

Finance Commission Minutes

Thursday September 17, 2026 6 pm
Winthrop Town Hall / Harvey Hearing Room

Meeting called to order at 6 pm by Chair Matt Gorzkowicz

ROLL CALL:

Present: Karin Chavis, Christian Buonopane, Michael Gillespie, Kim Dimes

Zoom participation: Matt Gorzkowicz, Max Tassinari

Absent: Bill Gault, Shannon Poulos, Joe Hanlon, Paul Reardon

Also present: Jim Letterie/Council President, Tony Marino/Town Manager, Robbie Powers/Finance Director

Zoom information:

Meeting ID# 8907 3201 294 Passcode 321891 Phone# 1-305-224-1968

Motion to accept minutes of May 28, 2026 / Motion by Dimes, second by Gillespie

Roll Call; Gorzkowicz/yes, Chavis/yes, Buonopane/yes, Gillespie/yes, Dimes/yes, Tassinari/yes

Chair introduced TM Tony Marino:

TM started by saying he will follow the email questions he received from Karin Chavis (see attached)

1. GIC Health/looking at alternatives, competitive bidding checking out MIAA, Harvard/Pilgrim and Blue Cross Blue Shield. Analysis expected by November. Current GIC, no provider has been able to beat rates.
2. Uncertainty of Grant Funding/ remain non-compliant with 3A. Matt stated "earmarked" funds and formula based grants continue to flow. We have received Federal funds through Congresswoman Clark's office, \$250,000.00 toward MS demolition (new Firehouse site), looking at Federal Grant for assist with Gym renovations (identified as a shelter) and continued assist from Rep Turco and Sen Edwards for "ear marked" funds from state.
3. Enterprise Funds/ need to recover \$40,000.00 from WHA which has not paid their fair share. Estimated actual cost is \$60-70,000.00.WHA board voted only \$20,000.00. Housing director contacted EOHLC for assist in obtaining the other \$20,000.00. Tony will continue to work with director and WHA on solid waste pickup costs. Parks and Rec director salary now ½ and ½ with Town. Hopefully this will help with that Enterprise Fund. Mention of Ferry Enterprise Fund/ Robbie stated about \$15,000.00 balance. Recent bill for insurance \$1600.00. MBTA have been down to look at the Ferry Docks, so hopefully we can hit them up for some maintenance to help us out
4. Prop 2 /2 limitations, not only in Winthrop, state wide. Over rides is common, need to examine for future in Winthrop.
5. Solid waste costs/ contract with Capital for curbside service are fair with 5% increase each year of a 5 year contract. Looming costs are dumping fees and recycle fees. Up to \$130-140.00 per ton.
6. EB Newton Building/ loss of CAPIC rental (\$11,000 per year). Parks and Rec now in the building, rent \$6000.00 year. There are still other rental spaces available. Some improvements have been made. We need to look at the building and see what the long term plans.
7. Scheduled Maintenance of Athletic Fields/ there is an individual in mind to work 15-20 hours a week and their responsibility would be just the fields. Get him started in the spring. It would be Ingleside, Veterans, B & C Field Cellucci Field. Miller Field is under School, A field not included, parents seem to take care of that. Miller Field Turf replacement is close at hand. Tony said Lynnfield just replaced for \$750,000.00. Ingleside has new shed for equipment being built and new dugouts.

8. AI and IT/ working on CIO. The town's Balsam contract is month to month so we can "jump ship" whenever we are ready. The school's contract is up in June, so there is a potential consolidation. School pays \$200,000.00 year. Looking to have IT director in place and then a couple of assistants, identify the school needs and pull the trigger on Balsam. TM did check with recent cyber issue in Everett. They do not have cyber insurance, Winthrop does. Their hack was through a device with no protection? Printer. Still working on AI, still messing around with that. Have looks Claude, Mat shared that the State is trying to negotiate a secure AI assistant for Cities and Towns at the state rate. Matt said he will get info to Tony for him to look into that program through Executive Office of Technology. Assistance with college student assist was proved to be too expensive.

