

# TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 6, 2020

## ROLL CALL

Present: Councilor Stephen Ruggiero, Councilor Barbara Flockhart, Councilor Rob Demarco, Councilor Peter Christopher, Councilor Tracey Honan, Councilor Nick LoConte, Councilor Rich Ferrino, Council Vice President James Letterie, President Philip Boncore

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Council President calls meeting to order at 7:00 pm  
Gives the Zoom information for the meeting details for any public comment.

### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Honan

### 3. ROLL CALL

### 4. MINUTES

- 4.a Approval of September 22, 2020 Minutes  
Motion by Vice President Letterie  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Rich Ferrino.

Approve: Councilor Stephen Ruggiero, Councilor Barbara Flockhart, Councilor Rob Demarco, Councilor Peter Christopher, Councilor Tracey Honan, Councilor LoConte, Councilor Rich Ferrino, Council Vice President Jim Letterie, President Philip Boncore  
Motion Passes 9-0

### 5. GENERAL INFORMATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.a **White Cane Awareness Month**

John Morgan reports on the White Cane Awareness Law ...  
Please see attached presentation information  
[WHITE CANE AWARENESS.2020.pdf](#)

#### 5.b **Outdoor Dining Ordinance**

Councilor Christopher speaks on the future of the Executive Order that the Governor stated and thinks the town should investigate doing this more permanent and offer them the ordinance that was drafted by the Rules & Ordinance.  
This was originally drafted for a temporary order but would like to make this a permanent one.  
Will send to new business for a vote.

#### 5.c **Address Protestors / Town Rallies**

Council President reports that everyone has the right of Freedom of Speech, the town does not take sides of any protestors, public spaces should not be used for any political purposes. We condemn hatred, violence, vulgar language. We want to work together.

Councilor Honan will make a personal statement....

This is her statement alone. Not speaking for the entire Town Council....(See Copy of Statement)

Councilor Ruggiero Thanks for Town Council addressing this matter. Agrees that there is no room for hatred. Finds it very sad that it is 2020 and this is still happening. Hatred and discrimination should not be tolerated.

Councilor DeMarco believes that this is not political it is more hatred.

Councilor Flockhart agrees with Councilor Honan and thanks for her comments.

Councilor Christopher feels the same and agrees with Councilor Honan, it goes without saying that as a Town Council we should be speaking out against anything that makes our citizens feel uncomfortable and our community should not feel this way and it is not the position of the elected leaders to accept this type of behavior.

Council President reiterates that these people are allowed Freedom of Speech, but unity is the way to go, work together and work towards the same purpose, make it more inclusive and no hatred.

**6. PUBLIC HEARING**  
**None**

**7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mitch Gaynes (P3)-Thanks the Town Council for putting this important issue on agenda and having this conversation. Attended meeting of CDIRC and wanted to join the Town Council Meeting and asks to note, that vulgarity does not necessarily mean swearing, it is saying people deserve to die, face violence. This is also very offensive. He feels very excluded in Winthrop, he does not believe that the WPD signs should be allowed. We need more unity and focus on what we want people to do and what are goals are.

Karin Chavis (P2)-Discusses the Finance Commission, and it was said that they could not see a new public safety building being in the forecast for the next 10 years. Asks that this cannot be put off, they deserve a new home, they need a decent place to work. This is not an option if not feasible then Capitol Improvement money should repair WPD and get us a new Fire Station. She is very aware that money is tight as she is involved with the finances in the town. Let's show the WFD & WPD the respect they deserve.

Alison Dewer (P1)-Echoes Councilor Honan and agrees 100% . The message coming from Dianna Ploss side of street is very hateful. Some flags around town are ignorant and hateful, they should not be allowed in town. "Hate has no home" has to be meant....not all are welcome, they must come into our town to work together not a dominance.

**8. CORRESPONDENCE**

All Correspondence is read and will be attached to the minutes as record.

**9. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**9.a Rules & Ordinance**

Councilor Christopher reports on the motions that were discussed. The Shirley St. 15 Mins. parking will be returning to TSAC for discussion.

Locust, Almont, and Cross St. has been tabled indefinitely and will be referred to TSAC once again review this and investigate different parking problems areas.

Motions will be continued under old business.

**9.b Finance Committee**

Vice President Letterie reports on a financial picture of the Board of Health and make sure financially they are in a good place. The Cares Act has brought funds into the town and being used for health reasons within the town. All resources are being meant.

**Fiscal Policies**-When Town Manager discusses the budget wants Finance Committee to review policies and be prudent with recommendations. financial decisions. Have asked Anna to do a spread sheet on her and the TM for what policies can be done and what cannot.

**Buses**-School dept. declared the buses given to the school by the Viking Pride as a surplus as schools thought it best to get out of transportation. The Finance Committee would like to create a special article account dedicated to the students in areas that Viking Pride does for the students. A motion will be introduced in new business.

9.c **Joint Meeting Finance Committee & Zero Waste Committee**

Council Vice President very happy with all attendance between both committees and information was reviewed. Has had a book given to him by Amel DiMento on the trash and recycling in our town from years ago which is very informative.

