

THE ARROWSIC ARROW

Volume 3, Number 2.

Arrowsic, Maine 04530

March, 1988

Dear Reader,

If you've ever thought you'd like to give the Town a piece of your mind, now's your chance. The next few weeks will hold meetings on the roads (by the ad hoc committee on roads); on property assessing (by the ad hoc committee on property assessments); and on the upcoming budget (see Fred's Footnotes). If you are unable to attend any meetings, but would like to be heard, contact the committee chairpersons or drop a line at the Town Hall. Thanks, and Happy March... Patty Olds, editor

Fred's Footnotes

As some of you have already heard, I will not be running again for selectman when my term expires in June. As part of what I see as a major period of change in Arrowsic's self-determination, I believe it is time for me to re-evaluate where my efforts will best serve the town. In preparation for this change, the selectmen have elected Patty Olds as chairman for the balance of this fiscal year.

In the coming months you will be offered opportunities to participate in a series of meetings that will explore the way the town manages itself, and will ask if it is a time to change some of these methods.

One key meeting will seek a consensus on how the town roads will be managed in the future. The vote at this meeting will dictate what is placed on the warrant for a final vote in the June Annual Town Meeting. Among the options being considered are either having an elected Road Commissioner (separate from the selectmen) or an elected/appointed Board of Road Commissioners.

There is also an ad hoc committee studying the Arrowsic property taxing system, with particular attention being given to the current valuation formula and to the issue of our pending revaluation.

Concurrently, the Planning Board is deeply involved with a review and update of the Comprehensive Plan. And, there are new questions being asked about the school budget.

In response to a variety of concerns expressed about the overall annual budget, the selectmen are asking for volunteers to convene an ad hoc finance committee to assist us in compiling a budget proposal for the coming year. For this effort to be of value, an immediate volunteer commitment is needed. Please let Prudy Foster (443-2114) or Patty Olds (443-4650) know if you are willing to serve.

In a broader context, we must all become volunteers in the next three months. The magnitude of the decisions being considered deserves the interest and participation of the widest possible representation of Townspeople. So please make every effort to participate in these Spring meetings to help us prepare for Town Meeting and for the future.

Fred Kahri

THE FUTURE IS NOW!

This is your town! How do you choose to have it run? As you know, the Ad Hoc Committee on Property Assessment has been fact-gathering for the past couple of months, and we have learned some startling statistics.

It's time for **you** to get involved. It's your money, your future, and your town. Do you know how your assessment was arrived at? Would you like to see the current system of property valuation continue? Would you like to have all properties in Arrowsic reviewed and valued by someone outside the town? What are the merits of our present system? We have all agreed **something** has to be done. We need your questions / comments in deciding what direction to take in bringing recommendations to the Town.

The committee would like to share our findings with you as well as hear your opinions on this issue. Please come to a **PUBLIC FORUM** Wednesday, March 9 at 7 PM Town Hall. More info? call Karen Robbins 442-7533

MORE BIG NEWS

The Ad Hoc Road Committee, which was formally appointed to the Board of Selectmen on February 9, is developing a recommendation to establish a road commission or board of commissioners for the town.

Since Arrowsic has never legally determined what kind of governing body or individual should be responsible for its roads, that decision will have to be made at a special town meeting this year. The Committee is examining various alternatives.

As part of this process, the Committee is gathering information from as many sources as possible. Members have been asking neighboring and similar sized towns how they manage the roads, and have met with the selectmen to discuss Arrowsic's alternatives.

Since the issue of the roads affects every town resident, (and their taxes) the Committee urges all those interested to actively participate in this process. The next meeting will be March 10 at 7 PM Town Hall.

ARROWSIC ARROW

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March 26, 1988

Dear Reader,

Please bear with me. I am about to attempt to explain why we are having a "surprise" Town Meeting this coming Wednesday, March 30...

