

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 11, 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 Aiello

MINUTES

Motion by Councilor DeMarco to Approve the Approval of Minutes of January 21, 2025 as circulated.

2nd by Councilor Munson

Motion Passed

GENERAL INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Attorney Cipoletta-

Discusses Article 97 in reference to the Middle School Site in reference to it hopefully being the new Fire House Site...

Discusses the new ADU Compliance including state-regulated changes for the Town, including restrictions on parking.

Chief Wiley – Review Emergency Action Plan for Town of Winthrop which cannot be fully discussed due to the nature of this plan....

PUBLIC COMMENT

Betty Peabody P4-Concerns on trash on windy days. Is it possible for the town notify people when it's really windy and watch out for your trash, possibly the Town Manager blog? Asks residents, Please watch out for your trash during particular windy days.

Mark Sennott P2-Residents and businesses commitment to snow removal, is it possible to remind our town citizens their responsibility to remove snow on the Town Managers Blog? Remind all the penalties and their civic duties for other citizens safety.

Jack Dowd P1-Thanks Chief about ER Plan....

Discuss the Article 97, reiterates only piece of property town owns is 141 Pauline St., other than that it is Ingleside Park....Green space is needed in Winthrop

Current discussion by Attorney Cipoletta on Article 97 is just an opinion...

1972 there was a law passed....cause many city and towns were using parkland to use for town buildings....there is a process you must go through....

Asks why Winthrop doesn't adhere Article 97?

Marci Hamilton P2- Thank you for the motion on the flooding.

Asks the Town Council to replay the finance report as it clearly stated financial shortfalls and projected future...

Diana Viens P2- Discusses Article 97. Ingleside is used for a park and should stay this way, its use has not changed as long as she has lived here and lives down the street from the park.

States how Jack Dowd has dedicated his time for this town and especially to the children to make sure Article 97 is included in the towns option for a new Fire House and we owe him a debt of gratitude.

How ADU's have slipped through the tracks due to the current concern on MBTA 3A but it must be considered.

She wonders why the town was not altered when we had an earthquake. Wonders what the town would do during a town emergency so not to sure on the Red Alert the town has in current use.

She provides a copy of an injunction that she has filed against Town Manager Marino, Town Council President and Attorney Cipoletta due to the Town Manager committing our town to complying with MBTA 3A

Vasilli Mallios—We should not entertain the Town Manager's 3A Action Plan. The Town Council already voted NO...do not play into the state!

CORRESPONDENCE

Several residents emails in reference to the Town Manager trying to comply with 3A with his Action Plan Winthrop Commission on Disability wrote a letter to the Town Council concerned of losing grant funding due to noncompliance with 3A. The town was awarded with a grant for the library and the commission would like to apply for more but were told by the state if town is in noncompliance with MBTA 3A, Disability grants are at risk of not being awarded to the town.

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

Rules & Ordinance-

Vice President Belcher reports on the Tree Ordinance Amendments and will be discussed with a motion in Old Business

Climate Commission-

Councilor DaRos reports on this meeting. Information during this meeting is on the Climate Commission website.

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT REPORT

President Letterie reports the meeting was based on how the budget will have to be reviewed if this election is not positive for the schools.

Students prepping for the MCAS

10 years ago in Winthrop 7.8 % English not primary language, today it is 25%..

Potential loss of revenues with schools if election is not positive, reflects the effect a negative vote will have on the schools. AP classes are not required and could be lost if vote is not positive.

TOWN MANGER REPORT

Report Attached...

Reiterates that the Action Plan does not commit Winthrop to being in compliance with this MBTA 3A but it does give the community hope to be able to apply for grants until at least July 14, 2025, this is just a process. Once again the Planning Board will review and make their recommendations to the Town Council for their final vote on complying or not.

The Town Council has the authority to adopt or not adopt a compliance plan in July. If we do not file by February 14, 2025 we will not be in compliance to be able to apply for grants and he would not be doing his job per the Charter which states he must follow the mass general law. This is only until the July deadline.

The state has added new language to all grants in reference to towns not complying with MBTA 3A and it will effect our funding. Once again, this does not commit the town to complying. We are just committing to a process. We are pushing for a density exemption and hopes the state considers this request. Winthrop is definitely dense but we cannot take this risk, this action plan must be filed for the good of the town as again, it is only in effect until the final decision by July 2025.

Town Council Presidents asks if there are any remedy's for keeping the trash bins locked during heavy winds. Town Manager will look into.

Councilor Aiello thanks the Town Council President for the School issues summary.

