

Finance Commission Minutes

Thursday May 28, 2026, 6 pm

Winthrop Town Hall / Harvey Hearing Room

Meeting called to order @ 6 pm by Chair Matt Gorkowicz

PRESENT: Karin Chavis KC, Matt Gorkowicz MG, Christian Buonopane CB, Bill Gault WG, Joe Hanlon JH, Max Tassinari MT, Kim Dimes KD, Paul Reardon PR, Michael Gillespie ML, Jim Letterie JL

Also present Robbie Powers RP and Sarah Johnson SJ on Zoom, Leslie Darcy LD

Absent, Shannon Poulos

Meeting is on Zoom, chair reads Zoom information into the record

Motion by KD to accept previous meetings minutes; 2nd CB

Yes: KC, MG, CB, WG, JH, KD, PR, ML

Abstain: MT

Chair moves into agenda of meeting; introduces Superintendent of Schools Lisa Howard LH to answer the commission's questions after previously meeting with her

LH provides an update on collective bargaining between the teacher's union and School Committee

LH gives very good insight into the commission's questions about step increases, COLAs, specific unit agreements,

MG then asks LH about her opinion on the difference between her submitted budget and the Town manager budget, referencing the contingency line

LH explains that the contingency line in 27 is there to settle the contract, for 4 units + admins + custodians; carried over

LH talks about earmarks and seeking more funding from the state via State Rep Jeff Turco and State Senator Lydia Edwards

LH also discusses grants, how they affect her department, and the losses (not receiving) grants that have resulted from noncompliance with 3A

General discussion between the Commission and Supt. Howard continues regarding the costs of various maintenance expenses, afterschool programs, and where to plug holes in the budget should her request not be met and/or grants continue to be lost

JH asks a question regarding the previous passed 2.5 override; LH explains that this override was NOT designed to last for many many years, and designed to keep level service for this / last year

LH adds that the school committee has thus far been able to stretch the money as far as possible through prudent management and careful spending

LH continues to explain that they are very cautious and conservative with planning

Continued discussion of rising expenses within the school department

KC notes that it would be nice for principals to post their reports / updates for each school

Discussion of test scores / performance

Commission and LH discuss a potential succession plan for her, Supt Howard explains her leadership style

Commission discusses enhancing the rink's capacity to generate revenue by improving amenities / the facility

Improving bathrooms, discussing hourly rate, increase to rate

Making the rink able to be open all year, JL points out that besides Parazzo rink, Larsen Rink is the closest to the airport -> significant potential

MG reminds the Commission to send him their comments to send to TC

General discussion of other budgetary issues including the Housing Authority and how much it pays for trash

MG again reminds the Commission to send him comments regarding the budget so he can prepare what to send for TC in time for budget meeting.

Meeting adjourned unanimously

Minutes by:

Christian Buonopane