In doing research to find out what the town's road governing options are, the Ad Hoc Road Committee asked me to contact the Maine Municipal Association. I spoke with Gary Wood, the Association's lawyer, on March 3. He assured me that if the selectmen chose not to serve as a board of road commissioners, they **would** have the option of appointing a single road commissioner, or a board of road commissioners **without** a special Town Meeting. The Committee decided based on those facts, to hold a public forum sometime before Town Meeting in June and talk about what, if anything, the town wanted to put on the warrant.

On Monday, March 21, Gary Wood called David Weiss (our Town Counsel) saying that if we **did not** have a special town meeting and vote to authorize the Selectmen to appoint an individual or a board of road commissioners, the Board of Selectmen **would have no choice but to continue** to be the Board of Road Commissioners.

Because of recent legislation, if any town wants to change the status quo of any of its offices (change the length of terms, create new positions, change titles) that town needs to have a special meeting 90 days in advance of their annual town meeting. This is to allow the time for townspeople to decide if they want to run for a newly created office, and to allow those that do run to understand before they are elected what their term of office will be.

Therefore, in order to satisfy the 90 day requirement, and the legal posting 7 days before any town meeting, the meeting has to be held this coming Wednesday, or not at all.

Last Tuesday, the Ad Hoc Road Committee and the Selectmen talked with David Weiss about holding a meeting. The Ad Hoc Committee was hesitant because their intent was to host a public forum before asking the town to vote on anything. The consensus was to go ahead with the meeting, albeit on very short notice, and allow the Town to decide how it would like to be governed. (Article 2 and 2a are alternatives of each other - you can only vote for one of these articles.) The Ad Hoc Committee will present their recommendations at the meeting.

A separate article to be voted on decides whether to abandon the titles of first, second, and third on the Board of Selectmen. In Arrowsic the titles have had nothing to do with our duties, and do not necessarily reflect seniority.

Another article deals with electing the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen. State law title 30, section 2060 paragraph 4C says that "a town may, in electing (selectmen) designate one of them as Chairman of the Board." If the town does not designate a chair, then the Board themselves may elect by ballot a chairperson. The new proposed article

takes the option away from the town and leaves the decision entirely up to the Selectmen.

NEWS FROM THE AD HOC ASSESSING COMMITTEE

On March 9, Townspeople met with the Ad Hoc Assessing Committee. The committee presented the findings gathered from reviewing Arrowsic's current assessment procedure, and methods used in neighboring towns. The two hour dialogue that resulted was both energizing and enlightening for the committee.

The group of almost 40 people gained some understanding of the problems of the current system.

The sense of the meeting was:

- to provide more uniform, equitable assessment of the town, a one shot assessment should be done by an professional assessing firm, then periodically redone as necessary.
- the ongoing assessment and required revisitation should be done by the board of selectmen.
- the cost of assessment should be kept down whenever possible.
- there was concern about the affect revaluation will have on the character and composition of the town.
- residents would like a continuing dialogue with the committee as the review process continues.

What is the committee doing now? We are continuing to review the current Arrowsic assessing procedure, and possible ways to speed line the clerical and in-house details. We are also contacting professional assessors in Maine to collect service prospectus', references, cost estimates, and scheduling details.

When we have a clearer understanding of these details, there will be another public forum, and if needed, an article on the warrant for the annual meeting in June.

There is a more detailed summary of the public forum in the Town Hall. Anyone with questions or concerns should call Karen Robbins at 442-7533.

ARROWSIC RECYCLING COMMITTEE

Beginning April 1 the dumpster at the Town Hall will be retired in favor of the new recycling mini-building. The new building will be divided into four compartments. There will be two compartments for newspaper, including all inserts. (Newspapers need to be in paper bags.) Another bin will be for mixed paper - including such things as junk mail, cereal boxes, and magazines. The fourth bin will be for cardboard and paper bags.

The new mini-building will have a lock, the combination of which will be made available to all town residents. It will be unlocked during the tax collector's regular hours.

The recycling committee urges all town residents to make use of this recycling opportunity.

PS If anyone has any used hatchback hydraulic lifters in working order, we could use them. Call 443-6174.

