

Winthrop Town Council
Regular Meeting
Monday April 7, 2014 at 7 p.m.
Town Office

Regular Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call - Chairman Kevin Cookson, Councilors, Sara Fuller (excused), Linda Caprara, Ken Buck Sr, Larry Fitzgerald, Don Ellis Jr., Richard Henry. Town Manager Jeff Woolston, Recording Secretary Joyce Tillson was in attendance.

Chair Kevin Cookson called to order, that the Winthrop Town Council meet to consider the following items.

Announcement Spirit of America Award Winner

Chair Cookson announced that Tabitha's Closet was the recipient of this year's Spirit of America Award. Chair Cookson read the nomination letter aloud. The winners were not in attendance to receive award; Jeff will see that they receive the award.

Approve the March 3 2014 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Fitzgerald

Seconded: Ellis

Discussion: None

Vote: All in favor (6-0)

Item #30 - Review Masonic Hall demolition bids

Four bids submitted. Low bid was \$29,000. Steven Magee. Magee's has own demo site and has no issues with DEP.

The acting Chair Fitzgerald will take a motion

Motion: Caprara

Seconded: Ellis

Discussion: Buck stated Magee is a big outfit and done a lot of this in the past.

Vote: All in favor (5-0) Cookson is on the Board of Trustees, so abstained.

Item #25 - Consider Quit Claim Deeds

People getting caught up on taxes. These came in after the foreclosure processing which is why Quit Claim needed vs regular discharge. Still a lot more to process as taxes are brought up to date.

Motion: Caprara

Seconded: Buck

Discussion: None

Vote: All in favor (6-0)

Item #26 - Conduct Public Hearing for General Assistance Appendices for 2014

Chair Cookson opened the public hearing at 7:12.

Jeff explained these are the new appendices for giving the town guidance on the types of thresholds that the general assistance staff can use. The Town can choose to not approve the use of the new guidelines but, reimbursement from the State to the Town can be affected if not using the state's new guidelines. One person wanted to know what maybe going up or down. Jeff said in 3 years he hasn't seen them go down he would expect modest adjustments based on what the state saw in various counties. This isn't anything the council can change they can either approve or not. By using these, the town will get the maximum state reimbursement.

Chair Cookson closed public hearing at 7:15.

Item #27 - Consider General Assistance Appendices for 2014

Motion: Caprara

Seconded: Ellis

Discussion: None

Vote: All in favor (6-0)

Item #28 - Conduct Public Hearing for Micro-Enterprise Assistance Grants

Chair Cookson opened the public hearing at 7:16

Jeff said two small businesses were applying for the grants: Custom Glass Terrariums and The Flaky Tart Cafe. Jeff signed the letter of intent and the State has asked that the businesses come back with applications for the grant. The application has been completed and looked at by one state representative. The state can decide to award up to \$50,000 per business. Jeff recommends the council support this. The public spoke in favor of the applicants.

Chair Cookson closed the public hearing at 7:19.

Item #29 - Consider Micro-Enterprise Assistance Grants

Motion: Cookson

Seconded: Caprara

Discussion: This is a good thing

Vote: All in favor (6-0)

Item #31 - Consider sending resolution to Maine Emergency Management Agency

Jeff read the resolution in which the town of Winthrop supports the efforts of the Town of Fayette to get a change in the federal guidelines for reimbursing municipalities when unforeseen weather causes overspending of budgets to keep the roads open for emergency vehicle response. Cookson asked what the storm cost the town. It did cost more than expected. Every town affected by the past winter's ice storm submitted requests for reimbursement which were subsequently disapproved when they got to the federal level. Jeff chose to have council not make own resolution; just focus on one. Once the policy is changed; it is changed for everyone.

Motion: Henry, to sign resolution

Seconded: Ellis

Discussion: None

Vote: All in favor (6-0)

Item #32 – Town Managers’ Recommended Municipal Budget, FY 2014 – 2015

Chair Cookson reminded Council next Monday, April 14, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.; first budget workshop. Jeff presented slide 2; introduction. Will cover areas of town services and current operating departments he is working with long range outlook and his proposed 2014-15 budget. Town services survey sent out in 2012 tax bills to see what services the town thought were important, not important and not needed. Several hundred responses received. All services in town being offered right now were still important according to the survey results. Jeff reviewed and highlighted the budget slide show. Would like to build reserves. Idea around reserves is that by 2026 the municipalities debt should be paid off. If the debt costs are reprogrammed into reserve accounts by 2027, the town should be in a position to pay cash for recurring requirements and the fire station. Long range budget projection represents a 2.6 mil increase with the current revenue projections. This amounts to \$1.6 million increase from FY 13-14. Goal is by FY 27 the town can be on a cash basis. Caprara asked how much in reserve right now. Jeff will look at audit and send to Councilors. Caprara would like when considering budget; to take a look at the roads in town and prioritize. Jeff will update the top 10 list and include in packets.

