

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2023 MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER 7:00

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Councilor Aiello

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Belcher

MINUTES

Motion by Councilor DeMarco to Approval of Minutes, August 15, 2023, as circulated 2nd by Councilor Belcher

Passed Unanimously

GENERAL INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Jim Powers of Powers & Sullivan
 - Discussion of the Towns outside Audit for FY22
Please preview this presentation on our Town Website
[Microsoft Word - {667D2480-7C59-4540-9A45-B2C068563428}.docx \(winthrop.ma.us\)](#)
- Presentation-Winthrop Middle School
 - Town Council President Letterie discusses the future of the Middle School site that has been vacant for the last 7-8 years and comments on the community thinking that nothing has really been done on this site but yet there are “behind the scenes” work that has been going on for years and it’s not for a lack of trying to have this site be an economical site for the Town. He delivers a Power Point presentation of this site being used for an Athletic Facility.

Please preview this presentation on our Town Website
[middle school site presentation.9-5-2023.pptx \(live.com\)](#)

Town Council Comments:

Councilor Munson asks if the YMCA was reached out to and they were but not interested.

Vice President Ruggiero asks procedural what the next step is?

Property will not be sold except for maybe the neighborhood parcel that could be sold.

Asks for a copy of an RFP of which the Town Council President will be reviewing this and there will be a committee formed to review this entire process.

PUBLIC HEARING

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vasilli Malios P5-Very happy something is being reviewed for this site. He has been to several of these facilities and they have restaurants he would like assurances there will be none allowed so our Town businesses can benefit economically.

What is another community close to us, puts one up?

We have Suffolk Downs with 18,000 new residents...do we have an idea of this traffic?
Town Council President-No restaurants...if our pro shop wants to put an annex, they are welcome
These facilities do not want to run restaurants, bars...etc...they would have relaxing areas for visitors
Traffic is a concern....as always...

We've been treated as a 2nd class citizen with Revere and Boston...we cannot be guaranteed the traffic with Suffolk Downs, hopes Revere takes this into account.

Will the ice take the baseball field?

Town Council President will have more information of details of sq. footage

Jack Dowd P1-Notices the GIS map and reiterates this data is not complete or maybe 100% correct.

What will be done to make sure we have correct measurements?

Please take care of green space as with the CBD

Previous mgr. stated that the first thing that should be done is an accurate survey...he has asked for this and still waiting....has research on 151 and 1.19 acres the rest is park...since 1902...many discussions on what to do with land but this property is a deeded park. If you want to change use you must go through Disposition of Land Article 97...

The 2005 McGregor Open Space use to be on Town Website and asks why it is still not there?

People that want open space, he feels Town Council President does not want open space...

In order to change the use of this site, it is a 5 step process. To change open space and park land to a different use must be done correctly and honestly. If not, you will lose any grant money.

Town Council President guarantees that nothing will be done illegal

Marci Hamilton P2-Thanks for the presentation...it will be a nice additive but would like to tweak and thinks it would be great for a **community based office**...people could get info...people that come into Winthrop need more information on our town.

She loves sports...but loves theater as well and one big draw is a space for a theater. Winthrop has none to offer...would like to see more theater or performance space....live entertainment...

Town Council President has looked into this in comparison with the Lynn Auditorium...and costs were extreme...

Peter Gill P5- Comments that Waldemar Ave should be residential and happy to see it is being considered.

DPW Calla states this is a great idea do not want to lose site of infrastructure work that is needed in the future, does not want to have to do work to a site that is complete.

Hrusoui Vakouros -P4--- Lives on Franklin St. and complains that the water is not draining and is getting into her property. Have been here 50 years and it has never happened, what can be done to help her?

Kathleen Cappuccio-P5-Echoes Peter Gill and is very happy with that decision. She asks for a legal opinion on the title with the Ingleside Parcel...a survey should be done. It is not clear with regards to size of parcels.

Shannon Poulous P3- In terms of time line of RFP with the Old Middle School and the likelihood that people will have this information prior to ballot vote is doubtful. More information is needed.

Comments that no one doubts we need a new Fire Station but this site recommended is in question.

We need to figure out a way that there can be a viable solution....

Carol M P2---Athletic Facility is a good idea, but curious if we know areas in commonwealth that have had long term success with this type facility?

Town Council President states that we would maintain control of land...in reference to long term he cannot go back but the company he is in discussions with have been very successful with these facilities.

He will add a link for comparison to different facilities for people to review....these companies have extended relationships with AAU club teams, farm teams etc...

Aaron Williams P1-Doing a great job with communicating with the public...did a great job of letting people know what is happening but asks to consider putting this information out with several translations.

Sharon Cohen P5-Concerned about the timing with the fire station and this facility. She is concerned that we could not use the Middle School site for the fire station because of flooding...why this ok is and not the fire station....

Town Council Presidents states we never said we can't, it wasn't the goal of the Town Manager or Town Council President ...the concern is the foundation. The Fire station would need such a strong foundation it could be a concern with a Fire House weight that would be needed for trucks and equipment.

Also, if we do consider the Middle School Site it would now be an \$80,000,000 debt exclusion as the Police Station would be considered.

Gillian Texeira P4- She has heard concerns on Court and Pleasant Streets, major accidents but yet nothing has been done? Why?

Residents on Locust and Cross have begged that it is not a one way...where was our traffic study...turning one portion one way will not help the rest of the street...we have asked the town for more signage and more enforcement and yet never received.

Town Council President understands that this has been a problem with the residents, it has taken 4 years before the Town Council took action on this but we are cognizance of what TSAC approves.

We are cognizant of the problems with major roadways in Winthrop and will be reviewing for the best solution to help with safety on these roads.

