



**Town Council Meeting  
March 29, 2011  
Financial Forum**

Under the Rules and Procedures of the Winthrop Town Council, President Turco called the meeting to order at 6:10PM in the Cummings Multi-purpose Room. Councilor Varone Councilor DelVento, Councilor Powers, Councilor Boncore, Councilor Sanford Councilor Calla Councilor Maggio, President Turco were present. Vice President Letterie will be late due to a prior commitment.

Councilor Boncore was asked to lead the Pledge of Allegiance the President asked the Clerk to call the roll.

Approval of the Minutes of March 15, 2011

Motion by Councilor Sanford

2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Varone

Discussion: Councilor DelVento questioned an entry in the minutes regarding the withdrawal and resubmission of the Town Manager's report on consolidation of the School and Town.

The Town Manager withdrew footnote number 1 of his consolidation report and resubmitted as modified.

Minutes of March 15, 2011 Approved as modified.

**Public Comment**

Tom McNiff, expressed his dissatisfaction with the Town website's incomplete set of proposals listed for consideration by the Ordinance Review Committee. The issue being, which proposals are for ordinance changes and those that would require a change to the Charter.

The President clarified the procedure of Charter changes using the Council being considered Town employees and eligible for Town health insurance as an example. It would require a majority vote of the Ordinance Review Committee and if recommended would go before the Town Council and have to be approved then sent forward to the voter and then if approved would have to go before the legislature for its approval.

Jim Little, Chairman of the Winthrop Board of Health, read a prepared statement regarding the recent appointment to the Board of Health. The only voting members of the Board are appointees. Mr. Little wanted to know if all the Councilors were aware of all the applicants for this Board and their qualifications?

The President stated the process in place for voting on applicants to Boards and Committees. The application is given to the Town Clerk who then circulates the

application to all Councilors. The Council President with authority given to him by the Charter appoints who he feels is the best applicant and the Councilors then agree or disagree by voting to confirm or not confirm the appointment.

Guy Brandenstein, Trident Avenue, asked if the Town Pier at the Landing will be modified for fishing. The Harbormaster answered his question regarding the finger slip, which at this time has not been able to come in at the price range we are able to work with. Still working to provide this to the Town. Second issue for Mr. Brandenstein is Winthrop Beach and the fact that it is washed out to sea and there is not much left area for people to enjoy the beach. He asked about the fencing. The President spoke about the meeting that took place regarding Winthrop Beach and referred to the Town Manager for details. The fence is for making sand dunes to remedy storm damage it acts as a natural barrier for the waves. Speaker DeLeo has earmarked the money for the beach. Councilor Calla talked about a meeting that took place regarding this issue. Nick Gove, DCR North Region Director, will come before the Council to do an outreach to inform the public about what is going on with the beach. Vegetation needs to be maintained. This takes a lot of manpower. Councilor DelVento also spoke about the plans for the beach. Permits have expired but we did have a successful meeting to deal with the issues. Will be a long process, talking years but could maybe start drainage and roadway work. The Council President talked about trucking the sand in and the downside of all those trucks entering our Town but it could be a temporary fix. Possible survey needed to ask the residents what they prefer.

Jerry DeFronzo made an announcement regarding an informational meeting on disabilities regarding rights and resources. The meeting will be on May 7, 2011

Peter Gill, Precinct 5 would like to request through the Council that the Ordinance Review Committee make clear which recommendations are ordinance changes and that Charter changes be explained so there can be public comment.

Chairman of the Ordinance Review Committee, Joseph Boncore has completed a comprehensive overview of the Town's Ordinances and has recommendations made that are ready to be published to the public. Accepting public comment on the Charter and provisions in the charter and any changes the public would like to see in the Charter. Three meetings left will be devoted to the Charter. The list is all the proposals citizens have made and what citizens would like to see pertaining to the Charter. Will submit this list to WCAT and the Transcript. Very few questions have been raised concerning this committee and not a lot of residents have attended these meetings. Next meeting is April 12<sup>th</sup> regarding the School Committee. Last meeting second Tuesday in May. There will be a complete list on all recommended Charter changes. The second meeting will be regarding the Town Council and all matters, powers and duties.

Questions: Mr. McNiff regarding the list on the website.

The list consists of proposals made by citizens of the town. They will be addressed at the meeting. Some proposals do not pertain to the Charter but all the public's proposals have been acknowledged.

