

Winthrop Town Council

Regular Meeting

Monday April 5, 2010

Winthrop Town Office

Attendance: Kevin Cookson, Chair; David Rheame, Linda Caprara, Ken Buck, Sarah Fuller, Pricilla Jenkins, Cornell Knight, Town Manager and Julie Winberg, Secretary. Absent: James Lattin

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Awards ceremony honoring Officer Carson, Chief Joe Young and Cornell Knight, commending them for their dedication to public service.

Approve the Minutes of February 1, 2010 (tabled from March 1), March 1, and March 18, 2010

Motion by Jenkins and seconded by Fuller with a unanimous vote to approve all the minutes with the one correction noted for the meeting held on March 18th (Lattin not present at that meeting thus changing the votes to 4).

Consider a resolution to oppose federal warfare funding brought forward by Councilor Jenkins – Tabled from meeting held on March 3, 2010.

Motion by Jenkins and seconded by Fuller to remove from the table this resolution to oppose federal warfare funding. Vote 2-4, yea: Jenkins, Fuller. Nay: Cookson, Rheame, Caprara, Buck.

Item #27 – Hold a public hearing on the liquor license renewal and special entertainment license renewal for Pond Town Tavern, 7 Union Street.

The public hearing opened at 7:13 p.m. Chief Joe Young informed the Council that things were relatively quiet. However, there have been some instances involving excessive drinking in the downtown area but it remains to be seen where the over serving may be occurring. He stated that he will be informing the two establishments to have better communication with each other and to send a representative to the upcoming server class that will be held later on in this month. Hearing closed at 7:15 p.m

Item #28 – Consider the liquor license renewal application and special entertainment license application for Pond Town Tavern.

Motion by Caprara and seconded by Fuller to approve the liquor license renewal application and special entertainment license application for Pond Town Tavern. Vote 6-0.

Item #29 – Consider the options available for the Masonic Building.

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Chairman Cookson began the discussion explaining he wanted this item on the agenda to make people aware of his concerns about public safety. The town purchased this building and lot for the sole purpose of library expansion. However as explained, the ordinances in place allow for a one year grandfather clause to replace the torn down building in the same footprint. Replacement of a non-conforming structure, a building footprint must be done within 12 months from the issuance date of the demolition permit. Once the building is started, the building permit is good for two additional years which equals a total of 3 years. A variance must be started and used within twelve months of issuance by the Zoning Board and it is good for another year to finish. The request for a variance goes to the town's Zoning Board. Any appeal of the Zoning Board's decision will then have to be appealed to the Superior Court. It does not go back to the Council.

It was determined that the cost for tearing down the building had an original estimate of \$25,000 to \$30,000 (which does include hauling away the debris). Councilor Caprara along with other Council members expressed that they were not in favor of tearing down the building and that they don't see the need to do it. The dilemma centers with the current and future budgets along with the dire economy should all play an integral part in the final decision. No matter how much the Library may raise through their ongoing fundraising quest, the town will have to still match it. The Library hopes to raise \$500,000 and the projected total for the addition is \$1.3 million. The public safety issues were described as a large amount of debris in the building and that increases the potential for a fire. As well as the roof is leaking.

Motion by Fuller and seconded by Rheame with a unanimous vote to table this item to allow the Town Manager to discuss this situation with the Town's Attorney with the prospect of overruling the Zoning Board and getting additional time over and above the one year variance requirement.

Item #30 – Consider the Cobbossee Watershed District's budget assessment.

The trustees have their budget session before the Town Council's review of the town's municipal budget next week. Mr. Bill Monagle was present to review his request. The proposal is that the CWD's FY 2011 budget will call for increases in municipal assessments of 3 percent over the current level, although this will not be determined until their meeting scheduled for April 13, 2010.

Discussion ensued centering on this 3% increase and the cuts needed for a 0% increase. The Council recommended that their concerns and recommendation of a 0% increase be relayed to the Trustees. The Council requested that a line item budget be submitted to the Council prior to any final review.

Item #31 – Consider the furnace replacement at the Annabessacook storage buildings.

The propane furnace at this storage facility broke this past winter and the pipes froze. The cost of the sprinkler repair was \$1,700. The furnace could not be fixed. The sprinkler pipes accumulate condensation and must be monitored regularly. It would be better to heat the building, since the electric heat in the control valve room must stay on. The initial estimate for a new propane furnace was \$2,800, however if the furnace is installed right now, the price would be \$2,280, according to Winthrop Fuel Company. This furnace will be much more efficient than the old one. The funds would come from the Transfer Station Reserve Fund.

Motion by Rheame and seconded by Fuller to purchase the furnace replacement at the Annabessacook storage buildings. Vote 6-0.

Item #32 – Consider a contract with Glacial Energy to supply electricity.

Motion by Rheaume and seconded by Caprara table the item until the May 3rd to get other quotes. Vote 6-0.

Item #33 – Presentation of the 2010-2011 Municipal Budget.

A copy of the proposed budget was distributed for the Councilors' review. There is less than a 1% increase in revenue and funds are approximately \$187,000 less. The town is not able to take money from surplus as it did last year.

Revenue sharing will be less. The proposal, in order to meet all the towns' requirements, would increase the mil rate from 12.50 to 13.30 per \$1,000 worth of assessed property. That is an increase of 80 cents over the current rate. Residents can expect an increase of about 6 percent in their property tax rate if the proposed \$4.9 million municipal budget is adopted unchanged and if the school budget stays at \$9.6 million. "This budget maintains basic municipal services, with no layoffs, but is short on capital investment", Cornel Knight wrote in an introduction to the 48-page budget document. This proposed budget lists no wage increases for town employees, and police and dispatch union members have agreed to postpone a 4 percent raise until July 1, 2011. A council vote to approve the postponed raises would extend the contract to June 30, 2012.

The next budget meeting is scheduled for April 12th.

The budget will be posted on the website.

Other Business:

Councilor Rheaume presented a situation involving Greenwood Avenue and the incidents of speeding on this populated road. A suggestion of installing a removable rubberized speed bump spiked into the street was recommended. Upon the possible improvement that this might present, this portable speed bump can be put on other road where speeding is a problem, such as Memorial Drive.

The Council asked that the Town Manager look into this possibility and report back.

Manager's Report

The Harpers Bond payment will be made in April.

Adjourn

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