

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 1, 2022

President Letterie calls meeting to order at 6:00 PM

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilor Honan, Councilor Fucillo, Councilor Munson Councilor Belcher, Councilor DeMarco
Councilor Aiello ,Councilor Flockhart, Vice President Ruggiero, President Letterie

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Flockhart

MINUTES

Motion by Councilor DeMarco to accept Minutes of October 18, 2022, as circulated
2nd by Councilor Fucillo
Abstain-Councilor Honan
Passed Unanimously

GENERAL INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DCR Lt. Bossi reports on the repeated defacing of the Winthrop Shore Drive Sign. He lets us know that this has been an ongoing investigation and without notify anyone of the name of the culprit, he is a 62 year old male not from Winthrop who has admitted to this vandalism. Lt. Bossi is available for any questions within this jurisdiction of the Winthrop Shore Drive and will continue with the help of the Winthrop Police to watch over Shore Drive.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

Public Hearing Opened

- Solid Waste Enterprise Fund Amendment, \$100,000-Finance Committee will vote with a positive recommendation
- Public Comment on Hearing
- Todd Sacco P2-Asks if these retained earnings are the trash fees?
- Council President reports these are retained earnings in this Enterprise Fund
- Going back in the Towns General Fund

Public Hearing Closed

Public Hearing Opened

- Town Council vote to transfer \$101,786.04 for the Brightly (School Dude) Facilities Needs Assessment for Town and School Buildings- Finance Committee will vote with a positive recommendation
This is a tool that will enable a capital schedule for the town for 20 years
Town Manager believes this is the next necessary step for the town.
- Councilor Aiello asks if any data will come from this with our current FY23 Capital Plan
- Town Manager believes this data will be for FY24
- Councilor Munson asks about the training that dept. heads had in using this software.
- So after first round of Brightly will it be on them to continue assessing or do we keep up to date
- Town Manager -It will be on us after we are updated from Brightly.
- Councilor Munson asks who will be putting in information
- Town Manager-All Dept. Heads

Public Hearing Closed

Public Hearing Opened

- Town Council vote to transfer \$247,775 Water Main Master Plan and Long-Term Capital Improvement Plan
- Finance Committee will continue this public hearing

Public Hearing Closed

Public Hearing Opened

- Ordinance Review Committee Recommendations-Council President reports there will be an additional Public Hearing on 12-6-22 hopefully at the WHS who does have zoom.
No public comment

Council President requests the Town Council thoughts on ORC

Councilor DeMarco believes they should go through the process of a vote.

One that did not come out with a Positive Recommendation from committee was the recall motion. He would like to see something come forward to keep all in check. He would like to see maybe 50% of the voters who want to recall, this should be able to be reviewed.

He believes this is the most controversial and something to think about.

Any recommendations will be voted on all individually, hopefully by January. These can also be amended.

Councilor Munson also looks forward to a recall and asks procedure on how this gets to the point of being sent to the State for Home Charter? Other towns there are 3 different numbers being mentioned. Can any metric be added to this particular recommendation?

Yes, it can.

Discussion continues on the Recall Recommendation

Councilor Belcher asks there is no point that the Town Council cannot amend.?

Council President-No all can be amended several times if necessary

Councilor Aiello concerned if we changed something substantially would this change what the ORC is recommending? Is this treating this committee fairly? Is this allowed in the charter, he thinks we need to think about this and be careful such deviation and could be reviewed as too much.

Council President agrees and has requested original charter authors to add their input...does not believe the Town Council would make major changes.

Councilor Aiello wants to make sure what is being done is agreeing with the Charter. He would like to ask legally how far we can go in making our amendments.

He finds the legal info sent to him confusing.

He would like an Ex. Session to make sure we are on solid ground legally and provide us guidance if we have to restrict ourselves.

Council President will forward an opinion on how far the Town Council could go? He did ask about an Ex. Session and that it is not allowed as it does not fit under the Executive Session Rules but he has not asked on how far of deviations the Town Council can go.

Councilor Aiello seems to think an Attorney stating he cannot do an Executive Session to answer their questions and that it has to be done in an open session is still confusing, how can you do in open session without acknowledging the protected document, he would like clarification.

Councilor Belcher- do these all need to be voted on and passed together or can we do one at a time on different nights?

Council President-More than likely a special meeting to vote on these.

Vice President Ruggiero back to point on deviation. There was quite a bit of debate with committee and this was result of committee, he would be surprised if the Town Council comes back with any major changes as it was discussed thoroughly in committee.

Councilor Honan reminds people that they as Councilors were elected to vote on recommendations out of any committee, including recommendations from the ORC. It's by no means the Council's job to rubber stamp anything coming out of the committee as some may think. For the Charter, the Council is to act on these recommendations and to her knowledge there have been no recommendations to change what the Charter says in regard to rubber stamping whatever comes out of the ORC or any other committee. As Councilor DeMarco stated, there is a process and we as elected officials should follow that process and that is why we send to Rules & Ordinance, have our Public Hearings, hear from the community and make our decisions and vote on the recommendations based on our research, feedback from the community, it's why we were elected.

