

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 21, 2025

President Letterie calls Town Council Meeting to order at 6:30 PM in the Harvey Hearing Room

ROLL CALL

Present: Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Costigan, Councilor Munson, Councilor DeMarco, Councilor Aiello
Councilor Swope, Councilor DaRos, Vice President Belcher, President Letterie

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Tassinari

MOMENT OF SILENCE

- Our continued prayers for the victims of the Wild Fires in CA , Firefighters who are putting their lives on the line and all volunteers that have come together to help with this tragedy
- Jim Lederman-Voice of the Vikings
- Congratulations on the Inauguration of our 47th President Donald Trump yesterday Jan. 20, 2025

MINUTES

Motion by Councilor DeMarco to Approve the Approval of Minutes of January 7, 2025 as circulated.

2nd by Vice President Belcher

Motion Passed

GENERAL INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Presentation-School Committee Chair, Jen Powell discusses the School Override Question

Councilor DeMarco comments on maintenance and future planning, feels schools should just be asking for the full \$4.9 Million

Councilor Swope-Surprised to see how many communities and having an election for school overrides.

Councilor Tassinari-When do we need to create a stabilization account to support the ballot question

Councilor Munson-Applauds clarity on questions

Councilor DeMaro asks about retirements, how will this affect budget?

Councilor DaRos remarks this school override is an investment for this town.

Superintendent Howard discusses the covid funding received and how an override is needed. Without a stabilization account the funding will only last a few years.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carina Campobasso P3-Requests Town Council to consider voting in compliance with MBTA 3A as our Town funding will feel the impact of the states guidance towards not allowing grants. She would like Town Council to please move on....

Jack Dowd P1-Comments on the MWRA Contract and does not feel the Town did not handle it well and we did not get what we should have from MWRA.

Todd Sacco P2-Comments on MBTA 3A that now must present new guidelines. Requests Town Council to move on.

Cassie Witthaus P6-Very important that people know the Town Council job is to work for the people and the town the best they can. It is irresponsible for the Town Council not to open the vote on the MBTA 3A since the state is jeopardizing our grant funding.

Kurt Millar P2-Discusses the Election and feels there should not be separate ballots. Believes town definitely needs a new Fire House but has questions on how exactly the School Override Ballot will be understood, it needs to be more transparent.

Steve Rogers P1-Comments on the Old Middle School site for the Fire House and reiterates that we need to keep the Rink where it is, we have the Rink, Parks & Rec and the Gym and all are used and should not be disrupted. Four Walls and some heat can change a kids life. The Town needs to make sure they claim these

Kathleen Cappuccio P5-Comments on motion to reconsider fire house location. She will vote not matter what as we are beyond an emergency situation in needing a fire house. Does not think the Walden St. location should be mentioned on any ballot. The more she speaks and hers, the old middle school site is the place for the new fire house to be built.

CORRESPONDENCE

Karin Chavis-

Carol Belcher

Donna Reilly

Several residents report positive on school override

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

Councilor DaRos reports on the Finance Committee meeting on 4 motions that will be heard in old business and was voted on with a positive recommendation.

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT REPORT

TOWN MANGER REPORT

Report Attached

Discusses the Firefighter grant approved and thanks Rep Turco and Sen. Edwards

Reports there are \$741 Million Dollars in Grants that are being threatened as we are not in compliance with 3A.

Councilor Swope-Thanks the Town Manager for work on ADA's

(See attached statement)

Councilor Tassinari asks for an update on the Pauline St. Firehouse hvac

Town Manger reports will waiting for the RFP

Councilor DaRos offers assistance in helping with the School override ballot

Councilor Swope urges the School Committee to consider the Superintendents Salary when comparing to the Town Managers

All councilors thank the Town Manager for his work and congratulations on his extension of contract.

UPDATE CDICR & POLICY MAKING COMMITTEES

None to report

OLD BUSINESS

Motion by the Finance Committee with a Positive Recommendation that the Town Council Vote to Authorize Unpaid Bills of Prior Year...

No 2nd Needed

Motion Passes

Motion by the Finance Committee with a Positive Recommendation that the Town Council to authorize the Town Manager's Contract an extension of 5 yrs. (See website)

No 2nd Needed

ROLL CALL

Yes: Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Costigan, Councilor Munson, Councilor DeMarco, Councilor Aiello

Councilor Swope, Councilor DaRos, Vice President Belcher, President Letterie

Motion Passes

All councilors thank the Town Manager for his work and congratulations on his extension of contract.

