

Winthrop Town Council
Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2012

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

Swearing in – Interim Council Member Larry Fitzgerald is filling the council seat left empty when James Lattin resigned in March. Mr. Fitzgerald served several years ago on a committee that studied the town's public safety facilities and options for replacement. To keep the seat, Mr. Fitzgerald will have to run for election again on the November ballot.

Approve the Minutes of March 5, 2012

Motion by Jenkins and seconded by Fuller, the minutes for this meeting were approved with a vote of 6-0 (Fitzgerald abstaining) and with the following corrections: Item #24 – Fire Chief; Item #25 – Caprara seconded the motion; and Item #26 – Patrice Putman's term ends 1/1/14 and changed the spelling of Gary Dawbin on the Dam Committee.

Item #29 Chairman Appointments – Finance Committee – Selecting Finance Committee Chairman

Chairman Cookson appointed Councilors Caprara and Fitzgerald as Chair and member respectively.

Item #30 Cobbossee Watershed District

Bill Monagle was in attendance and gave an overview of the status of Cobbossee's budget for FY13. Copies were distributed amongst the members. There is a 3% increase proposed. It was noted that the Council should keep in mind that the District has lost approximately \$1,500 in stormwater compensation fees. It was also explained that the amount designated for photo copying was for a service agreement for a copier covering not only the service on the machine but also the warranty. The

copier was purchased several years ago. The District has made a concentrated effort to keep their copying costs down doing almost everything in-house. Individual salary increases will be decided by June 1, 2012. The District pays 100% of the health insurance for employees only. The District will be voting on their budget next week.

In summary, it was stressed that the councilors should remember that there is a distinct correlation between property evaluation and water clarity with an example given of Annabessacook Lake which has resulted in an increase in property values and property tax.

Item #23 *Consider Central Services and Code Enforcement Fees – Second Reading*

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Caprara to accept as presented with the one correction in plumbing fixtures. Vote was 6-0 (Fitzgerald abstaining).

Item #31 *Public Hearing on Military Excise Tax Exemption Ordinance*

The public hearing opened at 7:28 p.m.

In summary, 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.

This State law exempts the vehicle excise tax for both active duty personnel as well as the guard reserves that are going on active duty for more than six months.

The public hearing closed at 7:30 p.m.

Item #32 *Consider the Military Excise Tax Exemption Ordinance*

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Jenkins, this passed with a unanimous vote.

Item #33 *Public Hearing on Transfer Station Fees*

The public hearing opened at 7:31 p.m.

The town manager went over the fees that will be increased. The stickers will be increased from \$5.00 to \$10.00 for two years with the additional sticker increasing to \$2.00. The demo disposal from \$0.05 lb to \$0.07 lb. The commercial trash cost will increase from \$0.025 lb. to \$0.035 lb. For tires, the cost will increase from \$1.00 per tire to \$2.00. Other town and tire stores charge \$2.00 to \$6.00 per tire. It should be noted that all these increases are in line with other towns.

Concern was expressed that the doubling of the sticker price will prove to be a hardship for many and the tire fee would/may result in more roadside debris than there is now. Others commented that the increases are still a remarkable value and remains very reasonable. It was also noted that tires should not be going in the normal trash. The town manager will be looking into other options such as recycling as well as researching the statute.

The public hearing closed at 7:39 p.m.

Item #34 *Consider the Transfer Station Fees*

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Jenkins to approve the transfer station fees as presented. The vote was 5-2 (Buck/Caprara opposed).

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Jenkins to waive the second reading on this motion. The vote was 5-2 (Buck/Caprara opposed).

The increases will go into effect in thirty days.

Item #35 *Library Expansion Update*

Mary Jane Auns was in attendance to review the status of the library expansion. She distributed the new brochure "Case for Support" which is given out to prospective donors. In addition to this she discussed the Talking Points, Frequently Asked Questions, and Naming Opportunities (naming a portion of the library). These are packets which have all been prepared and are to be distributed to all campaign members. Thirty people are on the campaign team and have been trained. The first meeting is set for April 26, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the library where there will be a power point presentation followed by a question and answer period. Ms. Auns

requested that the Council members familiarize themselves with the material presented so that they would be fully informed to answer questions from their constituents.

Item #36 2012-2013 Municipal Budget

Councilors reviewed the draft budget. The town manager will be providing the completed budget cost that will have an estimate of the possible increase in the town's property tax rate which is now set at \$13.68 per one thousand of property value. The town manager informed the council that the majority of increases in the proposed municipal budget are due to higher fuel costs, maintenance costs, aging vehicles and equipment, the higher costs of materials, the restoration of the paving budget and a 4% cost of living allowance for police and nonunion personnel.

The next meeting will be a budget workshop scheduled on April 9th followed by additional workshops in April and May. Future dates will be decided on April 9th.

On May 7th, the school board is scheduled to present its final budget proposal to the town council. On June 4th, the council votes separately on the town and school budgets. If approved, the school budget is then submitted to the town for validation at the polls on June 12th.

It was recommended that column headings, page numbers and a table of contents be added to facilitate an easier read. Also to be added is the delineation between departments. The councilors appreciated the addition of the comment section which provides an explanation of the differences in amounts from the prior year.

The town manager informed the councilors that the capital improvements section is 99% complete. This section will incorporate comments from the department heads. Examples of what some of the big ticket items are in this section: infrared asphalt repair equipment; Case Road culverts – increasing the width and adding guard rails– estimated at \$78,000. Among the items under encumbrances include the projects that should be considered: insulating the Bailey Library roof when it is replaced; repaving the parking lot at the Fire Station; a new roof for the gazebo at Norcross Point along with repaving the entrance to the Point and moving sand from behind the damn to the beach; and cleaning, repairing and repositioning the headstones where necessary at the town's cemeteries as

well as replacing the fence and repairing the archway at the Maple Street cemetery.

The debt services section is not complete. The tax cap has not been determined.

The town manager explained that this proposed budget is a 'true' and complete picture of what should to be done. His goal is to inform the councilors of projects that they need to review, then either approve, disapprove, or decide to postpone for future budgets.

Manager's Report

The town manager requested that the town approve the purchase of a replacement cruiser (a 2011 Ford Crown Victoria at \$22,509). He explained that if this decision is delayed, it would end up costing an additional \$4,000 as the price for the cruiser will go up and the trade in value will go down. The new cruiser gets approximately 18 miles per gallon and is available now. It is not 4-wheel drive.

Motion by Caprara and seconded by Fuller that passed with a unanimous vote, to purchase the replacement cruiser now and when the 2013 budget is approved, that sum goes back into the surplus account.

Councilor Fuller reminded the group that the Chamber of commerce will be holding a breakfast on April 5th at 7:15 a.m. at the Credit Union.

Adjourn

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Jenkins, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. with a unanimous vote.