Peter Gill P5—Commends the DPW Director and the Town Manager on the paving in town, it is going and looking great.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Health & Safety will be scheduled for 9-12-23

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT REPORT

Town Council President reports a very successful school opening. Still need Crossing Guards for the safety of our children, if interested please contact the school business office.

Welcome to the new principal Fort Banks Gorman School, Mark McAneny and also welcome him as a new resident in Winthrop.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

He has currently met with Planning Board and the ZBA to review court cases

He has met with Tree Committee Chair, Chris Aiello and are working with the DPW to plant 25 tree

Reports on road work on Crest Ave 2pm to 12 midnight for drainage...will work with businesses to leave open for customers.

Update on Air BnB Ordinance was mailed to the Town Council for review

DPW Director Calla Updates on flooding issues. Received estimate to redo drainage on Girdlestone and Tileston and it is estimated as a \$4-5 million dollar project. The towns drainage problem is our old clay drainpipes that are only 8” diameter, we need 24-30” diameter to help with our drainage.

DPW will install flapper valves once they are received. It will help marginally but due to drains being only 8” the system will still not be able to handle the drainage totally in these areas.

Franklin St. is not a drainage problem as much as ground water issue, it is at Sea Level...ground water 8” below grade...he has inspected 43 Franklin and it is storm water management on private property. Ground water is so high that properties cannot handle the flow...it is not a public works problem...we cannot be responsible for pvt. property foundations. Unfortunately 43 Franklin St. and neighbors need to do things on their own property. Ground water tables and flows change, this is why she may not have had this problem prior.

Councilor Munson asks for an update on the Pleasant St. and Court Rd bend accident and speeding issue....what has been decided?

DPW Calla states it is very difficult without lining entire area with guard rails, it is very difficult to cover every home with the safety protection needed from speeding. The DPW has ordered 7,000 led signs.

A guard rail will just slow a car down, not necessarily stop the accident.

Councilor Munson asks what about temporary rubber speed bumps.... DPW Calla will do what is asked of him and his department but please note these speed bumps do not just drop down on road, there are variables to installing.

Vice President Ruggiero –States that translation is needed within our town for citizens to all be treated fairly on any reporting done.

Town Council President will reach out to schools on different languages needed as they have program.

Councilor Belcher asks if that if problem with Tilestone and Girdlestone are reviewed, should we look at other areas in the town.

DPW Call states that Shirley St., Upper Highlands, Nahant Sewell...heavy rains are too much for our drainage systems that are over 100 years old....they are not mechanically up to date...way under capacity.... The drainage funding has not been as available, it is under Chap 90 but we only get \$280,000 but it goes to streets and sidewalks...

Councilor Belcher reiterates Flashing signs and any street improvement is good, please include Precinct 3 with these improvements as there are also speeding problems in this area.

Councilor Flockhart states that in thinking about different languages, maybe the students would be helpful...set up an internship for students.

Town Council President reiterates that 70 % of our drainage system is over 100 yrs. Old.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Motion by the Memorials Committee with a Positive Recommendation that the Miller Field Ticket Booth be named in honor of Amy Gallagher

No 2nd Needed

Passed Unanimously

Town Council President would like to refer to the Memorials Committee a memorial in memory of Bob Gillis at the E.B Newton who could have been considered a town historian and for his work with Winthrop's History

Motion by the Town Council President to appoint Jonathan DeMauro on the Firehouse Building Committee
Passed Unanimously

Motion by the Town Council President to appoint Susan Trimarchi to the Historical Committee
Passed Unanimously

- Town Council vote to appoint an Outside Auditor - Town Council President refers this to the Finance Committee
- Town Council discuss Ballot Question on Fire House Building-This question will be on the next Town Council Agenda for a vote on September 15, 2023, along with the Charter Review Questions advised to the Town Council by the Ordinance and Charter Review Committee
- Town Council vote to transfer \$49,000 from the Group Insurance Town line/Special Article line, to pay the replacement of the stairs in the public way connecting Hermon Street and Walden Street-Town Council President refers this to the Finance Committee

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jack Dowd P1—Discusses the Open Space committee and McGregor and Associates report. This is a 120 yr. old park that was dedicated to be a park. Virginia Wilder requested grants for this to be a park. Winthrop needs open space for pollution itself, the town need as many trees as possible between park and airport, trees keep us healthy. It is not the development it is the fact that the community need to be safer, we are being inundated by air pollution with the airport. Please consider planting as many trees as possible in this town.

Suzanne Swope P4—Echos Jack with the need of trees. She also requests the Town Manager to review the obnoxious sign in front of Viking Pub....can we do anything to keep signs like this out of Winthrop?

Karin Chavis P1...Requests a get a copy of mgt letter from Powers and Sullivan, also states that the stairs on Walden a lot older than 80 years...

DPW does not want people thinking he is forgetting neighborhoods when he comments on the towns problem areas, he realizes exactly how many need attention.

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

Councilor Honan- None

Councilor Fucillo- None

Councilor Munson Remind people country night...fund raiser for cancer support group...Big Ed.org. Oct. 7th in honor of his past best friend...

Councilor Belcher- None

Councilor Aiello- Absent

Councilor DeMarco- Really frustrated with work going on Revere St. but these people are constantly working...if you can give them water, buy a pizza...give a little There is progress on Revere St.

Vice President Ruggiero-

Friday 9-8-23 5:00 Open rec kick off, CASA WPD Elks...Shannon grant....
Open rec nights Friday nights..WMS..6-8th grades

Town Council President reports that the first Public Forum for the FHBC is on 9-11-23 encourage people to attend. The FHBC Website will be up and running this week

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Fucillo to adjourn at 9:40 PM

2nd by Council Vice President DeMarco

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, Council Clerk
