

**Winthrop Town Council  
Regular Meeting  
Monday, April 7, 2008**

**Attendance:** William MacDonald (Chair), Linda Caprara, Patricia Engdahl, Ken Buck, Jim Norris, Priscilla Jenkins, Cornell Knight (Town Manager) and Julie Winberg (Secretary). **Absent:** Kevin Cookson

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

Approve the Minutes of March 3, March 10, and March 25, 2008.

Motion by Norris and seconded by Caprara, the minutes of for these meetings were approved with a unanimous vote.

**Item #34** Hold public hearing on Pond Town Tavern Liquor License renewal, 7 Union Street; Sully's Restaurant Liquor License renewal, 6 B Union Street; and Sully's Restaurant Special Entertainment Permit renewal.

The public hearing was opened at 7:02 p.m.. Chief J. Young commented that he has reviewed the records for the past year and is satisfied with those findings. There have been no problems for the most part. One incident in Pond Town Tavern was reviewed briefly with a joint positive result.

The public hearing was closed at 7:05 p.m.  
**Item #35** Consider the Liquor License renewal for Sully's Restaurant.  
Motion by Caprara and seconded by Jenkins, the liquor license renewal for Sully's Restaurant was approved with a unanimous vote.

**Item #36** Consider the Special Entertainment License renewal for Sully's Restaurant  
  
Motion by Engdahl and seconded by Buck, the special entertainment license renewal for Sully's Restaurant was approved with a unanimous vote.

**Item #37** Consider the Liquor License renewal for Pond Town Tavern  
  
Motion by Norris and seconded by Caprara the liquor license renewal for Pond

Winthrop Town Council

Minutes

April 7, 2008

Page 1

Town Tavern was approved with a unanimous vote.

**Item #38**

Hear an update on the Mt. Pisgah Trail planning project and consider a request for funds to pay for materials for trail maintenance- Jim Connors

Jim Connors was in attendance to brief the Council and the public on the upcoming projects planned for 2008. There are many spring and summer activities planned. The joint care of the conservation property organized to maintain the trails has been working extremely well. This joint stewardship of this property has worked diligently and the heavier than anticipated use of the hiking trails has indeed benefited from all the hard work.

A needs assessment has been done. There is a need for stone steps, and bog bridges. The Kennebec Plan Trust is marshalling some volunteer courses. Drainage work is one of those courses. In addition, the Trust is still in the process of entering the tower into the National Historic Registry.

Mr. Connors informed the Council that in researching the material needed for the bog bridges is cedar planking. By making a bulk purchase, it would reduce the price. There is no cedar on the property. Thus, the purchase has to be from other local sources. Cedar is very durable. The bog bridging can be done all year long. The estimate for this project is approximately \$4,000 covering approximately 3-4 thousand feet of bog bridging. The planks would be approximately 12-18 inches long.

The total land in the Trust is 600 acres with the town owning 94 acres. The property's ownership is a combination of trust, private, and town.

The traffic has been consistent even throughout the winter. The participation in the activities involve both town people and from other towns

The Council asked the Town Manager to do some research and start the required bid process to make this purchase for the trail-maintenance funds. The Council thanked Mr. Connors for his report and his dedication to this project.

**Item #39**

Hear an update on the administrative re-organization from the School Department

John Mitchell, School Board Chairman, was in attendance to brief the Council and the public on last week's vote to restructure the schools' administration. The restructuring will place a principal at the grade school and an assistant principal and principal to supervise the middle school and high school.

Mr. Mitchell explained that these discussions had taken place over several months during executive sessions that excluded the public. The vote that took place at the last meeting was made because of the opportunity presented by the grade school principal's retirement and the high school principal's resignation, both of which are effective at the end of this school year. He told the Council that this move would save at the very least \$30,000. He said that the final vote on the restructuring came at the end of this executive session explaining that the Board did not want to wait another two weeks and needed to move on this now.

He explained that this was the best time to restructure. These changes are administrative. The plan brought forward by the Administrative Team was reviewed and together with the Board worked hard and exhausted all the options. The conclusion was to accept the proposal and move forward. The School Board now has to deal with their budget that is at the very least \$383,000 less than last year. There has been no discussion to date on what classes will stay or be eliminated. This was just a vote on the administrative structure of the Board. Now, the 'heavy lifting' comes in dealing with the numbers. He concluded by saying that he had not heard of any 'negative' comments.

