

Winthrop Town Council  
Meeting Minutes  
September 10, 2012

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

The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m.

**Conservation Commission Award Presentation**

The Chairman read the presentation.

This certificate recognizes the contribution that the Commission, along with the Maine Association of Conservations and other municipal commissions, has made to the conservation of the state's natural resources, open space, and quality of place. The efforts of dedicated volunteers in communities across Maine are the foundation of conservation at a local scale and play an essential role in ensuring the future of Maine's natural heritage.

**Constitution Week Proclamation Reading**

The Proclamation was read by the Town Manager.

Constitution Week is celebrated from September 17th through September 23rd giving us many opportunities to learn about the Constitution as the world's longest surviving written charter of government.

It was officially enacted on August 2, 1956 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower congressional resolution petitioned by the Daughters of the American Revolution, but it was George W Bush who officially declared the inception of Constitution Week in September 2002. The purpose of the observance week is to promote study and education about the constitution which was originally adopted by the American Congress of the Confederation on September 17, 1787.

Ordered that the Winthrop Town Council meet to consider the following items:

**Approve the August 6, 2012 Meeting Minutes:**

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Fitzgerald passing with a unanimous vote, the minutes for this meeting were approved with the following changes:

Item #64 - Page 2 last paragraph - change quite to quiet  
Page 3 paragraph #4 - change putting to pitting

Item #65 - Councilor Fuller requested that the following be added to the Corporate Personhood Resolution Discussion: To be noted that she did support the idea of the resolution with different language.

Correct the spelling for Vassalboro.

Other Business - last paragraph - the float will be placed taking out 'not'

Town Manager Report #6 - change 'damn' to 'dam.'

### **Item #66 - Consider requesting DOT Speed Study – Route 202 (E. Winthrop)**

Correspondence was received from resident Stan Boynton reference this request. David Allen, Engineer for DOT, was in attendance to explain the process for a speed study and the timeframe if approved. Starting with a written request, the council discusses it and if they express a desire to go forward, gives permission to the Town Manager to write a letter to DOT requesting a speed limit evaluation. Mr. Allen's sense is that people are travelling around 55 mph. The results of many of the studies that have been done have usually resulted in raising the speed limit rather than lowering it.

Police Chief Young addressed this as well stating although it has been difficult to get on to 'Route 202 from Carleton Pond Road, speed has not been the problem for the accidents on Route 202'. Drivers are pulling out in front of one another and crossing the center line. Whether it is negligence, distraction, medical or whatever, speed is not the problem. He recommends the rumble strips over reducing the speed limit. Once you reduce speeds, police will have to be assigned to monitor that section, setting radar etc. Police should be concentrating their efforts in neighborhoods.

The consensus was that if the DOT study does not cost the town anything, the town should go ahead with it. This study will strictly look at speed for the safety and efficiency of the highway system.

A center line turn lane would be quite costly and would not be received well as this area was recently redone.

Motion by Buck and seconded by Fuller passing with a unanimous vote, approved this request and authorized the Town Manager to send a letter to DOT to study the speed on Route 202 in East Winthrop.

### **Item #67 - Consider Requesting Rumble Strips for Route 202.**

David Allen prepared a chart for the councilors summarizing the number of crashes before and after the installation of rumble strips which was significant. They have been installed

in the towns of Turner and Woolwich. The one negative however is that they are very 'loud' and could be a problem for residents.

The strips do an effective job and DOT has funding to install the strips from Winthrop's town line to Manchester. The procedure the town would follow is to have a public hearing and if approved, put in a formal request to DOT. The town would then be put on a list and installation would be at the next construction season. Note: once the strips go in, they are in until the road is reconstructed. Also, the pavement integrity is a drawback and does limit DOT's future treatments.

There have been negligible complaints in the towns that have rumble strips.

Motion by Fuller seconded by Jenkins passing with a unanimous vote that the request for rumble strips to be put on Route 202 be set for a public hearing which should be held in October.

### **Item #68 - Tax Commitment Discussion**

The Winthrop School Board approved a \$152,015 increase in the school budget over last year's school budget. The upcoming ***September 18th, 2012 referendum*** will ask voters whether they agree that this most recently approved school budget can be used to establish property taxes for the fiscal year which began July 1st, 2012 and ends June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013. If this amount is validated by voters during the September referendum, the new tax rate will be 13.86mils, a 1.3% increase over last year's tax rate of 13.68mils. This "final" tax rate is based on precise amounts for the town's valuation and all the various other variables needed to complete the tax commitment process. This would mean a family owning a \$100,000 dollar property would pay \$18 dollars more than they did last year.'

The tax bills will be mailed out after the vote on September 18<sup>th</sup> and are due by October 1<sup>st</sup>. If, however, it is not validated, the Council will meet at a special session on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Councilors will have to decide which budget they will approve to send to the assessor. Reminder: the budget last year was approved on July 10, 2011. Councilors' should be prepared to choose the figure to move forward as time is of the essence. You can choose last year's figure or something in between. If needed, a supplemental tax bill will be mailed out to residents.

### **Item #69 - Dam Management Discussion**

The present relationship between Readfield and Winthrop was discussed, as it relates to the Upper Mill Stream Dam.

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Jenkins to approve the mission statement of the Winthrop Dam Committee as presented and named the members of the Inter-Local Agreement Committee as the members of the Winthrop Dam Committee passed with a unanimous vote.

