

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 2, 2026

President Letterie calls the meeting to order at 5:45 PM in the Harvey Hearing Room

Motion by Councilor Dimes to enter in Executive Session

2nd by Councilor Romano

ROLL CALL

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

Enter into Executive Session

Motion by Councilor Millar to Adjourn Executive Session

2nd by Councilor Finn

ROLL CALL

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

Adjourn Executive Session

ENTER INTO OPEN SESSION

ROLL CALL

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE-Councilor Finn

MINUTES

Motion by Councilor Dimes to Approve the Minutes of May 19, 2026, as circulated.

2nd by Councilor Romano

Motion to Amend by Councilor Romano to add Roll Call when entering back into Open Session after Ex. Session

Main Motion as Amended

Motion Passed

GENERAL INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Finance Commission – FY27 Budget Recommendations

Council President introduces the Finance Commission who with the Town Council Sub Committee on Finance work together on the Towns Budget with each Dept. Head and School Committee, to offer their recommendation on the FY27 Budget to the Town Council

Council President thanks the Committee Chair of the Winthrop Finance Commission, Matt Gorzkowicz along with other member Karin Chavis who is the Chair of the Citizens Finance Committee, the Town Council members, who is also on the Town Council Sub Committee on Finance, Chair Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Dimes and Councilor Reardon along with all members Bill Gault, Joe Hanlon, Shannon Poulos, Christian Buonopane and Michael Gillespie. Thanks all for their hard work and commitment to the Towns Budget.

PLEASE SEE ENTIRE POWER POINT PRESENTATION ON THE TOWN WEBSITE

Town Council Opens up Questions to the Town Council

All Town Councilors thank all the members for all their hard work on this Budget Presentation along with the Town Manager, CFO Robert Powers and Sarah Johnson.....

Councilor Tassinari discusses the importance of a 10 year capital plan as this will continue after councilors might be gone and we have to look out for the community.

Councilor Dimes thanks the commission for the experience and education of working with these committees.

Vice President Swope has ideas on the budget and would like to continue this discussion within the year and with all budget information for the future. Has questions on projects vs. line items...she would like to see more detailed information.

Councilor Millar discusses the recommendations and believes the town is behind on technology and this is something that could be cost saving to the Town especially using AI correctly.

Council President comments on these recommendations and advises all to review the audit books that are issued to work with the budget on items that are needed, which ones followed up on and which ones still discussed. Requests each Town Councilor to review this budget and if you have any changes that you might think one dept. deserves or needs more funding, to have the correct offset for each item.

PUBLIC HEARING

- Town Council vote to Appropriate Certified Free Cash/Revolving Fund Close out FY26

Public Hearing Open

- o Discussion
- o Councilor Tassinari reports on Finance Committee Meeting
- o Finance Committee voted on this motion with a Positive Recommendation

Public Hearing Closed

- Town Council vote to authorize Unpaid Bills of Prior Year

Public Hearing Opened

- o Discussion
- o Councilor Tassinari reports on Finance Committee Meeting
- o Finance Committee voted on this motion with a Positive Recommendation

Public Hearing Closed

PUBLIC COMMENT

Celeste Ribeiro Hewitt P1-Thanks the Finance Commission for their thorough and comprehensive job but would also like to see more of a “granular” view. There are certain funding she is interested in reviewing.

Jack Dowd P4-Comments on the Massport PILOT Negotiations and has asked several times that the town request a professional negotiator to review this contract. He requests procedures to be made public.

Marcy Hamilton P2-Publicly thanks Anita Prebble for the hard work she has committed to the town for the past 16 years and is saddened her program will not be re-funded with their grants due to the Town not being in compliance MBTA 3A and hopes the Town Council will consider a Citation for her hard work.

Diane Sands P5-Comments on researching the past campaign candidate’s comments during the election. She requests something in writing from each councilor that did not vote for the exemption case that Attorney Walsh prepared and filed.

Shannon Poulos P3-Thanks all for their hard work and would like all to think about the priorities of these recommendations and work towards each one. Work with Dept. Heads to see how these recommendations could benefit each department. Bring this info up at Town Council Meetings to keep ahead of them.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee-

Councilor Tassinari has reported on this meeting prior.

Rules & Ordinance-

Councilor Millar reports on the meeting and discussed each item on the agenda.

The Committee has voted with Positive Recommendations on the agenda items.

Continued the Scooter Ordinance Discussion

Continued the Town Council Rules & Procedures Review

Vice President Swope reported on the Public, Health, Safety and Works Committee along with the Listening Post

Of all agenda items. A Special interest discussed was on AI and how this can help the town immensely.

PLEASE SEE MINUTES ON TOWN WEBSITE FOR FULL DESCRIPTION OF THESE MEETINGS.

FHBC-

Town Council President reports that the bids for the general contractor should be out by end of June, back by August and being working in the fall and work straight through. There is a very informative video that will be available for review on the Town Website to get a clearer and visual view of this project.