Other Business

Councilor Buck noted that a lot of calls coming in around cardboard and transfer station and would like to know what a fine could be and what the revenue for the cardboard is. Caprara asked Jeff to back up and explain to everyone. Jeff explained that the town has only made its contracted tonnage for municipal solid waste going to the waste facility in Orrington Maine about 3 years. Other years the town was short 3 to 5 hundred tons. The contract will expire in 2018. If the town does not meet the required goal, a fine can be assessed that is the cost for the required tonnage plus the cost for fuel needed to replace the BTUs that would have been generated by the solid waste. The town has had a \$5,000 to \$7,000 fine in the past. That was invisible because it was represented by the town getting less profit sharing than it might have if not for the fine. Although there has been no fine in the past two years, the fine provision in the contract hasn't been waived. Cardboard bailed is about \$90 a ton. The town must also process the Hannaford waste that is about 265 tons annually. That isn't a plus. It keeps the town where it is. The town will be about 400 tons short for the foreseeable future. The town hasn't been able to interest commercial haulers. \$90 a ton for bailed cardboard is how much the town makes. It takes time and materials to bail and we would only break even. Caprara explained that the town's people like to recycle. Jeff asked the Councilors which direction they would like to go. Buck suggested until we get fined he sees no point in throwing cardboard in the waste stream. Fitzgerald asked about looking at fee structure. Jeff explained it will not change tonnage requirement. Buck asked Judi Stebbins, who was on original transfer station committee if she knew how the amount was calculated. Judy does not want to see the town stop recycling. An example of decrease is the school has gone from 1200 to 800 kids as have households; this could be part of it. Jeff explained the town has contacted other towns and there are none wanting to join us. Judi asked if we could renegotiate the contract. Jeff had sent MRC a note asking if for a 300 ton exemption. He doesn't see this happening. The contract goes until 2018. Henry asked if could purchase cardboard to avoid fine, not feasible. Chair Cookson recalls when Judi and Sue

Thomas were on Council that recycling came due to the state pushing for it. Looking for council guidance; Fitzgerald questioned if other towns having same issue. Jeff doesn't have any further studies. Linda Huff from the Green Committee was upset that recycling wasn't being encouraged.

Motion: Buck to continue to recycle to the maximum possible

Seconded: Caprara

Discussion: None

Vote: All in favor (6-0)

Manager's Report

Invoice for Municipal Office Space. Council approved school budget which contained the cost for the office space as local revenue. It was not in municipal budget so must be paid from unassigned funds. In order to make the school budget whole the council will need to authorize \$31,000 from unassigned fund to balance it out. Invoice for municipal daily office space and conference rooms. Caprara asked if we do not approve what happens at the state level. Not known. The auditor had mentioned that the state could hold back subsidies from the school. Cookson explained that this is all part of the comprehensive plan and the state knew we were doing this; they have no interest if we pay rent to the school. Because it was in the approved budget, it must be paid; Cookson has a problem with that as does Caprara and Buck.

Motion: Caprara

Seconded: Fitzgerald

Discussion: Ellis suggested that could leave the \$31,000 and subtract what the school owns the town. Ginny Geyer stated for the school it is revenue. Chair Cookson explained the catch 22 situation and the school finance would need to come up with \$31,000. The councilors feel this is a game and had eliminated it long time ago. They are only approving because they need to but will be looking at this in the future. Ginny feels the same way. Been going on and on and is looking for a history to come up with something.

Vote: All in favor (5-1) (Buck)

Jeff noted that a Public Works employee had given notice. This employee had a CDL and without him Matt and Larry only ones qualified to pull long trailers now; will be looking for new applicant with CDL qualifications or money in new budget to get current employees trained.

Jeff will have budget presentation posted online and 20 copies available for audience.

Chief of Police mentions that the plunge for Special Olympics raised \$18,000. Henry mentioned it was a great showing with police, fire and rescue.

Motion: Ellis; to adjourn

Second: Caprara