

Winthrop Finance Commission Minutes

Date: Thursday, May 9, 2024, at 6:00pm

Attendees: TOW: Brendan Carritte (BC), Diane Macken (DM), Kathleen Hickey (KH), Sarah Johnson (SJ), Robbie Powers (RP)
FC: Brent Farrell (BF), Karin Chavis (KC), William Gault (WG), Matt Gorzkowicz (MG), Hannah Belcher (HB), Joe Hanlon (JH), John Macero (JM), Max Tassinari (MT), John DaRos (JD)
Absent: Shannon Poulos

Meeting called to order at 6:06 pm by MG.

Rollcall vote completed by KC. All present except individuals noted above. All present members that attended prior meetings approved minutes from 4/24 and 5/2.

Focus of meeting will be on the discussion and review of the Treasurer / Collector and Assessment departments.

Treasurer / Collector

- Primary focus is on interaction with public
- Increased analysis of "tailings" which are refunds made by town to public
- 52 properties were late payers for property taxes, currently 40 remain
- New assistant collector search is underway
- ~50-60% of property taxes are paid via mortgage escrow, ~25% are paid in person and balance via electronic checks
- Currently earn 4.6% and 5.3% on current balances at local banks, deposited are fully collateralized

Assessing

- Receiving monthly deed updates from Suffolk County for the first time
- Focus on property record cards and updated photographs
- Interacting with Building Department to update permits, closing out 1,610 outstanding permits, with an additional 763 permits open from 2003 and 200+ still outstanding
- Outstanding inspections expected to be closed out by summer
- Findings exposed roughly \$250K in new growth for this year
- Vision recommended full town wide inspection of properties (cost of \$170K), department believes this can be done in-house
- Additional 200 boats found in town that are to be charged excise tax
- Increased staffing has addressed backlog but 3-4 years of work remain
- Vision software costs have increased across the state – company is very responsive
- Currently 1 full-time clerk, 1 30-hour clerk currently – hoping to increase to 35 hours per week
- Boat excise tax rates are set by the State, it has not been revised in approximately a decade

Various discussion points amongst the members included:

- KC requested Brightly report related to employee compensation
- MG would like to discuss the various departments to highlight certain recommendations
- Review prior year recommendation letter to occur in near-term future meeting

MG motioned to adjourn; HB seconded. Approved by all present members.

Meeting adjourned at 7:26 pm.