Councilor Tassinari asks for an update for what is currently being done on the current Fire House to help our firefighters during the construction until the new one is ready to go.

Please see website for all committee meeting minutes...

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT REPORT

WTA and Winthrop School Committee has signed a new 3-year contract which began 7-1-2025 and will be available shortly on line.

Last Friday, May 29th was the Graduation. 3 Hours prior to the graduation due to inclement weather they had to move from Miller Field into the gym, any overflow went to the auditorium and you could watch the graduation ceremony on a big screen. Over \$600,000 given out in Scholarships, this is an amazing opportunity for our students.

UPDATE ON POLICY MAKING COMMITTEES

Please see attached.....

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Contracted with Decker Technology with our Short-Term Rentals which will help immensely with our Short Term Rental Information.

Park opening Lewis Lake 5:30 -7 PM June 10th.

Council President discusses that the Town managers office has reached out to Rep. Turco's office who is in the process of reaching out to the Governors Office of the states denial of the CFC Grant which is the Commonwealth for Children which is quite comical they denied this grant due to MBTA 3A non compliance.

Councilor Romano would like a copy of the letter of denial of this grant.

Town Manager reports this was a 5 year grant approved prior to the MBTA 3A and there is two years left. Reviewing breach of contract.

Sail Boston is moving ahead which is July 11, 2026. Resident will have to show their ID to park and drive through to Point Shirley.

Please review Town Social Media Page for all updates.

Vice President Swope asks the Town Manager to send to the Commission on Disability Committee the plan on July 3rd and July 11th events.

Councilor Tassinari asks if we have to decide on any fines or recourse for unlicensed Short-Term Rentals. Town Manager reports there are already fines listed in our Fees and ISD will review and issue.

Councilor Dimes reports the 250 Year Celebration is moving along fine and volunteers still needed.

OLD BUSINESS

Motion by Councilor Romano to Waive Reading

2nd Vice President Swope

Passed Unanimously

Motion by the Finance Committee with a Positive Recommendation that the Town Council vote to Appropriate Certified Free Cash/Revolving Fund Close out FY26

No 2nd Needed

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes

Motion by the Finance Committee with a Positive Recommendation that the Town Council vote to authorize Unpaid Bills for Prior Year

No 2nd Needed

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes

Town Council discuss Ordinance Amendment 17.52.030 Use Variance

Motion by Rules & Ordinance that the Winthrop Town Council propose and refer for review the attached amendments to Title 17 Zoning of the Code of Ordinances concerning the prohibition of use variances and clarification of the powers of the Board of Appeals.

No 2nd Needed

The purpose of this amendment is to:

1. Clarify that variances authorized under Title 17 and Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 10, are limited to dimensional relief and do not authorize uses otherwise prohibited within a zoning district;
2. Amend the definition of "Variance" in Section 17.04.050 to conform to the limitations established by state law and local zoning regulations;
3. Amend Section 17.52.020 to expressly provide that the Board of Appeals shall have no authority to grant a variance for any use not otherwise permitted within the applicable zoning district;

4. Add a new Section 17.52.025 entitled "Use Variances Prohibited" to expressly prohibit the granting of variances for prohibited uses;
5. Amend Section 17.28.030(D)(1) regarding nonconforming uses to ensure that changes to nonconforming uses do not circumvent the use regulations established by Title 17; and
6. Include severability and effective date provisions.

Further, I move that the Town Council refer this proposed zoning amendment to the Planning Board for its review, recommendation, and public hearing pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 5, and any applicable provisions of the Winthrop Charter and Code of Ordinances.

Following receipt of the Planning Board's recommendation and completion of all statutory notice and hearing requirements, the Town Council shall consider the amendment for final adoption in accordance with law.

TOWN OF WINTHROP

CODE OF ORDINANCES – REDLINE AMENDMENT

TITLE 17 – ZONING

Section 1. §17.04.050 – Definition of “Variance”

§17.04.050 is hereby amended as follows:

Variance. A departure from the ~~terms of this title~~ dimensional requirements of this Title authorized by the board of appeals ~~under M.G.L.c. 40A~~ pursuant to §17.52.020 and in accordance with applicable provisions of M.G.L. c. 40A, §10.

A variance shall not authorize a use or activity otherwise prohibited in the zoning district in which the land or structure is located.

Section 2. §17.52.020 – Powers of the board of appeals

§17.52.020 is hereby amended by adding the following paragraph:

Notwithstanding any provision of this Title to the contrary, the board of appeals shall have no authority to grant a variance for any use not otherwise permitted within the applicable zoning district.

Variances shall be limited solely to dimensional and intensity regulations, including but not limited to setbacks, frontage, lot area, height, and similar requirements.

Any application seeking relief to allow a prohibited use shall be denied for lack of authority.