ADU/BnB enforcement/ new software cost \$5500 for basic package and \$500 online option to register. This will start with sending letters to the 150 unregistered operators in town. This will f/u with fines and tickets on those who are not compliant. We are limited to licenses.

Tony also stated we have 1 bus shelter being installed, CVS on Pauline St. Kim stated that that's not a busy spot, but Veterans Rd and Chase School are.

Robbie Powers/Finance Director

FY 26 closeout

Local receipts \$1,000,000 in the black. Bank interest rates, Tax title, Meals & room taxes, Parking tickets all over. Bldg. permits were down as well as electrical and plumbing.

Fuel costs, bills the same. Remain on State list.

Concerns: Parks and Rec/ receipts down because of 26 summer location. With move to EBN and director salary split ½ and ½, looks better for FY 27. Solid waste, not enough revenue to cover costs, dumping fees is increasing. Current cost is \$210/barrel, need closer to \$400/barrel.

Close out, DOR reports in next 2 weeks.

FY27 concerns

GIC / town appropriation looks okay, retirees over (On Watch)

Pension appropriation \$44,000 over, need to cover at end of year

Northeast Voke / over by \$14,000.00. Enrollment 61 students need to get accurate number after 10/01/2026. \$1,086,000 plus debt exclusion \$391,014 was current payment.

Fire OT is over, new firefighters started on 08/21/2026,

Police Quinn line item is over. Officers with new degrees.

Repairs at Town Landing/docks new pumps Pump out Boat and Docks, 75% reimbursement by State Town share about \$30,000/ Waterways Enterprise Fund.

School budget mentioned, they used money at years end to prepay and help with FY 27 budget.

Next meeting, scheduled for **January 14, 2027** at 6 pm in Harvey Hearing Room.

Motion to adjourn at 7:25 pm motion by Dimes second by Gillespie

Roll call: Gorzkowicz/yes, Chavis/yes, Buonopane/yes, Gillespie/yes, Tassinari/yes, Dimes/ yes

Minutes by;

Karin Chavis



Outlook

Finance Commission Requests

From Karin CHAVIS <karinchav@msn.com>

Date Fri 9/11/2026 2:22 PM

To Anthony Marino <amarino@winthropma.gov>

Cc Matthew Gorzkowicz <mgorzkowicz@gmail.com>; jim letterie <jimletterie@gmail.com>

Good morning:

The Finance Commission is meeting on Thursday, September 17, just as a cleanup and follow up to recommendations and questions after the completion of our meetings April, May, June and letter to Town Council dated June 2, 2026. Hope you will be able to attend, but there will be a Zoom link.

I have spoken to Robbie Powers to ask for a few things from him, and he said he will forward to me. Robbie will attend our meeting, maybe in person but could be Zoom.

1. Follow up to close out FY 26
2. FY 27 Budget to date

Our questions to you are generated from the TC letter.

1. ? GIC Health Inflation ? Signing new contract
2. Uncertainty of Grant Funding
3. Sustainability of Enterprise Funds
4. Long term limitations imposed by Prop 2 1/2
5. Solis waste costs - fair share WHA
6. ? EB Newton Building, adequate funding to manage cost to maintain. Loss of CAPIC as a tenant. I did hear that Parks and Rec are moving there for the Fall/Winter, so that is a loss of revenue. How is that made up towards maintaining the Building?
7. Has a scheduled maintenance of all Athletic Fields been established? Who is responsible for each Field, etc. Where is this posted? There is a Parks Committee listed on Town Website, when was that last updated?
8. Other issues:
 - AI / ? improve efficiency and reduce costs
 - IT/ ? Chief Information Officer
 - ADU and air BnB enforcement.

I know this a lot and some things may have talked about but too soon to act on.
Fin Com spends time on trying to assist on the Finance side of the town.
Status of recommendations would be welcomed.

Thank you ,
Karin Chavis