

**President Letterie calls the meeting to order at 6:30 PM**

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Councilor Costigan, Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Millar, Councilor Romano, Councilor Dimes, Councilor Reardon, Vice President Swope, President Letterie

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Councilor Tassinari

**MINUTES**

**Motion by Vice President Swope to Approve the Minutes of February 17, 2026, as circulated.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Romano**

**Passed Unanimously**

**GENERAL INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Presentation:
  - Fire House-P3-Don Pallotta  
<https://www.winthropma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2839/Winthrop-Fire-Station-Design-Renderings-Presentation-to-the-Town-Council-3-10-2026>
- Town Manager & DPW Director
  - Blizzard & Water Main Breaks  
<https://ma-winthrop.civicplus.com/476/Town-Council>

**Councilor Costigan**-Thank you for report and feels for those impacted. For the past couple of years, we have discussed emergency operations. Feels that communication is key and there should be a comprehensive plan, what happened to the LEAP Program ( Local Early-stage and Actionable Planning (LEAP) program), request update on website. We were very lucky and in a timely manner things will click back in order. Would like a network of communications...reverse 911 should have been done. We must have our citizens feel safe that we are ready for emergencies. Safety Health and DPW Committees review this LEAP Program.

**Councilor Tassinari**-Thanks all DPW for their hard work with the weather and water main breaks.... Thanks the WFD and WPD as well for their hard work. Not sure what could have been done better, thought all handled amazingly. Not all people can be made happy. Very happy Town Manager going after insurance companies to help those impacted. \$15,000,000 Environmental Bond Bill....have we reviewed further? We should be going after the Commonwealth not expect our citizens to dig deeper in their pockets.

**Councilor Millar**-Thanks all, sometimes all the work goes unnoticed and he wants to make sure all know how hard people work. Discusses PLC Maintenance, there should always be a maintenance plan. Is there an alert if certain locations fail. How are people notified? The alarm pressures are alarms. As far as PLC Maintenance the program is on a monthly schedule. Unfortunately, the fail safes on the manual side, failed. Councilor Millar asks if there are other alarms that should be reviewed?

Councilor Reardon-Great job but there was a problem. Can we get somewhere to take a look before this ever happens again? DPW Calla reports, it unfortunately was the fail-safe failures from the power outages was the main problem. He does feel that a battery backup would help.

Vice President Swope-Thanks all for their great work. Asks total cost to the town for the estimated damage. DPW Calla could not give information on the personal properties that were affected. As far as the water repairs were repaired for just under \$100,000. Not sure of other damages. There should be no expense on the PRV side, that was the cause of the major water damages. The valves were not the issue, it was the controls that were not set properly.

**Councilor Dimes**-Thanks all for all their hard work during these storms. She feels very bad for the flooding victims and if you have any questions, please contact her.

Discusses about the valve boxes, if they are located through GIS, GPS and if we are able to go with a rod and locate them. DPW Director Calla replies, yes, but of course the weather affects these.

**Councilor Romano**-Thanks all for their hard work, DPW, WFD, WPD, TM, President Letterie's leadership. Has question about our own town pumps. Were they ready? DPW Calla replied, yes, they were ready, unfortunately pulling people off the plow roots could be unrecoverable. It could be a major safety problem. Asks if additional workers could help? DPW Calla, of course additional workers would help. A reverse 911 call would have helped our citizens to be more prepared.

Town Council President once again thanks all for such hard work that was performed during these snowstorms. The Town Council does not do day to day operations, bottom line is it is a small town and a water break or flooding issue effects everyone, we all care about our neighbors. The issues are Tileston and Girdlestone and finding the funding, several different scenario's have been reviewed and will continue to be reviewed so that we can help our citizens and use all the means possible.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mark Sennot P2-Understands DPW was up against it but the pump not being on Girdlestone was not right, it would have helped. It is a piece of safety equipment that should be able to be deployed at any time. Discusses 3 plow drivers decided to plow Girdlestone Rd while it had 2 feet of water, creating a tsunami. Why would they plow water? Thanks those who reached out to him.

Celest Ribeiro Hewitt P1-Sent an official email to the Town Council from the Climate Control Commission and will share with the public. She is very sorry for those impacted by these storms. The Climate Commission would like to have meetings with the Town Council and residents for everyone's input. While so many impacts could not be foreseen, many have been considered a "hot point" for review. The Town seriously has to look into funding for these problems, our infrastructure has major concerns.