Councilor Maggio stated that many of the proposals that she presented to the Ordinance Review Committee were given to her by citizens of the Town and not necessarily from her personally.

**Correspondence: none**

### **Committee Reports**

Committee on Committee's Surveys were sent out. More information is needed. Email surveys to Councilor Maggio.

### **Manager's Report**

Chief Dehehanty spoke regarding regionalization to reinforce and collaborate with surrounding Town's to combat drugs, gangs and guns.

Chief Flanagan spoke about Urban Shield. They will perform a regional exercise on May 21st at the Landing. It will be a Police action SWAT team event. This will involve an incident on the Town Ferry. Several Police Departments, the FBI etc. Will be presented to FEMA as their annual training event. Publications will be put out by Urban Shield to notify the surrounding area that this is a training event. This event will be just the Landing and should not affect other areas of Town.

Ferry Service schedule was discussed including extra trips for recreation and pleasure in addition to just being a commuter Ferry.

The Town Manager attended a meeting regarding traffic changes at Short Beach.

The left turn at the red light is being omitted from the plan, which will affect Winthrop residents. The Town Manager is not happy with this change to the plan.

FEMA meeting in Revere was very informative and daunting. Have to be prepared as it will affect many homes in Winthrop. Significant public questions will result. A public meeting will be advertised.

### **Old Business**

Petition for the Designation of Overlay District is tabled until May 17<sup>th</sup>. Councilor Sanford made an announcement that there will be a meeting on Wednesday April 20<sup>th</sup> at the Cottage Park Yacht Club at 7:00PM. The topic will be the possible transition of the Governor Winthrop Nursing Home on Pleasant Street to residential units. The developers and or agents will be in attendance. There will be notifications sent out. All are welcome especially impacted neighbors in Precinct 5. All are encouraged to attend. Notifications and advertising will follow.

### **New Business**

TSAC issues from last meeting. Two issues voted on at the last meeting will have to be published in the newspaper. Will be voted on in an upcoming meeting.

Bed & Breakfast Ordinance can accept the report. It will be under Old Business for the April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Planning Board new Chairman Peter Roach was asked to get the Council final feedback.

The President talked about a possible ordinance change regarding the license for the Landing, in order to be able to buy a bottle of water or a hot dog. The President has talked to Chairman Ogus regarding this matter.

The Town Manager mentioned a proclamation April 29, 2011 is Arbor Day and people are encouraged to plant trees on that day. The President read the proclamation.

Councilor Maggio would like to the ability to participate in meetings when not present due to travel. She corrected words that were sent to the President in an email. The Attorney General has not put forth the ability to participate in a Council meeting telephonically yet.

### **Public Comment**

David Osbourne, Pleasant Street, quoted the Charter article 6, Appointments. He spoke about the recent appointment to the Board of Health.

The President responded to Mr. Osbourne's concerns regarding the appointment.

### **Financial Forum**

Department heads are here this evening to give a brief introduction about their department and what their fiscal challenges are going forward.

A brief summary of Town Council Fiscal Priorities was given. The obligation as Town Manager is to present a balanced budget. There are three primary missions as a community, public safety, public education and public health. Also have matters of Public Works including roadwork and the ability to provide clean water to the town. Maintain level public services, support improvements in schools, consider fiscal efficiencies where appropriate and continue to invest in planned capital equipment and infrastructure improvements. The Town Manager is proud to say we have not had a single lay off despite a drop in State aid.

Financial Officer, Michael Bertino spoke regarding revenue issues. Have had declining local aid. Overall had a 3 or 4year trend downward. On local receipts, things we collect from our residents, reached a plateau of 2.5 million. On the expense side the biggest expense is healthcare, then pension fund and energy. Have made improvements in energy and grants have no control over these costs and have to budget accordingly. Healthcare, overall increase this year was 8% better than 15, 20% we saw prior to having GIC. Water & Sewer overview maintained level staffing and expenses. Hope to incorporate radio read meters. Will continue to utilize MWRA funds for Capital Improvements. Work to offset a proposed 9.8% increase in MWRA Sewer Assessment. Work to implement workforce allocation analysis.

Chief of Police, Terence Delehanty informed the public that the process has started to rebuild the Department and three officers have been hired this year. Over the next year

with the help of Peter Lombardi in the Grant Office we will increase the amount of officers. Peter's work is very valuable to the Police Department because an officer is not being pulled from their responsibilities to write grants and nothing slips through the cracks in the process increasing our chances of receiving the grant.