We have received a great deal of communication from the community already, both in meetings and in emails; it's our responsibility to take this communication into account when voting on these recommendations.

Councilor Munson asks if there has ever been a soft referendum, soft poll to get pulse of town.

Town Manager-Yes, usually it is on an annual election and then nonbinding ballot questions would be on ballot and citizens can ask questions.

Council President- There will be another public hearing. He thanks the entire ORC Committee for their help on this.

Public Hearing Closed

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dottie Donofrio-P4-First and foremost on this important matter, remember the voice and the vote. The public listened in your candidacy and placed their beliefs in the ballot box; remember the problems that Winthrop has to deal with. She knows that right now, she can contact her councilor with no problems. Think about the recommendation of changing the size of the Town Council with the ORC Recommendations.

Todd Sacco P2-Wants to ducktail off Vice President Ruggiero statement but he will say he has talked to several councilors and if there are any concerns with raising bars, we are not opposed but want the people to be able to vote on these recommendation.

John DaRos P6- Thanks the Council for Lt. Bossi information on the Beach sign.

Regards to the ORC , on 12-6-22 is intention that folks can discuss the pros and cons of these recommendations?

Council President-Yes, we want to hear the citizens input.

Public Comment Closed

CORRESPONDENCE

Councilor Fucillo received correspondence on the tunnel closure and how it affects them.

Town Manager-We are working with additional funds with Ferry and other than that no further news.

Councilor DeMarco about the rise in heating costs. National Grid stated 64% increase, went from .11cents to .33 cents, it is much higher.

Councilor Munson did get emails on the Tips Project Mass DOT changes

Council President, we will have some sort of update from Mas Dot on Tips project?

Town Manager states he has a meeting Friday for these updates.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Fucillo reports on the meetings and both items were passed with a Positive Recommendation

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Shred day on November 17th and open to the public, truck will be in the parking lot of the town hall from 9-12pm. Town Hall will be closed to the public during this time.

Tree lighting update Nov. 25th., hosted by the Chamber and co-sponsored by Viking Pride. The town has a 24' foot Christmas Tree all lit and ready to go.

According to the Town Charter, he will have a Town Revenue update at next meeting

He has the pleasure of attending 3 different events over the last couple of weeks , Sgt Nick Bettano, has been recognized not only national level as recently down at Washington, DC but also locally by Mass Police Association and this weekend by the Association of Italian American Police and today in Worcester to the annual Hannah Awards, given by Governor Baker. We will obviously do something locally very soon.

Attended School Dude, Brightly Training with DPW Director Calla and Facilities Manager Rich Cifuni, training was very helpful.

There was correspondence and questions about zoning changes that were brought forward in 2018, Donna Reilly sent in email and there is a procedure for guidelines of these zoning laws. MGL Chapter 48 S5 provides the guidelines to change zoning bylaws. When presented these changes in 2018, the Town Council would have had 90 days to act on it. Obviously nothing happened and when these changes were brought forward, they were asking to repeal changes that were made in 2014. You cannot repeal, you can amend, and with other zoning changes that have to be reviewed, we can include these requested changes in 2018.

Wants to thank Councilor Honan and Vice President Ruggiero on doing the draft . He is reviewing with DPW Calla and Wendy Millar Page if there will be any additional costs. Once reviewed another draft will be submitted for final review.

Meredith Hurley , Public Health received a grant \$571,932 and within the next 3 years will address youth mental health in Winthrop, which is very helpful

MBTA did not do any changes we requested. Meeting tomorrow night, asks as many as can to attend.

Councilor Aiello thanks him to following up on Donna Reilly and asks when does he think we will have a chance to look at these changes.

Town Manager must take a look at the 2018 proposes and will review, he is hoping for close to February to clear this up. He wants to look at zoning by laws for affordable housing that works for town.

Councilor Ruggiero how are we doing staffing? Still open positions?

Town Manager- Looks good, hired Treasure and Assistant Treasurer collector, VSO Filled , Assessors position good, still looking for combined CFO with schools and town.

Councilor Flockhart stated she met with the housing authority and has not been given any notice of how the TIPS property will be affecting them? Why were they not notified?

Town manager-Housing did receive abutter notifications in the past and are now getting information from easements. Director Calla states the right of way was just notified to the town this year.

Councilor Flockhart asks will this be a problem since this is state property, not Winthrop.

DPW Director Calla- Are not sure what easement requests have been sent. This will get resolved. State requirements are above and beyond what the towns procedures are, their approach is different from how the town will address.

Peg Lyons WHA-She is very excited that the TIPS project will help with the traffic in this area as it has been a danger. October 17th is the first time they were notified. She has forwarded the info to the Community and they will help with the easement issues as best they can. This is actually state property, not the town of Winthrop's.