Section 3. New §17.52.025 – Use variances prohibited

Title 17 is hereby amended by inserting a new section as follows:

Sec. 17.52.025. Use variances prohibited.

Notwithstanding any provision of this Title or any general or special law to the contrary, no variance shall be granted to authorize a use not otherwise permitted by right or by special permit within the zoning district in which the subject land or structure is located.

All use changes shall occur only as permitted under this Title, including but not limited to rezoning or special permit approval where applicable.

Section 4. §17.28.030(D)(1) – Nonconforming uses

§17.28.030(D)(1) is hereby amended as follows:

A nonconforming use may be changed to another nonconforming use by special permit, ~~provided such use is not substantially more detrimental~~ provided that such change shall not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood and shall not circumvent the use regulations established by this Title.

Section 5. Severability

If any provision of this article is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions.

Section 6. Effective Date

This amendment shall take effect upon adoption and publication as required by law.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes

Town Council Review Ordinance Committee Recommendations - Scooters-CONTINUED

Town Council Review Ordinance Recommendation from the Tree Committee -CONTINUED

Town Council Discuss to formally re-adopt its own Rules & Procedures-CONTINUED

Discussion...this was previously sent to the Rules & Ordinance in 2025, this will continue for discussion in committee presently as this is technically still in committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Sidewalk Improvement Discussion-Council President refers to Public Health Safety & Works Committee

Small Commercial Vehicle Allowance for Resident Parking Sticker- Council President refers to Rules & Ordinance

Software Program for ISD-Town Manager Marino has reviewed contract and software

DCR-Beach Request-Town Manager has reached out to the DCR for an update. Winthrop Beach clean-up on Mondays

Motion by Councilor Dimes to suspend Council Rule 2A that the 2nd Meeting in June will be rescheduled from June 16th to June 9th to coincide with the Budget being voted on in a timely manner.

2nd by Councilor Tassinari

Discussion

Councilor Romano would like to change these dates

Motion by Councilor Dimes to withdraw motion and Councilor Tassinari to withdraw 2nd.

Motion by Councilor Romano to suspend Town Council Rules & Procedures and change the June 16th Town Council Meeting to June 30th , cancel the first Town Council Meeting of July 7th and keep scheduled Town Council Meeting of July 21st.

2nd by Councilor Costigan

Discussion

If this motion was to pass, the Town Council President will announce a special meeting for June 9th.

Passed Unanimously

Council President announces a Special Town Council Meeting on June 9th at 6:00 PM

Committee Openings-There will be several committee openings with re-appointments on June 30th.

Council President reads email from past Council President Ron Vecchia (Please see attached)

Please review Town Website for Committee Openings

Taxi Fares-Council President refers this to the Finance Committee but is also reviewing a change in the Ordinance of Taxi Fares 5.28.030 that would effect this request.

Budget Motions to be discussed during the FY27 Budget Adoption:

- Town Council Adopt Annual General Fund Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2027
- Town Council Adopt Annual Revolving Budgets for Fiscal Year 2027
- Town Council Adopt Annual Capital Plan for Fiscal Year 2027
- Town Council Adopt Larson Rink Enterprise Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2027
- Town Council Adopt Recreation Enterprise Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2027
- Town Council Adopt Harbormaster Enterprise Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2027
- Town Council Adopt Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2027
- Town Council Adopt Solid Waste Enterprise Fund Budget for Fiscal Year 2027
- Town Council Appropriate Funds to the Educational Stabilization Fund

Town Council Transfer \$250,000 from General Stabilization Fund to Snow & Ice Account-**Council President Refers to the Finance Committee**

Town Council Vote to Modify General Fund Budgets to Facilitate Closing of the 2026 Fiscal Year- **Council President Refers to the Finance Committee**

Town Council Vote to Appropriate \$110,000 Certified Free Cash- **Council President Refers to the Finance Committee**

Town Council Vote to Appropriate \$800,000 from Retained Earnings in the Water-Sewer Fund/Transfer to the Water-Sewer Capital Stabilization Fund- **Council President Refers to the Finance Committee**

Councilor Tassinari discusses the Taxi Fares having a joint meeting with the Rules & Ordinance

PUBLIC COMMENT

Celeste Ribeiro Hewitt P1-Understand that the property owner should have some say on tree cutting if necessary but it should also be reviewed by the Tree Committee and Town.

John Morgan P4-Discusses that if this tree review continues that the Commission on Disability and the Town ADA Co-Ordinator be involved. The Tree on 190 Somerset has been in court for over two years.

Tom Derderian P3-Discusses trees that are planted incorrectly. It may have been a good idea years ago but we should now try to put our trees in a better position of growing.

Council President reiterates his comments and clarifies on trees was directed more towards neighborhood trees not commercial enterprises. Trees in the town that have overgrown onto our sidewalks.

ADJOURNMENT

With no Further business for the Town Council, the Town Council President Adjourns Meeting at 8:45 PM

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