Several Councilors, including Chairman MacDonald, who said that they have heard negative feedback which centered around the process which closes off these meetings to the public. Open dialogue, allowing public input, particularly when deciding on anything that involves budgets, is paramount. The organizational structure needs to be an open process. Councilor Engdahl commented how 'secretive' the School Board seemed to be. The biggest concern, she went on to say, is that the process is not open. Executive sessions do not happen very often at all. And when you are talking about the budget process, it has to be open. The 'process seems very closed' and this certainly breeds dissatisfaction.

Councilor Norris said he left the school board meeting because he was unaware that a vote was going to be taken. He echoed Councilor Engdahl's sentiments on this subject. Open debate is critical for public support. The example, he noted, was the Public Safety Building and all the issues that surrounded the town's struggles with it. That process was completely open and everyone participated on it.

The Council recommended that the Chairman or the Town Manager at the very least should be included in these discussions as the town and the School Board are partners from the start of the process all the way through. There is a perception that the Board had/has a hidden agenda. If the process is an open one, the public can only feel confident in what is happening and supportive of the conclusions reached.

Councilor Buck asked the Council if the public would have the opportunity to comment on the School Board's decision on this night. Chairman MacDonald replied that they would. The floor was open to comments. Town resident, William Cunningham said "This is the first time you are hearing from the public on this."

Councilor Caprara, however, thanked the school board for their work.

**Item #40**

Consider a request for funds form the Maranacook, Cobbossee, Annabessacook, and Berry/Dexter Lake Associations for boat inspection costs.

Four separate lake associations have requested funding for boat inspection costs. A report was presented describing the milfoil prevention steps that have been taking place since 2003. Starting that year, courtesy boat inspections began resulting in 400 inspections at four sites. In 2003 to 2005, those numbers increased to 2,800 inspections at seven sites. These sites were staffed by Americorp volunteers. In 2006 to 2007, the inspections increased to 7,000 at eight sites.

The Association representative stressed that the efforts must go beyond maintaining. The work must increase now to at least 10 sites. The total cost of \$28,000 is funded by the Friends of Cobbossee Watershed with \$18,000 from the Lakes Association and \$10,000 from the towns. The labor costs total \$15,777 with the Town of Winthrop providing \$3,000 which would cover the boat inspections.

Milfoil infestation seriously reduces property values. In Winthrop alone, there are 652 lake front parcels providing \$2,000,000 in taxes, providing 36% of the total tax base. This is critical to economic development.

The Association is looking for funding this year. The town did not put any money into this project last year. The wash basin was a project done two years ago and was fully funded by LL Bean.

In polling the Councilors, protection of the lakes is one of the Council's goals. Milfoil volunteers were thanked for their dedication and impressive devotion to their task. This will be part of the budget review.

**Item #41**

Review the building plans of the Police Department

Winthrop Town Council

Minutes

April 7, 2008

Page 4

Architect Philip Locashio presented drawings showing the new configuration for the Winthrop Police Station. The 1855 brick building would be gutted and everything brought in new. A sally port is to be added at the rear of the building. He estimated the costs at \$600,000, and said the rehabilitation, including demolition, would be put out to bid. He offered a photo that showed new windows framed by green vinyl shutters and topped by a green sunburst. Dressing up the exterior like that, he said, would cost about \$6,000.

80% of the drawings are complete, with electrical, air conditioning, plumbing to be added. The architectural drawings are in good shape. The drawing showed the floor plan which incorporates the recommendations from the Chief of Police addressing the needs of the public, the staff and the prisoners. The existing building is 42'x60'. The public entrance would be at the Main Street side of the building and a separate, controlled entrance at the rear. The entrance, on the first floor, entering in the lobby, will be handicap accessible both in the entrance, the bathroom and a lift to the second floor. The first floor will house the offices for staff, interview rooms, and a waiting room, offices for the sergeant, captain, detectives, a work room/computer room, small bathroom adjacent to the dispatch area, a small kitchen unit, and a room for the copier and other office equipment. An addition will be put built in the back of the building where the criminals will be brought in. This will be where they will be booked. There will be an evidence room and a small bathroom as well along with two additional interview rooms.

The second floor will have a handicap accessible bathroom. The emergency operation center and communications system will be housed here, along with a locker room, exercise room, chief's office, administrative services office, and records room.

