

Finance Commission Minutes

Thursday May 7, 2026 6pm
Town Hall/ Harvey Hearing Room

Meeting called to order at 6 pm by Chair Matt Gorzkowicz

ROLL CALL:

Present: Matt Gorzkowicz, Karin Chavis, Bill Gault, Christian Buonopane, Michael Gillespie, Kim Dimes, Paul Reardon. Zoom participation: Shannon Poulos, Max Tassinari

Absent: Joe Hanlon

On Zoom: Sarah Johnson/Finance Director, Robbie Powers/ Ass't CFO

Zoom information:

Meeting ID 867-3067-1761 Passcode 959489 Phone # 1-646-931-3860

Motion by chair to accept minutes of April 23 2026 Motion by Kim Dimes second by Paul Reardon

Yes vote/ Chavis, Poulos, Hanlon, Buonopane, Gillespie, Dimes, Reardon

Abstain/ Gorzkowicz, Gault, Tassinari

Motion by chair to accept minutes of April 30, 2026 Motion by Reardon second by Gillespie

Yes vote/ Gorzkowicz, Chavis, Gault, Poulos, Hanlon, Gillespie, Tassinari, Dimes, Reardon

Abstain/ Buonopane

Chair introduced Meredith Hurley/Director of Public Health and Clinical Services:

Accomplishments for FY 26:

1. CLEAR program/ 157 peer recovery coach interactions, 235 social work interactions and 504 outreach visits by the WPD. WPD personnel involved; Lt. Gergerian/charge person and Sgt. Hamilton/Officers Joyce and Oyola.
2. Department work in community outreach, substance abuse programs, working with WPD
3. Food security/ \$60,000.00 allocated to Winthrop from regional funding through MGB able to obtain \$2000.00 in gift cards to Market Basket.
4. BU grad students assist with public health projects, ongoing program. Vital to writing grants and getting new programs.
5. New PT employee who is an adjustment councilor for WPS, fluent in Spanish who is assisting with outreach and peer recovery.
6. DON programs and grants from Department of Mental Health grants that are still available for Winthrop.

Ongoing and newer projects for FY 27:

1. Maternal child health work
2. Opioid Advisory Group for Winthrop, 7-9 members including 3 residents.
3. Safety Net program that uses radio frequency bracelets for persons who wander. Partially funded by the Winthrop COD. This antenna will be installed in WP cruisers for quick response.
4. Local food security work group to explore ways to accept SNAP benefits at farmers market

5. Currently 2 maternal health fellows (BU) are working on maternal depression projects, results are 4 published research papers. This BU program has been ongoing for 7 years after Ms. Hurley reached out to Universities in Boston, Schools of Public Health, seeking student interns.

There was a gap in funding personnel positions for FY 27. Equitable Approach to Public Safety Grant, which was not to be available for FY26, announced in January that Winthrop would be receiving \$188,000.00. Director Hurley stated that while some grant flexibility still exists for emergency housing and domestic violence, they are prioritizing personnel costs over training budgets and conference fees to address the funding gap. This helped with the personnel line item.

Opioid fund balances stands at approximately \$138,000 with inflows of \$30-35,000 yearly expected for several years.

Ms. Hurley explained that while grant funding has been more challenging to secure, they have successfully reduced non-essential expenses and maintained service levels through student partnerships for grant writing and evaluation work.

In conclusion, fatal overdose in Winthrop has had a significant decline since 2024. Mental and housing stability remain a pressing concern. Placement of Naloxone in town is under discussion.

Public Health Nurse in Winthrop one day a week to support immunization and child health.

Continue with BU Public Health School for their support of students.

Continued collaboration with WPD and other town departments for health and safety of Winthrop Residents.

Family resiliency hub project managed through Health Resources in Action with funding coming from DON.

Regional collaboration with Revere and Chelsea for support with ongoing projects.

Challenges with reduced grant funding and the need for additional municipal budget support.

Minutes by:

Karin Chavis