Councilor Swope urges the School Committee to consider the Superintendents Salary when comparing to the Town Managers

Motion by the Finance Committee with a Positive Recommendation that the Town Manager sign a 5yr. contract with Capital Waste.....

No 2nd Needed

ROLL CALL

Yes: Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Costigan, Councilor Munson, Councilor DeMarco, Councilor Aiello

Councilor Swope, Councilor DaRos, Vice President Belcher, President Letterie

Motion Passes

Motion by the Finance Committee with a Positive Recommendation that the Town Manager to renew the MWRA Contract
(Please see copy on website)

No 2nd Needed

ROLL CALL

Yes: Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Munson, Councilor Aiello, Councilor DaRos, Vice President Belcher, President Letterie

Abstain-Councilor Costigan

No-Councilor DeMarco, Councilor Swope

Motion Passes

Motion by the Town Council to reconsider proposed new Fire House location...

Discussion

- The Town Manager has plans for the Old Middle School Location
- Councilor DaRos supports reconsideration of Fire House Site
- Councilor Costigan feels we will lose the opportunity for revenue if we reconsider the Fire House Location
- Councilor Munson supports reconsideration of Fire House Site, but, he would like to present both locations to the voters of Winthrop give a pro and con of both sites.....
- Vice President Belcher supports reconsideration of Fire House Site

Councilor Munson makes an amendment to the main motion to include the Middle School Site and the Walden Street Site as a ranked voting type option on the ballot

2nd by Councilor Costigan

Discussion

Vice President thinks this amendment may over complicate the ballot with this amendment

Council President major concern is either both No or a split

Councilor Costigan reiterates that the Town Council already voted on the location to be the Basketball Courts-

He thinks rushing to judgment, is it the pressure by the public because the Old Middle School is an eye sore, if that the case, just take it down.

Council President agrees we did vote on the Basketball Courts but it is fact, nothing in revenue is happening with the Middle School in the foreseeable future.

Councilor DeMarco respects Councilor Munson opinion and he does prefer the Basketball Court site, but we have to act on this, our town needs a Fire House.

Councilor Tassinari does not love the location of the Middle School, but more important is our Fire Fighters need a new Fire House, if this is the best way, then he will support it...

ROLL CALL VOTE ON THE AMENDMENT

Yes: Councilor Costigan, Councilor Munson

No-Councilor Tassinari, Councilor DeMarco, Councilor Aiello, Councilor Swope, Councilor DaRos, Vice President Belcher, President Letterie

Amendment Does Not Pass

Motion by Councilor Aiello to move the question of the original motion

All in Favor

Roll Call on Original Motion to Reconsider Location of Fire House from Walden St. to the Old Middle School

Yes: Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Munson, Councilor DeMarco, Councilor Aiello, Councilor Swope, Councilor DaRos, Vice President Belcher, President Letterie

No: Councilor Costigan

Motion Passes

Motion by Councilor DeMarco to approve the language of the School Override Ballot Question and Information written by the School Committee..(See Website)

2nd by Councilor DaRos

Discussion

ROLL CALL

Yes: Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Costigan, Councilor Munson, Councilor DeMarco, Councilor Aiello, Councilor Swope, Councilor DaRos, Vice President Belcher, President Letterie

Motion Passes

See Voting Information and timeline for our election date.....

Discussion on what dates the election should take place on....

Motion by Councilor Aiello to move the Question on the Election Date

Motion by the Town Council to approve the date of Saturday, April 5th for the Local Election

ROLL CALL

Yes: Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Costigan, Councilor DeMarco, Councilor Aiello, Councilor Swope, Councilor DaRos, Vice President Belcher, President Letterie

No: Councilor Munson, Vice President Belcher, President Letterie

Motion Passes

Motion by Vice President Belcher to move the question

2nd by Councilor DaRos

Motion Passes

Motion by the Town Council to approve one Election and have both the School Override Question and Fire House Debt Exclusion on one ballot on Saturday, April 5, 2025 7AM to 8 PM

ROLL CALL

Yes: Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Munson, Councilor DeMarco, Councilor Aiello, Councilor DaRos, Vice President Belcher, President Letterie

No: Councilor Costigan, Councilor Swope

Motion Passes

Fire House Building Committee

Council President names the following on the Fire House Committee of 9 people

Chair, Scott Wiley

Karin Chavis

Kim Dimes

Jill Door

Paul Flanagan

Capt. Steve Caliendo

Shannon Poulos

Marc Wallerice

Joseph Hanlon

Honorary Member Richard Bangs

NEW BUSINESS

NONE

Councilor DeMarco honors Jim Lederman of the Voice of the Vikings.....

