

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 21, 2012

Under the Rules and Procedures of the Winthrop Town Council, President Gill called the Town Council Meeting of February 21, 2012 to order at 7:00 PM in the Harvey Hearing Room.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Letterie led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Assistant CFO Michele Karas served as Council Clerk for the evening.

ROLL CALL

Councilor DelVento	Present
Councilor Powers	Present
Councilor Letterie	Present
Councilor Boncore	Present
Councilor Sanford	Absent
Councilor Calla	Present
Councilor Mael	Absent
Vice President Varone	Present
Council President Gill	Present

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TOWN CLERK
MICHÈLE KARAS

MINUTES

February 7, 2012 on hold until March 6, 2012 Meeting.

Council President Gill made an announcement for a Moment of Silence for Kathleen Hickey's father Fred Cerulli who passed away over the weekend. Councilor Calla asks for a Moment of Silence for two residents: Debbie Abbott a young woman who lost her life battling cancer and Pat Wall's son John who passed unexpectedly.

PRESENTATION AND PUBLIC HEARING

Roadway & Infrastructure – PROJECT 3

Introduction by Steve Calla/DPW Director – Contract 3 Project – widespread 8 different neighborhoods in town; improve, one rejuvenate the gateway to town – 3900 foot water main replacement, 3,300 foot misaligned sewer main, mile and half sidewalk, asphalt/drainage Ingleside Park, ball park and resurfacing of two tot lots.

Jim McKenna – Request for this to be a Public Hearing. Per Town Council President Gill, this will be a Public Hearing and it will go along with the presentation by Arthur Leventis.

Mr. Calla introduced Art Leventis of Woodard & Curran who provided a PowerPoint Presentation outlining the details/scope/need/goals, scheduling of construction, and what to expect throughout the process.

Councilor Letterie had questions about the sidewalks and Mr. Calla stated a survey will be done and curb cuts will be done. Mr. Calla stated this will help our water main breaks too. He also stated he is aware of the proximity of school as well as Parks & Recreation Ingleside Park Programs

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There was a lengthy question and answer period regarding the poles, drainage, pitching of the pipes changing the flow of drainage and fixing the hydraulics:

Mr. McDuffe, a Walden Street resident had a question regarding Telephone & TV poles being moved. Mr. Levantis stated they would not be moved. Councilor Varone had a question regarding the line behind the pillar house. Mr. Levantis stated it will stay in effect but the main line that comes through from the school flow that it is carrying the hydraulics to go through those 90-degree angles, manhole catches grease and debris, should not affect the pillar house services. Mr. Calla stated that this is not part of that project.

Mr. Mullone of Palmyra Street had several questions regarding the drainage at Ingleside Park – going through Brookfield Road towards Donovan's Beach – where is all this water going go? Mr. Levantis informed Mr. Mullone that the pipes are bigger and sloped differently so the water can get out quicker; this is not bringing any more water to that area. Not adding any new pipes or changing the flow of drainage, we are only fixing the hydraulics. Mr. McKenna stated the building a greater capacity and pitching the pipes so drainage will happen much quicker. Mr. Levantis also stated he should see some relief; beginning stages of what needs to be a bigger project.

The Town Managers stated it is important to keep on schedule with this project then gave an overview of the scope of project and the funding.

Dave Osborne had questions about the bonds we were seeking and the effect it will have on the sewer rates.

CFO Bertino spoke on the effect of the water rate based on the projected budget water will go up 4.24% and sewer up 1.52%.

Mr. Rotondo had questions about the increase being approximately 6% and Ms. Sharkey had questions regarding the ditch area. Mr. Levantis responded that the pipe there now is 36 x 42 culvert (old granite); designing it now it will be significantly much larger.

Mr. Mullone expressed further concern regarding flooding at Brookfield Road.

Mr. Osborne had questions regarding the budget projected for next year \$750K meter project and his recommendation that the MGL to be added to the Real Estate Bill to enable taxpayers to claim as a deduction on income taxes.

End of Public Hearing at 7:59PM

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice President Varone announced that he is holding office hours the First Tuesday of the month in the Council Chambers.

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Guy Brandenstein, Precinct 6 suggested that someone fix the ballast. Mr. Osborne of 474 Pleasant Street stated we have the highest water rates in the country and not only the state; how other money has been added to the water/sewer rates; indirect charges; reserves; payroll; ½ million added to water/sewer – he feels misdirected and not necessary. Adding like it is nothing. He suggested that the Town take out a general obligation bond, take it on as the town and leave the sewer/water ratepayers alone. Should look at gas projects – that is a good project/change all oil to gas.

Mr. Rotondo of Precinct 2 wanted to clarify some information regarding the School Committee request for a transfer of \$208,000 from free cash to bottom line/SPED line of the School Committee Budget to the Town Council as they deliberate on this matter. He discussed various sources of funding from which the School Committee set their 2011 budget. He went on to state that the Town Council held back \$240,000 (money that Mr. Rotondo stated the School Committee had budgeted for raises) from the School Committee budget request when the Town Council voted on the final 2012 Town Budget. Further, he stated that there were monies “swept” from the budget including \$293,000 Circuit Breaker (SPED tuition money) and other items totaling \$919,000. Further, he stated that everyone was aware that the Circuit Breaker Funds are part of the SPED Funding and that there would be a shortfall requiring a transfer to be made prior to the end of FY12. He also stated that this projected shortfall was not a surprise and was not unanticipated.