Cliffy Yarrow P2-Asks if anyone realizes how long this problem of flooding has been going on. Over 30 years! At one point the home health aid could not get to his home to visit his sick mother. Asks if these problems are acceptable? Something must be done.

Marci Hamilton P2-Had property damage due to these water issues. Continues requesting something be done with these flooding problems...

Jack Dowd P4-Congratulates Steve on his efforts and the presentation. Asks about MBTA 3A exemption case and if still being reviewed.

### **CORRESPONDENCE-**

Received several emails from residents in reference to the flooding, these will be attached to the meeting mins.

### **SCHOOL DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

Contract negotiations are still being discussed. There is a web page the School Committee has put up for information on these negotiations.

### **TOWN MANAGER REPORT**

Please see attached.....

**Councilor Tassinari** asks in light of the capital expenditures, can we include info that are not currently funded?

**Councilor Millar**-Requests if another EOHLC meeting will another be scheduled soon with new director?

**Vice President Swope**-Happy to hear that a project is being worked on to keep the Town Council abreast of past issues.

**Councilor Romano**-Asking how soon these berms will be addressed and requests time frame.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Precinct 6 Council Seat

Town Council President would like to delay this vote until we are sure of the 4 candidates that are interested are still interested and requests resumes from the candidates.

This agenda item will be heard at our Town Council Meeting on March 24, 2026.

Councilor Romano makes a motion to appeal the decision of the Town Council President of moving this vote until our March 24, 2026 Town Council Meeting

2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Costigan

Discussion

Town Council President feels that vote should be taken when all candidates are present. All candidates should be able to speak on their behalf.

Motion by Councilor Tassinari to amend the motion to allow the candidates that are present to be able to speak

2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Romano

No discussion on the amendment

Roll Call Vote

Yes: Councilor Costigan, Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Millar, Councilor Reardon, Councilor Dimes, Councilor Romano, Vice President Swope

No: President Letterie

**Amendment Passes**

**Town Council President requests nominations for candidates**

**Councilor Romano nominates Martin Finn**

2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Reardon

**Councilor Romano nominates Michael Gillespie**

2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Tassinari

**All in Favor**

**No Other Nominations**

**Nominations are Closed**

Each candidate speaks on their behalf.....

Town Councilors speak on behalf of each nominated candidate.....

Each candidate answers questions by Councilors that are asked.....

**ROLL CALL VOTE FOR NOMINATED CANDIDATE:**

|                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Councilor Costigan   | Martin Finn       |
| Councilor Tassinari  | Martin Finn       |
| Councilor Millar     | Michael Gillespie |
| Councilor Reardon    | Martin Finn       |
| Councilor Dimes      | Michael Gillespie |
| Councilor Romano     | Martin Finn       |
| Vice President Swope | Martin Finn       |
| President Letterie   | Michael Gillespie |

**Martin Finn has won the nomination Vote for Councilor of Precinct 6**

**NEW BUSINESS**

Council President nominates Chris Summa as a Constable for the Town of Winthrop

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jack Dowd P4-Discusses his concern about the negotiations with Mass port. Discusses contract differences.

Jennifer Jones P1-Asks about a berm being created at Yirrel Beach and if there will be one down at Morton St. as she feels the berms that were removed have now become a problem.

Cassie Witthause P5-North Suburban Consortium still has an opening on their board. They have down payment assistant funding.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS / UPCOMING EVENTS**

Women's History Month-Vice President Swope dedicates her discussion to Eleanor Roosevelt as a Woman in Woman History Month

Town Council President Office Hours in Town Council Chambers: Thursday Marcy 12<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday March 17<sup>th</sup> 4-6 PM

#### **Openings:**

Board of License-Board of Appeals

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to adjourn by Vice President Swope at 9:00pm**