LETTERS

To the Board of Selectpersons:

The function of the Road Commissioner is noted in the Arrowsic Town Report as a, "Collateral duty of the First Selectman." There are no provisions for accountability except the First Selectperson. There are no requirements for a public report of accomplishments. There appears to be little control or definition except that the exclusive control is exercised by the First Selectperson.

I feel that the Road Commissioner function should be a reportable activity in the town report. The Road Commissioner's activities should be specifically supervised by the Third Selectperson. General supervision should be exercised by the Board of Selectpersons. The Road Commissioner activities could be contracted with an individual or firm that has expertise in this area. The Third Selectperson should be responsible for overseeing the contract performance, and submit an annual report.

If during any municipal year the Road Commissioner's efforts become unsatisfactory, the Board of Selectmen should deal with the matter until the town meeting, when a new commissioner could be appointed.

Dear Madam Selectperson,

What's this rumor I hear wafting about that would do away with the chronological composition of our board of selectpersons?

Please lend an ear. Traditionally, we towns in our great state of Maine have enjoyed our right to self rule. The orderly process to accomplish this is the selectpersons, counselor, and manager forms of government. This is the manner Arrowsic has been doing it for many years. This system immediately identifies the do-ers, the non-do-ers, and the in between axe grinders. Let's take a look at the process. First there are the Selectpersons. More about them later...

At Town Meeting you have the Moderator. He controls things. He is #1, right? Then there is the Town Clerk, who keeps the moderator straight. She/He is definitely a #1. I fear that if these #1s were demoted in favor of a talking circle there would be considerable confusion and consternation with little being accomplished, and I would be denied my privilege of recognition until I out hollered the rest of the crowd. Sure the circle has a chairperson, but what happens when you have a weak chairperson? Great Gravy Girl, The Board of Selectpersons with it's identifiable pecking order is tradition. No axe grinders have been comfortable with it and have operated within the legal parameters recognizing the First Selectperson position. The Board has traditionally been- First Selectperson- General Administrator and Mediator; Second Selectperson- Welfare, and Third

Selectperson- Road Commissioner. Admittedly, Arrowsic seems to have the Road Commissioner somewhat misplaced but this is easily corrected. I still like the traditional "Board of Three" with specific responsibilities.

What happens when you have a strong axe-grinder on the equal identity Board? S/he pushes his/her personal interests and usually gets away with it. Right? Now then, lets make the Board composition three axe grinders with no specific duties. What happens to the roads when the Circle of Three want increased welfare and they fail to address the roads issue?

Lets see- the school system has its Super, the Legislature has its Chair and Speaker with decending committee chairmen, the Masons have their Master with a specific subordinate composition, likewise the Knights of Pythias with their Chancellor. The colleges- you know about them.

Heavens, Girl, this whole issue is mind boggling. You will confuse us all just when we are about to get the Road Commissioner issue resolved.

I wonder if this type of administration has been tried before? Would Arrowsic be the first one to try it? I never thought of it that way. Arrowsic would be #1. Arrowsic already IS #1.

Tell you what, you put this matter on the back burner for a while, and I'll mull it over and get back to you.

Respectfully,
Bill Kimball
Whitmore's Landing

The two preceding letters were from Bill Kimball who comes to Arrowsic from Dresden where he served on the Board of Selectmen.

MANY THANKS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

Robin and Bill Krachy
Diane Smith
Manli Ho

Notes from the editor:

I am seriously searching for land in Arrowsic with or without a house, off the road, and on or near the water. You can write to me (Patty Olds) at Doubling Point, Arrowsic, Me 04530; or phone 443-4650. All replies will be kept confidential. Thanks.

For Your Information...

The Arrowsic Arrow is NOT a function of the Board of Selectmen or any other town entity. It is privately funded by contributions from its readers, and occasional stamps from the town. My government involvement and editorship of the Arrow are only happy coincidence.

My apologies for the appearance of the newsletter - I've tried out a new program & it seems to run the text together in a few places... Live & learn, they say.