Next to present is Peter Lombardi, Grant Administrator who gets paid with a stipend. The Manager hopes to compensate him in the future for his hard work. Many grants do not allow for the Grant Writer to be compensated as part of the deal. This year the Grant Office has secured \$684,000, on such projects as the town hall boiler project, Pt Shirley project etc. Just under \$1million is outstanding on projects we have applied for. Funding has been applied for resource officers for the schools, energy efficient ceiling for the rink, and Walk Winthrop. Mr. Lombardi works with Department heads to try to maintain or increase their operating capacity for staffing. Infrastructure and capital repairs have been his focus.

Mr. Mark Rotondo, School Committee member FY2012 budget for the School Department has the following priorities.

1. providing level services
2. class size reduction especially at the elementary level
3. develop curriculum
4. compliance issues looking for funding for that

Schools have to be aware of financial constraints and function within its means. Embarking on a different type of budgeting process. Do a buildup from a line item analysis. Basing it on three year actuals and creating a new format for our expenditure reports. The goal of the new proposed format is for budget transparency and for the residents to know what the operational cost for education is in this community. The School Committee always puts the students first and will insure that there is appropriate staffing.

Fire Chief Paul Flanagan, acting as Chief Procurement Officer recently purchased a new fire truck for the Town. Last year the Chief was allowed to replace 3 firefighters in order to put public safety first in Winthrop. The Fire Department currently has 33 employees, which leaves the department with one position which will remain unfilled at this time. Last year received a \$261,250 grant from the Federal Government toward the purchase of a new fire truck. The Fire Department is purchasing a new engine to replace a fifteen year old engine which is in disrepair. With grant money the department was able to put two new radios in the Harbormaster boat and purchased new police portables for the Police Department also a new infrared camera and fire training. There will be an increase in utilities. Concerning double telephone poles the majority will be gone by the end of July.

Library Director, Alan Thibeault, submitted a level funded budget \$474,334 exactly the same as last year. 3 objectives of the budget

1. Need to cover contractually obligated payroll to remain open 40 hours five days per week. Have eleven people on staff, which is all the budget allows. In order to remain certified can go no lower than 40 hours.

2. Have been able to provide adequate resources. Have to meet a certain level, 12-15% of the budget must be spent on materials such as books magazines, CDs and online databases.
3. Need work on the roof, lighting and safety features need to be updated. With regard to professional training, need to retain membership in North of Boston Library Exchange. Which is a group of Libraries that pool resources together for a commonly shared automated system. Board of Trustees feel all this can be accomplished this year given the monies that has been requested and asked that any cuts be made fairly and proportionately.

Mr. Steve Calla, Operations Manager for the DPW, reported this has been one of the worst winters in recent years. As a result there have been a lot of damages as a result. Asphalt restoration and pothole repair has been the focus. The department is working diligently to be efficient with both money and materials. The sidewalk list is growing they will be addressed on severity. Currently have 270 complaints for sidewalk issues and growing. There is a supplemental budget request for sidewalk restoration this is important and would really benefit the Town. The Water Department is wrapping up March meter readings also just completed a leak detection survey. This helps find leaks that do not surface. Hydrant flushing will begin soon also DEP lead line replacements which is a big request for a small department. The number 1 supplemental budget request is for an automated meter reading system at a cost of \$725,000. Also replacement of the backhoe is needed, at a cost of \$83,000. Mr. Calla gave an update on the state of several pieces of equipment that is needed for daily operation of the DPW.

Mr. Charles Famolare, Harbormaster: At the Landing parking and landscaping have been completed. Lobsterman wharf also has been completed. Ferry will be starting up again in May. It will be another demonstration project. It will decide what kind of vessel the Town will be purchasing. We got a Federal Grant to purchase a vessel. The Ferry will be a great asset during construction of the bridge and the Orient Heights project. The terminal building went out to bid. The ramps are designed and permitted. Looking for a funding source. Possibly will begin in November. Regarding the Budget on target barely. The Harbor Department will be responsible for the water bill at the Town Pier. Maintained a total of 900 waterway stickers this year, which is up from 800. The Town Pier tenant rate is at 100%. Additional boaters are on the waiting list. There is a \$100,000 surplus in the Harbor Enterprise Fund for the past fiscal year. This will help with further projects.

