

Winthrop Town Council
Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2012

Attendance: Chairman Kevin Cookson: Jennifer Currier, Linda Caprara, Priscilla Jenkins, Sarah Fuller, Ken Buck Sr, Jeffrey Woolston (Town Manager) and Julie Winberg (Secretary). James Lattin – Resigned.

Approve the Minutes of February 6, 2012

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Currier, the minutes for this meeting were approved with a vote of 6-0.

Item #15 *Consider the Public Safety Fee Changes*

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Caprara, to approve the public safety fee changes as presented passed with a unanimous vote.

Item #17 *Council Briefing from RKO on the most recent Audit*

Greg Chabot, Runyon Kersteen Ouellette, made a presentation on Winthrop's 2011 financial statement. There were no material weaknesses with the Town's internal controls. The report is in a comparative format of financial results for fiscal year 2011 and 2010. The review of the internal controls indicated a problem with the segregation of duties. However, this is not a major issue as a 100% of segregation of duties is just not practical for the size of the office.

Of review were the general fund assets, general fund liabilities, general fund balance, revenue and expenditures, the school department revenues, expenditures, and the school nutrition fund balance. The town's cash flow is sufficient though the property taxes were below budget. The outside revenue was under budgeted. The town's property tax collection rate was under 94%, and is at a 10-year low. The property tax collection rate went

down in 2011. An analysis was made for FY2002-2011 for the fund balance.

The complete report is available at the town office for review.

Item #18 *Discuss Possible Military Excise Tax Exemption Ordinance Development*

The Council, after reviewing 'An Act to provide tax relief to residents deployed for military duty or stationed outside of Maine' approved Public Law, Chapter 313, decided to forego this excise tax for anyone who was deployed for more than 180 days. A public hearing will be held, and then an ordinance will be drafted. The effective date that this act takes effect is January 1, 2012.

Item #19 *Joint Public Hearing/Winthrop Planning Board/Proposed New Zoning*

Public hearing opened at 7:26 p.m.

The Chairman of the Planning Board, Richard O'Brien, along with some of the other members of this Board were present and gave a brief summary on the background of this proposed zoning change. The Board had been solicited by various groups, one of which was the Comprehensive Planning Committee and a few business interests for the town to consider a zoning change for the Royal Street area. Royal Street is in the Village zone. The Board reviewed the request thoroughly, discussing the various options to meet the new goals of creating an alternate gateway to the town and came up with three options:

- a. Change this area to general commercial*
- b. Change the entire area to village zone.*
- c. Create a separate zoning category encompassing the area in question and calling it Village Commercial Zoning District*

The Board took into consideration the lot size, as well as trying to stay true to the character of the area. It ultimately made more sense to incorporate the entire existing village zone to the southwest going down Route 202 and up Route 133.

Two public hearings were held giving the public the opportunity to voice their opinions in reference to the proposed changes.

The Council thanked the Board for their hard work with the goal of redeveloping this whole area.

The public hearing closed at 7:33 with no questions or concerns being voiced.

Item #20 *Consider the Proposed New Zoning District*

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Buck passed with a unanimous vote to approve the third option creating a new zoning category – Village Commercial Zoning District.

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Caprara passed with a unanimous vote

Item #21 *Special Needs Student Projection and Discussion*

Gary Rosenthal, School Superintendant, made a special presentation regarding the district's special education budget. Under Federal Law, the schools have no options but to cover all the financial needs for special education students (ages 3 to 20). Winthrop is being asked for additional funding from the town. The money will have to come out of the general education budget which means existing programs will probably need to be cut. \$638,800 is the special education budget but the actual expenses are \$816,200, leaving a shortfall of \$177,400. We are mandated to pay for these services.

He went on to say that the School Board wants to continue working with the town, be as transparent as possible, and have a collaborative effort between the school and the Council to tackle this problem. It is estimated that there should be over 60 children attending kindergarten next year.

The Council thanked the Superintendant for the report and asked him to continue keeping them informed.

Item #22 *Public Hearing on Central Services and Code Enforcement Fees*

The public hearing opened at 8:12 p.m.

The town manager increase is primarily due to advertising and postage. This is consistent with the fees other towns charge.

After discussion, it was decided that the town will waive the fees for Norcross Point for the Summer Concert Series.

As far as the fees for notary services, the public will be charged. The dispatchers are all notaries and do not charge for police business.

The public hearing closed 8:28 p.m.

Item #23 *Consider Central Services and Code Enforcement Fees*

The Council reviewed a number of fees to be increased for code enforcement and central services.

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Jenkins to approve the fees as presented passed with a unanimous vote.

Item #24 *Equipment Donation to Fire Department*

The Fire Chief informed the Council that this was a 4x4 Kubota that will be made equipment ready and perform quite a few needed services. The cost will be from private funds.

Item #25 *Request to accept Funds from Non-Matching Grant*

Motion by Jenkins and seconded by Caprara passed with a unanimous vote to accept funds from the non-matching grant.

Item #26 *Council Appointments*

Motion by Jenkins and seconded by Fuller passing with a unanimous vote to approve the following appointments:

*Rick O'Brien – Planning Board 1/1/15
Ronald Taylor – Zoning Board 1/1/15
Jan Saleeby - Board of Assessment Review 1/1/15
Margy Knight – Recreation Committee (from Associate Member to Regular Member) 1/1/15
Jill Ippoliti – Conservation Commission – 1/1/14
Elizabeth McKenney – Conservation Commission – 1/1/14
Patricia Putman – Recreation Committee 1/1/14
Margy Knight – Recreation Committee 1/1/15
Tom Heist – Planning Board – 1/1/16
Gary Dawbin – Dam Committee – 1/1/14*

Councilor Jenkins reminded everyone that there still remain several openings on these committees.

Councilor Caprara was excused at 8:40 p.m.

Item #27 *Special Election*

Councilor Lattin has resigned his council position and therefore a special election has to be set. It will be on March 29th. The filing deadline for the election is March 15th. This new appointee will serve until January 2013 which will complete Latin's term.

The Chairman read the following announcement: I move that a special election be scheduled for March 29, 2012 to fill the current vacancy on the Council, and further that the time period for the availability of nomination papers be reduced to ten days, with a filing deadline of March 15, 2012 as authorized by Section 2528, Subsection 4E of Title 30-A.

Motion by Cookson with this reading and seconded by Fuller passed with a unanimous vote.

Item #28 *Ambulance Requirement*

The town manager reviewed the options in reference to a purchase of a new ambulance. The 1998 ambulance is not in service and will be sold

privately. There will not be an ambulance to trade in, leaving the only remaining option to replace the 1998 ambulance with a new one and eventually do the same with the 2003 at a later time.

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Jenkins passing with a unanimous vote to approve the purchase of a new ambulance with the caveat that the 1998 ambulance be immediately put up for sale. The new ambulance will be diesel and should arrive by the end of July.

Manager's Report

The Annual Report for the year ending June 30, 2011 has a release date of March 2012.

Motion by Jenkins and seconded by Fuller, with a unanimous vote, to approve \$1,400 which is needed to pay for various suspension repairs that must be made to the Sexton Truck to return it to road worthiness. The money is not available in the Sexton or Public Works accounts.

The Sexton work force will be reduced by one person. This reduction means that the sexton personnel will only be concentrating on the five town cemeteries

In reference to a request from a town's resident to resume the old property tax notification process, the town will keep its present notification as it has significantly lowered the mailing costs to the town. The dates due remain the same – April 1st and October 1st.

Adjourn

Motion by Jenkins and seconded by Currier, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.