Mary Alice Sharkey of Precinct 2: stated that she agrees with a lot of what Mr. Rotondo stated and she does not think the School Department has been irresponsible. There was talk of a Stabilization Line to anticipate the pre-paying tuition for next year but that had not been put in there then we would not be here to discuss this. The Budget Committee has sat with Mr. Bertino and has to remind the Council that the Council took money from the School. DESE told Ms. Sharkey that the School Committee is allowed to keep one year’s Circuit Breaker money to be held over to provide for any unanticipated SPED tuition needs and that this money cannot be swept.

CFO Bertino wanted to clarify the money that was swept it was run through DSES; you may keep one year in reserve and cannot stockpile the money. \$500K was sitting circuit breaker and another \$500K in tuition, which is not allowed legally, maintain as a savings account. Budget on actual expenditures that we know are going to be here and go forward with those numbers, we must forget about the past.

CORRESPONDENCE

President Gill read a letter from Nancy Williams requesting that the Council designate a liaison from the Council to assist with planning an event to honor Speaker DeLeo on the naming of the Robert DeLeo Senior Center.

President Gill read a letter from the Council on Aging requesting an appointment to vacancy on the Council on Aging. Three letters of interest in the position were attached.

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President Gill will have Mrs. Williams notify each of the interested parties to submit an application. He stated after a review of the applications he would make an appointment.

President Gill read into the record a Resignation Letter from Christine Dow of the Conservation Committee. Also, a letter from CONCOM – due to the recent resignation a request to follow-up to request an appointment to a full member – Karen Wynn (read into the record). Application in hand also in the Town Clerk's Office. (Appointment will be discussed under New Business).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

TOWN MANAGERS REPORT

Mr. McKenna spoke on three brief matters:

Bus Service

MBTA Hearing coming up; reading newspapers and getting comments – situation more reality than fiction; need to pay attention to this and our bus service may be in jeopardy. Ferry Service is an option/discussion on the table. Mr. McKenna stated he has had conversations with various agencies regarding their future support for Winthrop's Ferry Service. He stated that we need to voice our concerns regarding these important services.

Ferry Services

Meeting on March 1st on the Ferry Service and procurement of a vessel.

How we fit in that picture or a different picture. Both Bus and Ferry Service(s).

Six Month Update on the Consolidation

Mr. McKenna presented an update on the consolidation as requested including reports from the Facilities Manager, Finance Manager and MIS.

Mr. McKenna introduced Mr. Boyle the Town's Facilities Manager who has many years of experience within Facilities Management within Cambridge and Somerville. Mr. Boyle thanked the residents and his co-workers stating everyone has been friendly and helpful. He stated he is still in the "learning" phase. Mr. McKenna stated that Mr. Boyle has taken on the role as Project Manager at the Ferry Terminal Building.

Councilor Powers spoke on the 5 Year Capital Plan and Mr. Boyle reported that we just converted to gas from at the Middle School and Rink. MSBA will be a factor for the High School. Mr. Boyle stated he has been touring buildings and would like to catalog his findings.

Councilor Calla had inquiries about Mr. Boyle's daily activities. How much "hands on" work is involved? Councilor Letterie wanted to know if Mr. Boyle is available "24 hours a day-7 days a week"? President Gill questioned what is Mr. Boyle's role with regard to the School Custodians? How does that relate to the Principals' role with the Custodial Staff?

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OLD BUSINESS

Councilor DelVento read motions that had been referred to Council Finance Committee

All items were advertised.

Councilor DelVento made a Motion from Council Finance Committee to transfer the amount of \$38,040.00 to Unemployment Line from Unemployment Reserve.

CFO Bertino stated there would definitely be another adjustment to the Unemployment Line; this was December and we have new liability and they have extended.

Motion Passes Unanimously

Councilor DelVento made a Motion from Council Finance Committee to transfer \$33,000 to Litigation from Council Reserve.

Motion Passes Unanimously

Councilor DelVento made a Motion from Council Finance Committee to transfer the amount of \$35,879.18 for unpaid bills from FY2011 School Department Bills from Free Cash.

Councilor Powers wanted to know if there has been a system put in place so this doesn't happen again and Council President Gill stated yes, procedures have been put in place and have been corrected and strictly adhered to. CFO Michael Bertino stated the policy is put into place and you need the funds to back it up. The Town has been using electronic Requisition/PO system. The School has put a purchase order system in place.