We are trying to reduce the amount of trash that Winthrop is using.

Our price for trash has been relatively stable but there is a new contract that has increased.

Will return in December with more concrete information to make an informative decision.

Going to have another meeting and investigate other communities and review how they handle their trash.

Delivery of new barrels will not take place until 2021.

9.d **Commission for Diversity, Inclusion & Community Relations**

CDIRC-Council President Boncore was present at meeting and asks member John Morgan to discuss the meeting of which he feels the committee must continue meeting as to become more aware of community needs.

Council President reviews the meeting....see copy of minutes.

Discussed quite a bit of issues within our community.

Town Manager wants to check with the committee and reminds this is an advisory committee, it is a suggested course of action if the TC wants to pursue or not pursue.

Anything passed must come to TC and take the action.

10. **TOWN MANAGER REPORT**

Town Manager Faison appreciates the community's patience and tolerance with all the changes that the town has been dealing with. We are still working at it. Town Hall and Library welcomed back a fair amount of staff working on site. Hand sanitizers, QR Code for our safety, his priority is his staff, he is preparing for shifting into maybe working remotely again. Will continue to provide services to the community and educate more how online works.

Bike Sharrows are about 50% installed. There is realization that bikes are on roads also and need safety procedures.

Last week new signs, (Soofa signs). 5 locations within the business districts. One thing that has been brought to his attention is that Town Hall does a bad job in communicating with the people. We can post our calendars, communicate with the town and push messaging. The signs are currently in many communities as it generates real time information for our citizens.

Will work with local businesses, town gets 20% of that cost back. Communication is key.

Public Safety Director Meredith Hurley gives Covid update...please see website for updated information.

Council President thanks Meredith and the MRC for the great work that has been done.

Flu clinic for Seniors will be held and more specific to population. There was a drive through for flu shots, children received shots one by one, not while in vehicles.

Council President reports this is the 8th week in a row that we are in the RED, we would like to consider getting back to school but we are being held back.

Councilor Honan, kudos to Meredith, she was at the Flu clinic and handled everything professionally.

DPW Director gives update on street paving in Winthrop. Phase 2 starting first day of paving tomorrow., Pleasant St. Brookfield and Pauline, Sargent and Washington. Please see website for updates of CBD District and road paving. Looking to get approx. 5 miles of roadway paved this year. Updates are on Town Website.

Council Christopher asks if new communication boards can be displayed separately?

TM-Yes, we can move around what is displayed where and how.

They can tell us what is open in the area. Each sign can be tailored to each individually.

Councilor Ruggiero are these just to read?

Town Manager replies yes, there are no buttons, but it is real time with all information that can be communicated with the town. Public Calendar can be added, a host of information.

Councilor DeMarco asks Steve Calla are there any plans for new crosswalks?

Steve new pedestrian ramps on Morton St. area and did over 4000 sq. yd. sidewalk and a lot of rehab on crosswalks, any opportunity we must fix, we do.

## 11. SCHOOL DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Council President reports that the School Committee met 9-28-20

Discussions included the School Committee and Teachers Assoc. and Cafeteria workers...

All info is online for anyone interested.

Schools have been technology upgraded, thermal temp scanners to keep up to date when kids go back, free lunch and breakfast. Only 350 students have signed up, there is room. They can deliver for handicap.

Superintendent reports all surveys are back and she will be sending out information on target dates and if we can phase children back in school. Problem is we are still in the red and expectation is that if you are red for 3 weeks you are not going back to school. even if out of red, it's another 3 weeks prior to getting out of the red.

All this info will be sent to students' homes.

Special needs children will be going back to school.

## 12. OLD BUSINESS

12.a Town Council accept the recommendation of the TSAC Committee to implement 15 Mins. Parking on Shirley St. in the vicinity of Shirley Hardware

**The Rules & Ordinance Committee tabled this and sent back to TSAC for further review.**

12.b Town Council accept the recommendation of the TSAC Committee to improve traffic and pedestrian safety on Almont, Cross & Locust St.

**The Rules & Ordinance Committee tabled this motion indefinitely and asked TSAC to review intersections to make wider.**

## 13. NEW BUSINESS

13.a Town Council vote to declare a surplus for Winthrop Fire Dept. Vehicle and Pump

Motion by Vice President Letterie

2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Rich Ferrino.

**Council President Boncore refers this motion to the Finance Committee**

Motion by Vice President Letterie to create a special article for the proceeds on the sale of the buses that were declared surpluses from the schools

2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Ferrino

Council President Boncore refers this motion to the Finance Committee

Motion by Councilor Christopher to amend our ordinance to allow for outdoor dining.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor DeMarco

Council President will refer this motion to the Rules & Ordinance Committee

#### 14. PUBLIC COMMENT

Wendy Millar Page P2-Oct. 15th 6:30-8 WIN2030 final meeting, registration is needed. Info on Town Website.

WIN2030.ORG for information.

Thanks Councilor Honan for her well written statement on racism in the town of Winthrop.

Has been attending rallies and is trying to get people to tone back.

