

**Winthrop Town Council
Regular Meeting
Monday, April 4, 2011
Winthrop Town Office**

Attendance: Kevin Cookson, Chair; David Rheaume, Linda Caprara (arrived 7:20 pm), Priscilla Jenkins (arrived at 7:10 p.m.), James Lattin, Sarah Fuller, and Julie Winberg (Secretary). Absent: Ken Buck, Joseph Young (Interim Town Manager)

Call to Order at 7:08 p.m.

The newly appointed Town Manager, Jeffrey S. Woolston, was in the audience and introduced to the public in attendance. Mr. Woolston will begin his position with the Town on May 1, 2011.

Item #31 Presentation and update from Amy Lawson, Executive Director of The Western Kennebec Economic Development Alliance (WKEDA)

Amy Lawson, Executive Director for WKEDA, presented an update as to what WKEDA has been doing. Ms. Lawson spoke about the alliance's work at the solar farm at the Super Fund site on Annabessacook Road. DEP is very supportive of this project. A 30% tax credit to investors has been extended to 2020. The timetable is hard to predict but there is not a lot of ground work to do. The vernal pool is in question on these 10-12 acres and Ken Stratton is doing the investigation.

There will also be a meeting with the Office of Community Development for a grant for the trail project. \$10,000 may be eligible for Winthrop.

Ms. Lawson then gave brief summary of what is going on in the region.

Item #32 Consider an application from American Legion Post 40 to close the boat ramp to launching of boats at Norcross Point from 10:30 am to 2:00 pm on Memorial Day, May 30, 2011. Steve Robbins.

The American Legion has submitted an application for use of Norcross Point on Memorial Day to host an antique car show between the hours of 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. This request is to waive the present rules, that the Council has previously adopted, and to close the boat ramp between the hours of 10:30 am and 2:00 pm for this event.

Recap:

Steve Robbins was in attendance to present a Memorial Day Event – Antique Car Show. The purpose he explained, of tonight's presentation is to explain the intent to the Council and to get it

on the next agenda in April. This event promotes patriotism and is a public event to be held on Memorial Day after the parade. This is to bring more people to the town to attend the parade and to honor the veterans.

The car show will have 50 cars parked in the lot at the point. There will be judging inviting people from every group to participate – council members, board members and police officers.

There will be different judging categories with patriotic themes. It will start at 11:00 – 2:00 p.m. inviting the school band to play several numbers totaling about 20 minutes or so. The band will be treated to lunch.

The lunch wagon will be available; a band at the gazebo playing music and volunteers will be available to clean up. There will not be alcoholic beverages. There is no need for police presence except that the town ordinance requires it.

The town has a policy of not closing the boat ramps and he is asking for an exemption from that rule for this purpose. The funeral parlor has offered overflow parking. The legion riders may also be having an event as well. All insurance concerns will have been met. Boaters can launch their boats from dawn to 10:30 a.m. and then the ramp will be closed from 10:30 to 2:00.

Although this is a big weekend for boaters, every effort will be made to accommodate them during those hours as the point is open at 4:00 a.m.

This is essentially the busiest day for launching boats at the point and it should be noted that many of the boat slips have already been rented for May 30, 2011.

The Council discussed several options which were an alternative to what was proposed as there was a unanimous concern about monopolizing the lot during one of the busiest times of the summer season.

One option, among many, was to close Bowdoin Street and to publicly advertise it sufficiently to notify the public of this event in plenty of time so that any potential boaters/picnickers/visitors are well aware of this in advance. The Council was open to what should be included in this notice but just stressed that adequate time be afforded.

The applicants will review their options.

Item #33 Consider a request from the Town of Manchester to share in the cost of repairs to Cobbosee Dam in the amount of \$42,091.76. (See Attached Letter)

Work needs to be done on the dam. Manchester is seeking assistance in paying a \$220,000 bill for dam work, and billed each town according to its frontage on Lake Cobossee. West Gardiner will not participate. The remaining towns agreed that they would help pay for the project but not incur West Gardiner's share. The calculation was almost 40 cents per foot, according to Manchester Town Manager Patrick Gilbert. For

budgetary purposes, this amount has been added the Capital Improvements Program list, spread out over the next three years.

Motion by Rheame and seconded by Fuller with a unanimous vote to include this amount for this purpose in the new budget.

Item #34 Consider the approval of property abatement per recommendation of the Assessing Department.

The assessment for Map 12, Lot 22 was based on the wrong lot size. The correction has to be made and will lower the assessment by \$6,000. The Assessor, Pursuant to Title 36 Section 841, Abatement Procedures (the assessor within one year from commitment can do an abatement to correct an error - thereafter, but within three years from the commitment, the Town Council can make an abatement), can put through the abatement for the current year. This error has been this way for a number of years. Therefore, the Town Council has to approve the abatement for FY 2009 & 2010. The abatement equals \$75.00 for each year based on the mill rate (at that time) of \$12.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Motion by Rheame and seconded by Fuller with a unanimous vote to approve the property abatement per recommendation of the Assessing Department.

Item #35 Presentation of the 2011-2012 Municipal Budget.

The 2011-2012 Budget was distributed by Finance Director, Jan Tewksbury.

The proposed dates for the working group to meet on the budget are:

4/11

5/2 – with the school budget presentation

5/9

6/6 – public hearing

The proposed budget includes a proposed 3.01 mill rate increase. The expectation is that the property tax rate would increase from \$13.28 to \$15.72 for every \$1,000 of assessed property value. Jan Tewksbury, town finance director, stressed that the proposed rate increase was the starting point in the budget process and not the final result, which will come only after lengthy discussion and negotiation. The proposed increase comes even though town spending for fiscal year 2011-2012 is projected to rise less than 2 percent or just over \$88,000. The town's health insurance costs were expected to rise about 14 percent in the coming year. Revenues are expected to decrease by 7 percent or slightly more than \$180,000. And that can be attributed to a decline in the town's portion of state municipal revenue sharing. The budget shows every department and what the decreases are and what the increases are.

Several proposals have been introduced in reference to the School Board budget as buildings, building wings and just about everything else is on the table as the Winthrop Board of Education continues to work to trim some \$1 million for the budget proposed for the upcoming year. Information is still being collected from the public and school administrator. The budget has to be in place by May 1 because it is scheduled to go to the Town Council on May 3.

Adjourn

Motion by Rheaume and seconded by Caprara, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m. with a unanimous vote