PUBLIC COMMENT

Susan Leonard-Thanks the Town Council for their commitment on the School Override

Jack Dowd P1-Does not think the volume is high enough. There was a lot of talk earlier that 2 ½ does not really do this for us and does not give enough money. Comments on confusion of this entire election.

Celeste Ribeiro Hewitt P1-Comments on MBTA with not being compliant and our grant issues...asking the people to vote and pay more....

Mark Sennot – People that want the Fire House at the Middle School are willing to pay the extra
Voting Yes on School Override

Vasili Mallios-Comments on the No to 3A does not effect the School Override....asks what point is our town willing to accept the intimidation from the state in reference to their threats of grants. 30+ have said no, 25+ are in a deadlock...Fire Dept. safety grants hit media and Governor changes her mind....

Shannon Poulos P3-The Fire House at the Middle School is a viable option, put the people of Winthrop first...stop blaming 3A on everything happening in our town....what the state doing is extortion...let's focus on the Fire House and Schools

PUBLIC RELATIONS / UPCOMING EVENTS

Time to Renew your Parking Sticker & Dog License online on the Town of Winthrop Website

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Councilor DeMarco at 10:00 pm

2nd by Councilor DaRos

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



TOWN OF WINTHROP

OFFICE OF THE TOWN MANAGER

Town Hall, 1 Metcalf Square, Winthrop, MA 02152 Telephone: 617-846-1077

Anthony Marino
Town Manager

Town Manager Report 1-21-2025

- Department Budgets have to come in for the FY26 budget season. We continue to plan for our normal budget cycle with nominal COLA increases in line with past budgets. However, I need to stress that if the Schools do not receive additional funding via an override, substantial cuts across every department will be required from the Town side of the budget to assist the schools. We will not be able to give the schools the entire 3.5 million dollars that the schools will need for the FY26 budget but will need to offer up more than we normally do to spread the cuts throughout the entire town and to be prepared to highlight the service level drop off and any staff reductions that will occur. Superintendent Howard and I will meet in the coming weeks to prepare a 2nd version of the FY26 budget without a school override and determine what services will be reduced for both the Town and the Schools.
- With the Supreme Judicial Court decision in the Milton case released, the Town of Winthrop has a few steps to take as we move forward:
 1. Submit an updated Action Plan to the EOHLC on or before the February 13, 2025 deadline.
 2. Any suggested changes that we would like incorporated into the regulations will need to be submitted during the public comment period. We are still waiting on the exact process and timeline that the EOHLC will follow to promulgate the regulation.
 3. Once the new regulations are promulgated, which we anticipate will mirror the former guidelines, the Planning Board will need to review and revote their recommendation on the overlay district plan for submission to the Town Council.
- The 2nd round of sandbags was delivered and will be installed later this week and into next week, per the discussion with the homeowners at Morton and Banks, to assist in alleviating some of the flooding they continue to experience. Again, special thanks to our DPW crew for doing a fantastic job installing the sandbags!
- Town Attorney Jim Cipoletta will be in attendance at the next Town Council meeting to present a draft Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance to comply with the new State ADU zoning law that goes into effect on February 15, 2025.

Finance

- John DaRos, Chair
- Hannah Belcher, Member
- Max Tassinari

Rules and Ordinance

- Hannah Belcher, Chair
- Rob DeMarco, Member
- John Munson, Member

Public Health and Safety

- Suzanne Swope, Chair
- Joe Aiello, Member
- Patrick Costigan

Public Works

- Rob DeMarco, Chair
- Max Tassinari, Member
- Suzanne Swope, Member

Economic Development / Capital Assets

- John Munson, Chair
- John DaRos, Member
- Patrick Costigan

Appointments, Commissions, and Committees

- Rob DeMarco, Chair
- Hannah Belcher, Member
- John DaRos, Member

Intergovernmental Strategies

- Max Tassinari, Chair
- Suzanne Swope, Member
- Joe Aiello, Member