Motion Passes Unanimously

Roadway and Infrastructure Project – Contract 3

CFO Michael Bertino stated that the Bond Council is very strict and once we vote this the people have been made aware of a rate adjustment so we can pay debt service. Council Powers would like to have the opportunity to discuss the impact at next Special Town Council Meeting set for Tuesday, February 28 to see how it will impact Water/Sewer Enterprise Fund. Council President Gill stated we will need the language from the Town Manager regarding the Project so it can be discussed and voted at the next regular meeting, on March 6th

Motion by Councilor Powers to Table Roadway and Infrastructure Project Contract 3 Bond Authorization until March 6, 2012

Motion Passes Unanimously

NEW BUSINESS

President Gill asked for Confirmatory Vote on Police Labor Contract.

Motion by Councilors Powers for a Confirmatory Vote on the Police Labor Contract

2nd by Vice President Varone

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Discussion about Conformity Vote on Labor Contract

Councilor Powers stated he is a strong believer in raises for employees but his only concern with this and any other raise is that he doesn't want to see a contract approved that is going to impact departments where layoffs are required to support the contract or anything that would cause the Town for an additional fund request.

Councilor Letterie not questioning the worthiness of the raise his concern is this the first of three more unions? Mr. McKenna stated he has 5 on this side and there are several on the school side. Town Manager has pegged an 8.6% of increase for health costs/increases and you have to look at the totality of the Contract when building a budget and essentially it is 6 years at 1.2 % increase per annum and he has to negotiate in good faith. It the responsibility of all of us to generate new revenue for the Town and he hope with budget discussions it is talked about along with the challenges for the School and the Town. Council Boncore stated parity is not legal in this state and need to negotiate each contract separately. This is more of a raise than he would like to see; taxpayers need to be taken into consideration because they are not getting those raises in private sector. Council DelVento stated the increase is a small increase and the Union has made concessions that were considered and made by police union in this contract. Councilor Letterie believes that we are the bare bones with Fire and Police and doesn't want to jeopardize the public safety we have now.

6 YAY – Councilor DelVento, Councilor Powers, Vice President Varone, Council President Gill, Councilor Boncore, Councilor Calla

1 NAY – Councilor Letterie

Motion passes 6 to 1

Councilor Sanford and Councilor Mael not in attendance.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS

President Gill stated he would like to appoint Karen Wynne as a full member of the CONCOM

Councilor Boncore made a motion to adopt the appointment of Karen Wynn

2nd by Councilor Powers

Motion Passes Unanimously

President Gill reminded all that there is a MBTA Meeting, which is very important regarding fare increase vs. service decrease. Everyone should attend to voice their importance for the bus services.

Also, Special Meeting of the Town Council on February 28, 2012 6PM in the Harvey Hearing Room for Enterprise Funds.

6:00 - Water/Sewer

7:00 - Rink/Recreation

8:00 - Harbor Management

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Also, Rules & Ordinance Meeting on the 29th at 6:00pm

Motion by Councilor Powers for a Citation from the Council for Captain Ned Hazlett who has retired after 43 years of service for the Town

2nd by Councilor Calla

Motion Passes Unanimously

The citation will be presented to Captain Hazlett at his retirement party on March 24, 2012

Motion by Councilor Boncore to release the minutes from the first part of the Executive Session on February 7, 2012, which pertains to the Police Contract when the minutes are approved for the regular Council Meeting of February 7, 2012

2nd by Powers

Motion Passes Unanimously

Councilor Letterie had questions about the double poles, Chief Flanagan responded stating there have been 54 double poles taken out of town and that there is an issue with some of the vendors National Grid, Verizon, etc.

Councilor Letterie had questions about the Bridge Project and DPW Director Calla stated that the Project is progressing well, that the gas main issue is being identified and being rectified currently and projected lane changes by mid April.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Guy Brandenstein, Precinct 6 spoke on the new ferry terminal stating it is very nice looking; would like to suggest something be done about the Seagulls as they are using at a roost. Mr. Boyle stated seagull measures were not in original design but there are devices for them and it is being worked on as we speak. Mr. Brandenstein, continued speaking of next weeks meeting with the MBTA stated reading lead him to believe budget problems are self-generated, mismanagement and poor budgeting. Example: Rose Kennedy Roadway, six figure salaries and suggested these facts be used for information when speaking with Mr. DeLeo. President Gill suggest that this conversation be taken up at the hearing next week.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Powers

2nd by Councilor Calla

Motion Passes Unanimously

Meeting Adjourned at 9:21PM

A DVD of this meeting is available from WCAT

Public Documents used in this meeting are available in the Town Manager's Office.

Documents used in this Meeting:

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Notes taken by Michele Karas who filled in for Council Clerk.

PowerPoint Presentation by Arthur Leventis.

Contract 3 – Sewer, Water and Drain Improvements

Handout Scope of Contract 3 Project – Mr. McKenna/DPW Director Steve Calla.

Correspondence from Nancy Williams, Betty Vazquez and resignation of Kristine Dow of the Conservation Commission

Three Letters of Request for Appointment to the Winthrop Council on Aging

Opening Meeting Law Complaint by Guy Brandenstein

Legal Notices for Public Hearing Roadway and Infrastructure Project, Contract 3 Authorizations, Loan Order and Transfer Requests.

Town of Winthrop Budget Snap Shot for seven months ending January 31, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,
Town Council Clerk
Kathleen S. Hickey