**2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Romano**

**Motion 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 3-10-2026

- The Revere Street TIP project continues as they work on switching over to the new traffic lights and installing solar controls on the streetlights, so they go off during the daytime hours. The curb and concrete work will resume in the Spring of 2026.
- The Fire Station demolition is almost complete, as most of the site has now been demolished and cleared. The Owner's Project Manager (OPM) is arranging boring holes to finalize the site's foundation plan and determine how much fill we will need. Also, the design plans for the new fire station are moving forward, and we will schedule a public meeting for late March or early April following tonight's presentation by the OPM.
- We have not yet heard back from the EOHLC about our questions and request for information regarding Winthrop's 3A noncompliance. However, with Secretary Augustus stepping down and the new EOHLC Secretary Juana Matias not starting until April 1, 2026, we anticipate hearing back from them shortly after she starts in her new position.
- Work continues on the FY27 Budget as the finance team compiles the budget and capital plan requests from our Department Heads. We look forward to working with the Town Council and the Citizens Advisory Committee on Finance during the upcoming FY27 budget cycle.
- The DPW is going to start work on constructing the coastal dune on Yirrell Beach. Given the harsh winter, we are starting later than anticipated and will work to install as much as possible before April 1, 2026, when we need to get off the beach for the Piping Plovers. Once the sand is installed, we will begin planting the vegetation, which will help hold the dune in place during inclement weather.
- At the last Town Council meeting, Vice-President Swoope suggested keeping a running list of open items that were presented to or concern the Town Council. This list should be updated as the items are worked on and eventually closed out. The Town Council President and Town Council Clerk are working together to create this list and make it available for the Town Council to review.

*Please reach out to me if you have any questions about the items listed above. Thank you.*

Anthony Marino  
Winthrop Town Manager

Dear Council President Letterie, Town Councilors, and Town Management,

As residents of Precincts 1 and 6 and as leaders of the Citizens Advisory Commission on Climate (CACC), we are deeply concerned that the February blizzard's cascading failures at the Pressure Relief Valves (PRVs) and the severe flooding on Girdlestone demonstrate **systemic, long-standing problems in Winthrop's water and stormwater infrastructure.**

The Climate Commission's **Climate Action Plan** identified Tileston/Girdlestone, Morton/Banks, and Pico/Fisherman's Bend as top-priority neighborhoods for drainage upgrades, pumps, and backflow prevention, yet these projects remain largely unimplemented. In addition, recent policy choices have caused Winthrop to lose or become ineligible for more than \$2 million in state climate and resilience grants.

The Climate Commission was created to baseline climate-driven risks, spotlight exactly these flooding hot spots, and recommend phased capital investments; after more than a year of meetings and planning with limited response from the Council, we voted to suspend operations until the Town Council demonstrates that this is a priority.

*This pause is not a rejection of partnership; we stand ready to resume our work and support the Council with research, planning, and public engagement as soon as there is a concrete path to implementation.*

In light of the blizzard's impacts, we respectfully request that the Council:

1. **Commit to taking action on the CACC's recommendations** for Tileston/Girdlestone, Morton/Banks, and Pico/Fisherman's Bend, including timelines and funding strategies, as outlined in our Climate Action Plan.
2. **Evaluate backup power and fail-safe settings for PRVs** and present options for rapid corrective action.
3. **Convene a public briefing focused on infrastructure and climate resilience**, with participation from the Climate Commission, DPW, MWRA, and relevant state partners, so residents can understand both the recent failures and the path forward.

Winthrop residents seek a visible commitment to both infrastructure improvements and climate resilience. We recommend beginning with our Climate Action Plan and restoring access to the outside funding sources our community urgently needs.

We look forward to partnering with you to transform this storm into a pivotal moment for sustained investment in our town.

Best regards,

Ana Tavares Leary, Co-Chair, Citizens Advisory Commission on Climate  
Norman Hyett, Co-Chair, Citizens Advisory Commission on Climate  
Celeste Ribeiro Hewitt, Secretary, Citizens Advisory Commission on Climate

## Denise Quist

---

**From:** Suzanne Leonard <scarlet689@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 3, 2026 12:06 PM  
**To:** town council@town.winthrop.ma.us; Anthony Marino  
**Subject:** storm preparedness / water main breaks

### **Dear President Letterie, Town Manager Marino, and Town Council Representatives,**

I am joining a larger group of concerned residents in Precinct 4 in response to the recent flooding and infrastructure failures that occurred during the February blizzard. The storm exposed critical vulnerabilities in our water system and raised serious questions about preparedness, response, and accountability.

According to official updates, multiple water mains broke as a result of power outages at key Pressure Relief Valves, contributing to substantial flooding in several neighborhoods. While we appreciate the efforts of DPW crews to restore services, residents remain unclear about the decision-making and system safeguards that were in place before, during, and after the storm.