She was aware of TIPS project but not as in depth. She has been in touch with the state as to how these easements will be handled. She has reviewed the blue prints and feels there are a lot of solutions in this project. It is her understanding that 30 days can make a decision on what to accept and what not to. She has to wait for the state if the WHA can give an easement? Has concerns of the shorter sidewalks.

Council President is very proud of Sgt. Bettano's actions and would like the opportunity to publicly thank him

Also, electric scooters? Are there any rules on this?

Town Manager will review.

Councilor Aiello asks about age of Ferry and the repairs this year and the age of this vessel.

With state grant received, does this help with the Ferry funding off season. We should be asking the DOT now to help with getting ready for this year, off season and next year.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORT

No meeting

Council President asks if Tom Reilly, who just arrived in meeting can speak on the ORC recommendations.
Town Council-Of Course

Tom Reilly discusses as in the past, being an author of the original charter and how it was written and discussed....he discusses the ORC Recommendations in detail.....Concerns changing a legislative body that the people voted for. One of the advantages of a Councilor at Large is due to the councilors not sitting next to an opponent and citizens having a choice of councilor for different subjects.
Requests to have a meeting with all original authors involved.

OLD BUSINESS

- Trash Enterprise Fund / Trash Abatement / Trash Enforcement- **Still under Review**
- Ordinance Review Committee Recommendations-**There will be a Public Hearing 11-1-22**
- DCR Presentation-**Awaiting update of date**
- Discussion-CBD Parking Requirements/Signage-**Still under Review**

NEW BUSINESS

- Motion by the Finance Committee with a Positive Recommendation that the Town Council amend the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund Amendment, \$100,000...
Roll Call Vote
Approved: Councilor Honan, Councilor Fucillo, Councilor Munson Councilor Belcher, Councilor DeMarco Councilor Aiello ,Councilor Flockhart, Vice President Ruggiero, President Letterie
Passed Unanimously
- Town Council vote to transfer \$247,775 Water Main Master Plan and Long-Term Capital Improvement Plan-
Continued to next Town Council Meeting
- Motion by the Finance Committee that the Town Council vote to transfer \$101,786.04 for the Brightly (School Dude) Facilities Needs Assessment for Town and School Buildings.....
Roll Call Vote
Approved: Councilor Honan, Councilor Fucillo, Councilor Munson Councilor Belcher, Councilor DeMarco Councilor Aiello ,Councilor Flockhart, Vice President Ruggiero, President Letterie
Passed Unanimously

Committee Handbook-
Councilor Belcher would like to send to the Committees on Committees
Motion by Councilor Belcher to refer to the Appoints, Committees and Commissions
2nd by Councilor DeMarco
Discussion
Vice President Ruggiero requests committee chairs to receive and give feedback
Passed Unanimously

Motion by Council President that the Town Council accept the appointment of Bybiose LaRochelle to the Commission of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations
2nd by Councilor Belcher
Passed Unanimously

Motion by Council President that the Town Council accept the appointment of Karin Chavis to the TSAC Committee
2nd by Councilor Munson
Passed Unanimously

motion by Council President that the Town Council vote to amend the Town Council Rules & Procedures Rule #4 Order of Business, to include an added agenda item of a Report from the Commission for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations (CDICR)

2nd by Councilor Fucillo

Discussion

Roll Call Vote

Approved: Councilor Honan, Councilor Fucillo, Councilor Munson Councilor Belcher, Councilor DeMarco
Councilor Aiello ,Councilor Flockhart, Vice President Ruggiero, President Letterie

Passed Unanimously

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PUBLIC RELATIONS / UPCOMING EVENTS

Early Voting begins in the Town Hall Lobby on Oct. 22nd. through Nov.4th /Hours posted on Web and Transcript
Council President thanks the PTO's from Cummings and Fort Banks Schools...Trunk or Treat, great fundraiser and will go to Families in Need for the Holidays.

Before asking for motion to adjourn, Council President Letterie asks each Town Councilor if they have anything further to discuss:

Councilor Honan- No

Councilor Fucillo – WHS Football against Cardinal Spellman on WCAT, 1st Playoff Game

Councilor Munson- Odd Fellows hosting food drive on behalf of the Winthrop Food Pantry M-F all month

Councilor Belcher- MBTA Map input public meeting Zoom MBTA Network redesign last meeting before final decision

Councilor DeMarco- Echo Councilor Fucillo on WHS game

Councilor Flockhart- No

Councilor Aiello- Congratulations to the Bike Winthrop. Thanks Bob Carroll for all his dedication he has given to the town. Art Assoc. 1:30 this Saturday. Feels MBTA under gun, they are understaffed, advancement of new bus redesign seems to be off kilter, there might be a big reset in January, but have to have a real offensive with our town reps.

Vice President Ruggiero- CAPIC has fuel assistance program.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Councilor DeMarco to adjourn at 8:49PM

2nd by Councilor Fucillo

Passed Unanimously

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 Motion

Respectfully submitted

Denise Quist

Town Clerk

Council Clerk