Asks if the motion tonight on Phase II of flooding takes us to the end of FY25

We must continue to look for funding , the grant for Fishermens Bend was not approved, we can now reapply for this due to the current action plan the Town Manager has considered.

Discusses that his name was mentioned by a resident in a public comment that he wanted micro units in the CBD, he assures the residents he has never stated this and this mis communication by this resident is misleading the public as zoning in the CBD should remain as is.

Councilor DeMarco states he will use his Town Council Priveledge on the discussion of the Town Manager's Action Plan.

Councilor Tassinari thanks the Town Manager with moving forward and re-applying for grants we did not receive. Asks about the Physical Impact Study

Councilor Munson reflects that the Town Manager's action plan is following the law.

Town Council President reports that March 8, 2025 from 9-12 pm the Firehouses will be open for residents to visit and review conditions of current fire houses.

UPDATE CDICR & POLICY MAKING COMMITTEES

None to report

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Town Council vote to approve a new Education Stabilization Fund

President Letterie explains how this account should be considered prior to election for the Schools Override on Stabilization Funding and in place.

Motion by Councilor Swope

2nd by Councilor DeMarco

Discussion

This requires a 2/3 vote to create this fund

This is not required to go to the Finance Committee

Councilor Tassinari asks if this can be created after the election?

Town Council President reports this should be done prior to the election

Councilor Aiello want to make sure this has to be created prior to the vote. Is the Town Council prepared to provide where this is in the law and asks for this law.

The Town Manager asks why this shouldn't be set up?

Councilor Aiello is concerned that confusion in the town would believe the stabilization account has already been passed and therefore people may not vote for it on the ballot.

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

NO: Councilor Aiello

Motion Passes

There is a creation of a stabilization fund with a balance of 0

Town Council to discuss new Finance Policy in relation to Free Cash-Town Council President refers to the Finance Committee

**Town Council vote to approve the Amended Tree Ordinance – Vice President Belcher reads the motion (Please see attached)
This will be continued prior to a vote for a Public Hearing to be heard at the Feb. 25, 2025 Town Council Meeting**

Town Council vote to approve \$158,500 for the funding of Phase II of the engineering at Tileston, Girdlestone and Pico - -Town Council President refers to the Finance Committee

Town Council vote to approve letter to the Mass DOT Secretary and General Manager in reference to the Winthrop Ferry

Discussion

Vice President reports on a letter sent last July of which we have not yet received a response. She has written another letter of which she would like the Town Council to consider signing....

All Town Councilor in Favor except Councilor Tassinari voted to abstain.

**Motion by Councilor DeMarco that the Town Council vote on Fire House Debt Exclusion Question
2nd by Vice President Aiello**

Discussion

All information will be included on the Fire House Building Website and a cost estimator will be included

ROLL CALL VOTE

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

Motion Passes

**Town Council review/approve EOHLC Action Plan – MBTA 3A-
Council President explains if Town Council Priveledge is used, there will be no discussion on this tonight and will be discussed at next Town Council Meeting
Councilor DeMarco uses his Town Council Priveledge to continue**

Motion by Council President to appoint Drew Stock to the Tree Committee

2nd by Councilor Tassinari

Motion Passed

Motion by Council President to appoint Hannah Belcher to the Fire House Building Committee

2nd by Councilor DeMarco

Vice President Belcher abstains

Motion Passed

Motion by Council President to appoint Jack Dempsey to the Fire House Building Committee

2nd by Vice President Belcher

Motion Passed

2025 Ordinance Review Committee-will be named at the next Town Council Meeting

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jack Dowd P1-Concerned if the vote for the Fire House is approved but goes over budget, is town prepared?

Brendan Cooney P5-Thanks Councilor DaRos for the Climate Commission information. Asks that the funding for Phase II of the flooding issue be passed.

Diana Viens P2-Comments on a plan “submitted behind closed doors” . An extension was filed and submitting this action plan is preposterous. She states that this letter by the Town Manager on the action plan actually says that vote will turn out differently this time and asks residents to read letter....

Olive Constantino P5-Disappointed the motion on Phase II for the \$158,500 was not voted on.

Carole Meitzch P-Thanks DPW for their hard work in the storms. Asks Town Manager to consider in his action letter that Winthrop reserves the right to reconsider the letter sent if a difference of regulations are presented?

Quotes Town Charter on members behavior.....

Council Aiello apologizes to the councilor for losing his temper and also to the public that had to hear it. He is deep frustrations of having his words and actions being mischaracterized continuously , he let that get the better of him and he is sorry.

PUBLIC RELATIONS / UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Last day to register to vote: March 26, 2025

Absentee ballots are available

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Councilor DeMarco at 9:00 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