To ensure transparency and proper future planning, we respectfully request detailed answers to the following questions:

1. What protocols existed for operating critical water infrastructure during power outages, and were redundant power systems available?
2. At what point was the loss of PRV power identified, and what actions were taken to mitigate pressure spikes in the water mains?
3. Why was the stormwater pump at Girdlestone and Pleasant not deployed earlier despite recognized drainage issues in that area?
4. What coordination occurred with the MWRA and neighboring municipalities, including any disputes over roadway controls or operational decisions?
5. What assessments or investments are planned to improve our underground infrastructure and ensure community resilience in future storms?

We believe Winthrop residents deserve clear, factual explanations and a shared plan for infrastructure resilience. We request that these answers be provided publicly and in a timely manner, ideally at the next Council meeting or in a special briefing.

Sincerely,  
Suzanne Leonard

378 Revere Street

Winthrop

## Denise Quist

---

**From:** Vanessa Flavin <vanessaflavin@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 3, 2026 10:08 AM  
**To:** town council@town.winthrop.ma.us; Paul Reardon  
**Subject:** Water and flooding issues

Dear Town Council and Councilor Reardon,

I am writing on behalf of concerned residents in Precinct 5 in response to the recent flooding and infrastructure failures that occurred during the February blizzard.

The storm exposed critical vulnerabilities in our water system and raised serious questions about preparedness, response, and accountability. According to official updates, multiple water mains broke as a result of power outages at key Pressure Relief Valves, contributing to substantial flooding in several neighborhoods.

While we appreciate the efforts of DPW crews to restore services, residents remain unclear about the decision-making and system safeguards that were in place before, during, and after the storm.

To ensure transparency and proper future planning, we respectfully request detailed answers to the following questions:

What protocols existed for operating critical water infrastructure during power outages, and were redundant power systems available?

At what point was the loss of PRV power identified, and what actions were taken to mitigate pressure spikes in the water mains?

Why was the stormwater pump at Girdlestone and Pleasant not deployed earlier despite recognized drainage issues in that area?

What coordination occurred with the MWRA and neighboring municipalities, including any disputes over roadway controls or operational decisions?

What assessments or investments are planned to improve our underground infrastructure and ensure community resilience in future storms?

We believe Winthrop residents deserve clear, factual explanations and a shared plan for infrastructure resilience. We request that these answers be provided publicly and in a timely manner, ideally at the next Council meeting or in a special briefing.

Sincerely,  
Vanessa Flavin  
Precinct 2  
[Vanessaflavin@gmail.com](mailto:Vanessaflavin@gmail.com)

## Denise Quist

---

**From:** Chris Aiello <christopher.j.aiello@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 3, 2026 8:46 AM  
**To:** town council@town.winthrop.ma.us; ms.marcihamilton@gmail.com; Denise Quist  
**Subject:** It is time to address flooding issues

Dear Town Council,

I am writing to express my concern about the recent flooding in the Girdlestone Rd. area, but more about the lack of a plan to address this issue. While the storm brought much attention to this, it is not a new issue as it has been going on for years. Our children went to daycare in a home on Tileston Rd. that was often impacted by the same flooding. We have friends on Pleasant St. whose home has also been impacted by this flooding (repeatedly). The flooding is largely the result of broken, failed, or insufficient infrastructure. The town is ultimately responsible for this. The community deserves a plan and transparency. Is the plan to raise taxes to pay for the needed work? Is the plan to bury our heads in the sand? Is the plan to make ourselves eligible for state funding so that we can seek assistance? Whatever your position, you must make it clear and make it known. Our community deserves that much.

I'll note, this problem is not unique to Girdlestone Rd. There is similar work needed in other parts of town, with the Pico Park area being another prime example. Flooding issues are only going to get worse with time. If we cannot deal with these areas, what does that say about the town's future? Will the beach, Point Shirley, and marsh-abutting neighborhoods be protected in the future? Are we going to sit by while large parts of town become uninsurable? What will this mean for existing mortgages? What will it mean for people wishing to sell their houses? What will it mean for home values, the biggest investment for many Winthrop families?

When will we see a plan? When will we see action? What is your position? Our community deserves to know.

