front would be used by the engineers who become responsible for managing the construction, for instance, the roof will be fabricated in the way it was engineered in the beginning and would be completed according to the estimate. It could be done piece meal and

maybe it would not cost \$500,000, Councilor Bowie said, he did not know. Lisbon could have an engineering firm look at in totality to make sure everything works together, and then the engineering firm becomes responsible for the oversight of the rest of the project and the construction portion of that.

Councilor Henry asked how much the engineering work for the public works building cost. Councilor Bowie said it was approximately \$60,000 or \$70,000. Robin Tupper asked what the cost was for the elementary school. Dr. Welsh said it was a percentage of the total cost, which is usually around 5%. She said it was cheaper and better to do an engineering analysis in mass instead of having different firms come in at different times for different sections of the building.

John Collins said he thought the school was around 55-60 years old, and questioned why Lisbon would spend ten, twelve, or fifteen million dollars to do these repairs when in five or ten years down the road Lisbon may need another couple of million to redo the plumbing or even need to build a new school. He said he would rather pay a twenty five million dollar bond to get a new school with modern technology than patch up a 60-year old building with twelve million. Councilor Larochelle said that he wrestled with that question over the public works building too. Dr. Welsh said that is exactly the concern we all had and that one of the early services Lisbon would pay for is something called the new verses renovation analysis. The firm goes in and analyses the structure, she said, and if they say its costs effective to do the renovation or in other words that the renovation work they recommend will extend the life of this building by 50 years. She said they would not fix one part of it, like they will not come in and fix your heating system and leave your windows; they are going to recommend you address all of that in order to have it be an efficient and effective building. We have to make sure, she said, this structure is secure for the kids and the residents for 50 years.

Dorothy Fitzgerald encouraged the Council to consider window and roof replacements since they add resale value to this building.

#### B. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Eldridge said he was reviewing the budgets with Ms. Ricker right now and that he would start reviewing the budgets with the Department Heads soon. He said revenue projections would be down this year. He pointed out that the November 2009 ballot would have the 50% Excise Tax question on it. He mentioned that the last snowstorm was classified a disaster and Chief Galipeau had submitted costs for reimbursement. He mentioned Chief Galipeau had received an \$89,000 Fire Act Grant for communication equipment.

#### C. BOARD AND COMMITTEE LIAISONS

Mr. Eldridge asked Councilors to volunteer for boards and committees they might be interested in serving on. Councilor Wells volunteered to serve on the Audit Committee when one is developed. Councilor Cote volunteered to serve on the Planning Board and Board of Appeals. Councilor Larochelle volunteered to serve on the Recreation Committee. Councilor Crafts had been serving on the MTM Board, but recently withdrew. Mr. Eldridge mentioned that recent discussions indicated these two boards (Recreation Committee and MTM Board) might be one soon. Councilor Henry volunteered to serve on the Conservation Commission. Councilor Mason volunteered to serve on the Planning Board along with her current service on the Revitalization Committee. Mr. Eldridge said he would see if there were any interest in combining the Trails and Conservation committees.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION - NONE****APPOINTMENTS**

*Councilor Crafts left the meeting at 9:12 PM.*

**PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEMBER**

**VOTE (2009-7)** Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Cote moved to make the alternate member, Francis Drake, Jr., a regular full member of the Planning Board. **Order passed - Vote 6-1.**

*Councilor Crafts returned to the meeting at 9:14 PM.*

**RESIGNATION OF CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEMBER**

**VOTE (2009-8)** Councilor Larochelle, seconded by Councilor Cote moved to accept Kris Kucera's resignation from the Conservation Commission. **Order passed - Vote 6-1. (Opposed: Henry)**

Carroll Curtis pointed out that there were two vacant seats on this commission. Mr. Eldridge said he would be advertising these vacancies.

**COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS**

Councilor Wells asked whether Mr. Eldridge had received any notification on the medical insurance 6-month extension. Mr. Eldridge said he hoped to have an answer by the next meeting.

Councilor Larochelle pointed out that he was not trying to derail the School Committee's plans for the High School because he knew it needed a lot of work since he attended Lisbon High and offered his support. He praised Beaver Park for its wonderful cross-country trails.

Councilor Henry thanked everyone for his or her support at the recent Aaron Farmer Dinner and mentioned what a nice evening it had been.

Councilor Cote asked that the Police Department to try to be more considerate, adding that fine money was hard to come by these days. Not buckling up is a \$70 fine.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**VOTE (2009-9)** Councilor Wells, seconded by Councilor Larochelle moved to go into executive session at 9:25 PM per 1 MRSA Section 405 (6) (C) Acquisition of Real Property or Economic Development. The Chairman dismissed the Council Secretary. **Order passed - Vote 7-0.**

*Councilor Henry left the meeting at 9:26 PM.*

The Council returned to regular session at 9:55 PM.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**VOTE (2009-10)** Councilor Wells, seconded by Councilor Mason moved to adjourn at 9:55 PM.  
**Order passed - Vote 6-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,

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

*These minutes are not verbatim. Cassette tapes are filed in the Town Clerk's Office.*