Some things that are coming out of the other side really have nothing to do with politics.

Would like to help the CDIRC committee with any help they need.

With local issues, effects daily life than national. You must be OK with opposition but not with violence or threats.

Donna Reilly P5-Thank all for the speediness with setting up the Diversity Committee. She did send to the CDIRC the mission statement of the 2018-2019 no obligation to replica but as a guideline.

Thanks, the town for the email address of the CDIRC Commission.

Thanks, Councilors, for their support of this commission.

Julia Wallerice P2-Thank Councilor Honan for her statement.

There is no room for hatred & bigotry, morally we should work together.

Thanks Councilor DeMarco about bringing up the paving, it is great these streets are getting improved. At same time it is a great opportunity to put back better than once were.

John Morgan P4 -Apologize for performance of the White Cane Awareness and as disabled is very fortunate to be able to attend many meetings and have concerns listened too.

Council President discusses Johns disability, and the town is very fortunate to have him involved.

Motion by Vice President Letterie to revert to New Business

2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor DeMarco

Approve: Councilor Stephen Ruggiero, Councilor Barbara Flockhart, Councilor Rob Demarco, Councilor Peter Christopher, Councilor Tracey Honan, Councilor LoConte, Councilor Rich Ferrino, Council Vice President Jim Letterie, President Philip Boncore

Motion Passes 9-0

Motion by Council President to appoint Chief Terry Delehanty or his designee as an associate nonvoting member of the CDIRC and Superintendent Lisa Howard or her designee as an associate nonvoting member of the CDIRC

2nd Councilor DeMarco

Approve: Councilor Stephen Ruggiero, Councilor Barbara Flockhart, Councilor Rob Demarco, Councilor Peter Christopher, Councilor Tracey Honan, Councilor LoConte, Councilor Rich Ferrino, Council Vice President Jim Letterie, President Philip Boncore

Motion Passes 9-0

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS / UPCOMING EVENTS**

All committees' meetings dates are given and can be reviewed on the Town Website Calendar

Councilor DeMarco discusses Covid that there are going to be cases and we must live with them. Wants to give a shout out to For Kids Only to help kids learn in a school setting. They had a kid test positive, but victory is they had a response plan. It is very important to have a plan for these issues. They are giving the kids some normalcy.

### **16. ADJOURNMENT**

Ferrino / Letterie 8:50 Motion to adjourn by Councilor Ferrino at 8:50  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Vice President Letterie

Approve: Councilor Stephen Ruggiero, Councilor Barbara Flockhart, Councilor Rob Demarco, Councilor Peter Christopher, Councilor Tracey Honan, Councilor LoConte, Councilor Rich Ferrino, Council Vice President Jim Letterie, President Philip Boncore  
Motion Passes 9-0

A DVD of this meeting is available from WCAT / [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

Public Documents used in the meeting are available at Town Managers Office.

Documents Used in this Meeting:

Handwritten Notes / Committee Openings Documents

Roll Call Log

Written Motions / Verbal Motions

Respectfully submitted,  
Town Council Clerk  
Denise Quist

What I am about to read is my statement alone. I am not speaking for the entire Council.

Winthrop has always been a strong community of immigrants. As we know, over generations, in our America, the faces, languages, and the countries-of-origin of immigrant's change, but our stories do not. Our pursuit of those inalienable rights, of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, written in our Declaration of Independence, should never be impeded by bigotry or xenophobia. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.

Before every Town Council meeting, we join to say the Pledge of Allegiance, which avers Liberty and Justice for ALL. Not for some, not for the majority, not for a particular race, creed, or sexual orientation, but for ALL.

The 14<sup>th</sup> amendment of our Constitution avers equal protection under the law for ALL Americans. ALL Americans should feel safe to pursue their lives, to feel safe driving their cars, to feel safe in their own homes, to feel safe going for a run in their neighborhoods. We must adopt an attitude, as Martin Luther King Jr. said, that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. Brutal assaults and murders, blatant crimes which have been captured on tape, the perpetrators of which are then treated with impunity: that is injustice.

Why am I quoting our Constitution, our Declaration of Independence, and our Pledge of Allegiance to our flag? Because I love my country, and I believe in its ideals, but I recognize that we are imperfect. As James Baldwin once said, "I love America more than any other country in the world and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually."

Today, Winthrop is a resilient and diverse community of people in race, culture, and gender identity and we must continue our work together toward an anti-racist, and anti-xenophobic Winthrop. It is what we should aspire to, not only as citizens of Winthrop, but as Americans. We must not become complacent in this regard, nor can we sit idly by while voices of hate and intolerance rise unchallenged. I ask my fellow Winthrop Town Councilors to join with me in a pledge of allegiance to these American ideals: that hate has no home here, that diversity is a source of our pride and strength, that black lives do matter, that the freedom to worship who we chose, and love who we chose to love, are freedoms that we Americans should not take for granted, and should not ever be disparaged, that ALL are welcome to live their lives in peace and acceptance within our community, and that we are stronger together. I ask that you support me in pushing for a united, just, and equitable Winthrop.