### **Item #70 – Consider Draft Commerce Center TIF Amendment**

A public hearing on this agreement should be held next month. Councilors were asked to review it and report their changes or reservations. Note: this is for the town of Winthrop and was clearly identified in the wording for all projects such as bicycle and walking paths. The biking trail was identified as a need in the Comprehensive Plan bringing to the community much needed economic development.

Infrastructure improvements were discussed such as improving the pavement of the town's sidewalks as an immediate need along with a long term feasibility study for biking trails and walking paths.

In reference to hiring a contractor to do the planning and development, the Town Manager stated that if the town wanted him to do this, he would keep track of the hours he spends on this as a separate category from the salaried hours with the town in his position as town manager. He explained it would be a totally separate category not funded by the tax payers.

It was recommended to 'broaden out' the categories to include the beatification of Main Street businesses, as well as recreational facilities such as the waterfront and marina. It was stressed that in order to receive funds under TIF, categories must be clearly identified and not vague. Councilors were asked by Chairman Cookson to send their recommendations on specific categories to Councilor Fuller, who will relay to the Town Manager for inclusion.

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Jenkins that the **Draft Commerce Center TIF Amendment with allowable inputs from councilors** be set for a public hearing in October. This passed with a unanimous vote.

#### **Item #71 – Consider Transfer Station Rules**

The Council was asked to review the revised rules. If no changes were to be made, it would be immediately sent to the transfer station for implementation pending any final changes after the public hearing.

Motion by Fuller to accept these revised rules and send it on to the transfer station setting the final Order as an agenda item at the next meeting in October. This motion died for lack of a second.

Motion by Jenkins that the Town Manager amend these rules to include some fees for items that would prevent the town from losing revenue and take the final Order to a public hearing.

Councilor Fuller then amended the above motion to include specific fees such as under 50 lbs. \$5.00 and over 50 lbs. \$10.00. These amounts will be included, sent to the transfer station, and set it for public hearing at the next meeting in October.

The final motion, passed with a unanimous vote.

## **Other Business**

The Councilors were asked by Mr Gary Dawbin to take action and put in place a noise ordinance with signage to include no engine breaking (although motorcycles, fireworks and rowdy parties were also discussed for inclusion). Although the town has a noise ordinance, it has been difficult to enforce. Signage will be a clear reminder – with black and white signs.

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Jenkins to install black and white signs on Route 133 – no engine braking was then amended to include all major truck routes throughout the town was again seconded by Jenkins and failed with a vote of 2-3 (Buck, Caprara, Fitzgerald).

Vice Chair Fuller then asked the Councilors to reconsider the amended motion. Chairman Cookson abstained in the initial discussion as he lives on Route 133. Councilor Cookson included himself in this discussion explaining the plight of living on Route 133 and describing the noise as ‘intolerable’ reminding all that this is a residential neighborhood.

Black and white signs indicate that an ordinance is in place. This is easy to enforce as the noise is obvious. Law enforcement would just have to witness it. The Town Manager will work with the Police Chief for the verbiage and bring the final draft to the Council. The reconsidered motion, seconded by Chairman Cookson passed with a vote of 5-1 (Caprara).

With a question on the future of Candidates Night, the audience was informed that the Chamber of Commerce does not do this anymore but anyone interested in pursuing this type of event should look towards the Rotary or Lions Club.

## **Manager's Report**

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Caprara to approve the \$5,000 down payment for the monitor/defibrillators as presented (already identified in this fiscal year's budget). This passed with a unanimous vote.

Council of Governors meeting will be held in Waterville this year. Councilors Cookson and Jenkins are the official representatives. Please give the sign-up sheet back to the manager when completed.

The Annual MMA business meeting will be held in conjunction with the annual conference. The primary member to the meeting is Councilor Caprara with Councilor Jenkins as the alternate.

The Municipal Review Committee - If anyone wants to be on the slate of officers, see me after the meeting.

If the Council wants interlocal video meetings they should let the Town Manager know. As a note, the revenue with the cable company will be decreased with the addition of this service.

The Spirit of America awards will be held as usual with a ceremony at the end of the year and not at the Kennebec Countywide ceremony on October 15<sup>th</sup>.

A Squire Hill Village resident asked for help from the manager to clear the path to Hannaford. The Town Manager will write a letter asking the property owners if they plan to clear the path and if not, whether a team of volunteers has their permission. If he gets the permission, he will ask high school if it wants to do the task as part of a service project.

\$25,000 was the trade-in price of the Winthrop Utility's back hoe. That is the amount the municipality will pay for the vehicle and then move it to the Transfer Station.

A public hearing will be held next month to increase the fees for false alarms by \$30.00. The Town Manager will work on an ordinance and bring it to the next council meeting.

The annual report for 2011 is almost ready for printing. The manager anticipates the 2012 Annual Report will be done after the auditor's presentation to the Council. It will also be posted on the website.

There has been a lot of turnover in the Clerk's Office. The latest two hires for deputy clerks were brought in at about the same time but at different rates. The Town Manager, after a review of their work, and after their probationary period was completed satisfactorily, recommends that both of these hires be put at the same level at the higher rate. The increase will be approximately \$4,000 and will come out of the office safety reserve account. Motion by Fuller and seconded by Buck to approve this was passed with a unanimous vote.

### **Adjourn**

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Jenkins this meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m. which passed with a unanimous vote.