Mr. Eric Moore, Health Agent for the Winthrop Health Department. Highlights for the upcoming year will be involved in a Health Needs Assessment to find out what the public issues are in the Town. Hope to prioritize and engage resources to address needs and concerns. Participate in health inspections, emergency preparedness, vaccinations clinics and public health education initiatives. The Department is level funded.

Mr. Jim Soper, Building Commissioner: The function of this department is to insure public safety during and after construction. The Department reviews plans and issues permits, answers construction questions and performs inspections. Also responsible for

issuing certificates and occupancy permits. Enforces ordinances and regulations related to zoning, building, plumbing, gas, weights and measures. Responds to complaints regarding various property matters. Performs safety inspections prior to issuance of liquor licenses to clubs and restaurants. Also inspects places of assembly. The Department consists of three inspectors and 1 Clerk. Due to the downward economy the department is handling a lot more foreclosures and vacancy and tenant issues. Assists the Board of Health, Fire Department and Police Department. Permits are up, 550 permits were issued this year. The department collects 185,000 a year in fees. Expenses are \$134,000 a year. The department is always working hard and pressing forward to help the Community.

Ms. Nancy Williams, Director of the Senior Center, recently added programs due to increased participation. Added another art class, Italian classes, also offer tai chi, zumba and yoga. Very fortunate to have received a couple of very large donations from Mike Eruzione who donated a television to the Center and Paul Flanagan gave \$10,000 for a new computer lab. Robert Flanagan is going to pay for all new carpeting at the Senior Center, which is badly needed because the Senior Center is now 20 years old. One of the goals is to have the Outreach Coordinator position established as a Town position. Involved in writing a grant for this position. The Senior Center is not always dealing with fun issues they also deal with physical and mental health issues for elders. The Outreach Coordinator must deal with elder abuse and visits homebound elderly. A grant was submitted with the Department of Transportation and with the help of Speaker DeLeo was awarded funding for the new van. The department has provided about 3,000 rides to people in the community. The Senior Lunch Program is growing. The staff consists of 2 part time people and 2 van drivers who are paid through the revolving account and an Outreach Coordinator. Also very grateful to have about fifty volunteers who help out at the Center. Going to put a major fundraiser together to be able to pursue the other goals of the department such as equipment for the kitchen and other projects. Will be starting a community garden this year.

Mr. Sean Driscoll, Parks and Recreation Director, and Larsen Rink Manager. Has been getting a lot of calls regarding damage from the tough winter we just had. Playgrounds are going to be a challenge there are several that are in need. The new location is working out great thanks to the staff at the Middle School. The Department is mostly self-funded. The biggest obstacle is coming up with programs. They anticipate a large turnout for the summer program. Regarding the rink energy costs are a challenge. They were able to get work done on the light fixtures through a grant from National Grid and the zamboni is in need of repair. Warm weather becomes a challenge at the rink. The staff is great, Jill Caputo and Toni Tittmore also Frank Fabiano is a great asset at the Character Breakfast. Added a new great website, WinthropRec.com. The buses that were donated by Viking Pride is a great asset for the Department, they keep transportation costs down.

Finance Department, Michele Karas, Assistant Finance Director and Michael Bertino, Finance Director. The MIS Department major goals were to fine tune and look at where

we can cut costs. The financial software system, which is 99% complete will save us almost \$50,000. Hope to put that back in the General Fund so it can be distributed to other departments. Training is an area that has not been budgeted in the past. It is important to cross train and become more efficient. Working on the phone system town wide and doing an analysis of the cost and services. Want to purchase one system that will be maintained by one department. Also oversee the Assessing Department. We have had a layoff of the Deputy Assessor. We outsource part of that function. Going into a re-certification with the Department of Revenue, which will be strenuous on the department. Fifteen hundred properties need to be revalued.

Finance Director, Michael Bertino, reported the parking program is in full swing for almost five years now, in-house for almost 2 years. Treasury committee is reviewing bids for the Ferry Terminal. They will be moving the Treasury Department to where the Clerk is. Collections are average.

That concludes the Financial Forum at 9:40PM

The President entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session with the purposes of discussing collective bargaining.

Motion by Councilor DelVento  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilor Powers

Councilor Varone	YES
Councilor DelVento	YES
Councilor Powers	YES
Councilor Boncore	YES
Councilor Sanford	YES
Councilor Calla	YES
Councilor Maggio	YES
Vice President Letterie	YES
President Turco	YES

9 YES Votes

Respectfully Submitted  
Leighanne Strangie  
Town Council Clerk