Sincerely,  
Chris Aiello

## Denise Quist

---

**From:** Alyson Casey Dewar <casey0222@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 2, 2026 10:15 AM  
**To:** town council@town.winthrop.ma.us; Anthony Marino; Denise Quist - Council Clerk  
**Subject:** Blizzard of 2026 and subsequent mess

### **Town Council, Town Manager, and Town Clerk,**

I am writing as a concerned resident in Precinct 1 in response to the recent flooding and infrastructure failures that occurred during the February 23 blizzard. The storm exposed critical vulnerabilities in our water system and raised serious questions about preparedness, response, and accountability.

According to official updates, multiple water mains broke as a result of power outages at key Pressure Relief Valves. This caused or contributed to substantial flooding in several neighborhoods. While we appreciate the efforts of DPW crews to restore services, it remains unclear how decisions were made and what, if any, system safeguards were in place before, during, and after the storm.

To ensure transparency and proper future planning, I request detailed answers to the following questions:

1. What protocols existed for operating critical water infrastructure during power outages, and were redundant power systems available?
2. At what point was the loss of PRV power identified, and what actions were taken to mitigate pressure spikes in the water mains?
3. Why was the stormwater pump at Girdlestone and Pleasant not deployed earlier despite recognized drainage issues in that area?
4. What coordination occurred with the MWRA and neighboring municipalities, including any disputes over roadway controls or operational decisions?
5. What assessments or investments are planned to improve our underground infrastructure and ensure community resilience in future storms?
6. How do we expect to pay for any of this: damage caused by the storm and the work necessary to prevent future damage?

Winthrop residents deserve clear, factual explanations and a shared plan for infrastructure resilience. We request that these answers be provided publicly and in a timely manner, ideally at the next Council meeting or in a special briefing.

Alyson Dewar  
Precinct 1

## Denise Quist

---

**From:** Paulette O'Brien <paobrien147@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 5, 2026 11:37 AM  
**To:** town council@town.winthrop.ma.us  
**Subject:** Storm flooding

Dear Council members,

I am writing concerning response to the recent flooding during the February blizzard. According to officials the water main breaks were a result of power outages at key pressure relief valves. Residents are unclear as to any system safeguards in place before, during, and after the storm. It is also questioned why the storm water pump at Girdlestone and Pleasant was not deployed earlier? What is planned to improve under ground infrastructure to ensure resilience in future storms? Residents are requesting public explanations in a timely manner, ideally at the next council meeting.

Sincerely,

Paulette O'Brien / Precinct 5  
147 Cottage Park Rd.

Sent from my iPad

## Denise Quist

---

**From:** Marci Hamilton <coastal@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 11, 2026 6:47 AM  
**To:** town council@town.winthrop.ma.us  
**Subject:** Dear Town Council,

Dear Town Council,

My home and property were damaged by the most recent drainage issues caused by the water main break on Marshall Street. For 3 plus years now, I have worked tirelessly with this government to ensure that this flooding would not happen again. It took years to investigate and relay this issue to you let alone to identify the solution and further develop a workaround to stabilize the problem in the absence of funding. A pump on the Pleasant st and Girdlestone Rd. served that purpose.

The Girdlestone pump was not activated during this extreme weather event which resulted in more than two feet of water in my yard, shed, garage, and basement. This was preventable by the town and after all of my efforts, I feel betrayed by this neglect and lack of proactivity.

This is not new news. This is a drainage issue that you've known about since 2017 and one that I've continuously brought to your attention for years. Here I stand yet again, to remind you of this problem's history and request the allocation of funds to resolve. Woods Hole recommended infrastructure repair in 2017. In 2024, our Climate Commission proposed a precise phased implementation plan. In 2025, Woods Hole again told us what was needed to fix this issue and you committed to the permitting. We have since dismissed the Climate Commission recommendations due to lack of financial commitment.

I demand a vote be put on a future agenda that will allocate the 4 1/2 million dollars in May to fix this issue and end this misery to my neighborhood. As for my property damage, I will be in touch with the Town Manager when the total damage can be assessed. I am most concerned with what's happening underneath my home and our neighborhood as a whole. Our properties have had constant water flow and destruction. This must be evaluated and addressed.

You will never know the stress that overcomes you as water is pouring towards your home. Not one person on this board has personally experienced these events but it shouldn't have to happen to you for you, especially as a town council, to care about it. Thoughts and prayers do nothing to ease the constant worry about my property as it is being damaged time and time again - not due to climate but due to the lack of attention on broken drainage infrastructure.

Sent from my iPhone