



Town Council Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2010

Under the Rules and Procedures of the Winthrop Town Council, President Turco called the meeting to order at 7:03PM in the Senior Center on Harvard Street, Winthrop, MA. Councilor Varone, Councilor DelVento, Councilor Maggio, Councilor Sanford, Councilor Powers, Councilor Letterie and Vice President Calla were present. Councilor Boncore was not present due to a family commitment.

Councilor Sanford led the Council in the pledge of allegiance. Council President Turco asked the Council Clerk to call the roll for the record.

President Turco stated that this meeting was to be a workshop style meeting with an open flow of discussion and ideas with no general business to be considered or acted upon. He then polled the Council briefly on the meeting schedule for April. It was decided that the Council would meet on April 6 and April 27 in the Harvey Hearing Room.

The Town Manager asked the Council to review with him the handout he provided to them before the meeting that gave a “big picture” look of the Town’s financial picture and ongoing projects and goals. This handout is attached to these notes.

Highlights of the discussion were

- During the review Town Manager McKenna asked the Finance Director, Michael Bertino to give a brief overview of the Pension Fund and how it works as well as Winthrop’s current position.
- Vocational School continued rising costs
- Increasing annual health care costs
- Restructure and review of the parking program and how the Town handles our municipal lots.

President Turco suggested that the Economic Development Committee look at this issue as well as Rules & Ordinance and report back to the full Council at a later date. The President then asked they go around the table and take a few minutes each to mention items that each Councilor felt important to them going forward.

Councilor DelVento mentioned the following:

- Felt it was important for the Town to get thru the next round of local aid cuts
- Was willing to review the budget process with any new Councilor in his role as Chair of the Finance Sub Committee

Councilor Letterie mentioned the following:

- Curious about the real numbers related to the recently increased meals and lodging tax the Town began to collect in October of 2009.
- Is hoping the EB Newton School is vacated by August 31, 2010 as was promised several years ago
- Curious about how the Manager will handle the Quinn Bill funding issue.

Councilor Sanford mentioned the following:

- He would like to see a grant writer funded in future budgets to capitalize on stimulus and grant funds available.
- He is encouraged by the discussion of a revised parking plan and feels it is very necessary to have a clear definition of parking in the Town.

Vice President Calla mentioned the following:

- She would like to see increased focus on Economic Growth.
- Aggressive plan in regards to road and sidewalk repair that would include a public information component.
- Sale of the Dalrymple School move forward
- Beach revitalization project move forward
- Crystal Cove development project move forward

Councilor Maggio mentioned the following:

- She would like to see community spirit come back to our Town of Winthrop
- She would like to see a fitness trail at Winthrop Golf Course
- She believes in economic development balanced with quality of life issues
- Very supportive of the Casino Citizen's Advisory Committee

Councilor Varone mentioned the following:

- Agrees with quality of life issues, beach renourishment, parking enforcement.
- Would like to see Town Hall open on Fridays and another evening.

Councilor Powers mentioned the following:

- Feels strongly that any Casino mitigation be earmarked for capital projects and not to fund operational budgets as the Town has done in the past.

President Turco mentioned the following:

- Desire for Winthrop to create a well thought out 5 year plan
- Concern in getting Ingleside Park flood issues corrected
- Meeting maybe quarterly with Realtors to find out why people are buying here and why people are leaving

- Promotion of home ownership with tax incentives
- Increased police department employees
- Possible philanthropic effort with the high school to add a new effort to parks and beautification of Town property
- Would like to see Town's monthly budget online
- Would like to see Town Employee salary online
- Considering moving all voting precincts to one polling location for increased savings

Councilor Sanford asked the Manager what the Council could do to assist him in reaching his goals going forward. The Manager replied that he enjoyed open communication with the Council and hoped that it would continue.

Public Comment

President Turco called on Guy Brandenstein of Trident Avenue to speak. Mr. Brandenstein spoke out against the parking program and stated that the public would not support a High School renovation while the EB Newton was still open.

Motion by Councilor DelVento, Seconded by Councilor Sanford: to adjourn for the evening at 9:50pm.

VOTE: Passed on Voice Vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carla Vitale