At 8:05 pm the Council took a ten minute break to allow the members of the council as well as the public to view the drawings presented by Mr. Locashio this evening.

The Council resumed at 8:15 p.m.

The cost is estimated to be approximately \$600,000. This will go out for bid in mid May.

Should the estimates come in higher, things like the handicap lift to the second floor could be eliminated. Funding from the Historical Society is out since this site is not on the registry. The two front chimneys will be taken down, salvaging the original brick and using it throughout. Parking will be provided with 15 spaces which meets the town's Zoning Ordinance. The site sits on approximately 17 acres which comprises the police department, the ambulance service, and the school site.

Mr. Locashio stated that they will be working in conjunction with the contractor and all codes will be met. This will be an energy efficient building with 12" of brick all around, although the existing walls do not have insulation, the new structure will. The windows will have the highest R rating as well. Solar energy is not feasible, as Maine's sunny days are limited.

The Town Manager hopes to time the work so the ambulance service can be moved into its new home in the former health center, and police can be housed temporarily in

Winthrop Town Council

Minutes

April 7, 2008

Page 5

the old ambulance headquarters.

**Item #42** Consider a rule regarding renting the gazebo at Norcross Point

The history behind this request was reviewed being was it was on the agenda at the Council meeting held in March.

Motion by Jenkins and seconded by Caprara, approving the requirement that any person or organization that requests renting the gazebo at Norcross Point show evidence of insurance prior to getting a permit. This can be done by calling up and getting a one day policy through the town's insurance carrier or provide their own. Vote was unanimous.

**Item #43** Consider a used pick-up truck purchase for the Cemetery Department

The 1988 pick up presently being used needs approximately \$1,000 worth of work. Through due diligence, a 1991 truck has been found at a cost of \$1,000 that would suit the town's needs. The town would keep the 1988 pick up and use it for parts.

Motion by Buck and seconded by Caprara to approve this purchase. The vote was unanimous.

**Item #44** Municipal Budget Presentation for fiscal years 2008-2009 which will start July 1<sup>st</sup>.

By charter, the budget is to be presented to the Council on the first meeting in April. The budget carries no tax increase despite a 1.5 percent increase in spending. The budget proposed shows the tax rate remaining at \$12.50 per \$1,000 worth of value. The proposal sets the municipal budget at \$4.93 million for the 2008-2009 fiscal year which begins July 1, 2008. Various portions of the budget will be reviewed at later dates, beginning April 14<sup>th</sup> and April 16<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 p.m. in the cafeteria at the Winthrop Middle School. These will be open work sessions. The Council hopes to get public feedback. It will be a workshop with active dialogue.

**Other Business**

Motion made by Engdahl and seconded by Norris to reappoint Doug Whittier to the Winthrop Utilities District. Vote was unanimous.

**Manager's Report**

The town is very close to getting the plow truck that was ordered back in June of last year. The plow company got the truck in January but it was only delivered to Bangor last week to be serviced. While waiting for it to be delivered, the town was forced to use the one that we were

Winthrop Town Council

Minutes

April 7, 2008

Page 6

scheduled to be traded in. Thus, the town cannot trade it in as it was damaged from overuse due to the harsh winter and excessive plowing that was needed. The town plans on setting it aside and keeping an eye out for a used 'rear end' that it now needs and eventually hope to sell it privately to make some sort of a profit.

Motion by Caprara seconded by Buck to accept a \$100.00 donation from Sully's to the Police Department Special Olympics.

There has been no further news from the postal service.

**Item #45** Consider an executive session to discuss a real estate purchase, MRSA Title 1 Section 405 6© and a real estate abatement Section 405 6 (F).

Motion by Norris Seconded by Engdahl to return to regular session. Vote 6-0.

Motion by Buck Seconded by Caprara to deny an property abatement request made pursuant to 36 MRSA Sec 841 (2) for the tax years 2007 and 2008. Vote 6-0.

Motion by Norris Seconded by Engdahl to approve the purchase and sale agreement with MaineGeneral and the Town of Winthrop, dated April 7, 2008, for the former health center with deed restrictions. Vote 5-1 (Buck opposed).

Motion by Caprara Seconded by Jenkins to adjourn at 8:57 pm.

At 8:50 p.m., motion by Caprara and seconded by Jenkins the Council went into executive session.

Adjourn