

Winthrop Finance Commission Minutes

Date: Thursday, May 22, 2025, at 6:00pm

Attendees: TOW: Phil Ronan (PR), Al Lagee (AL), Russ Sanford (RS), Lisa Howard (LH), Sarah Johnson (SJ)
FC: Karin Chavis (KC), William Gault (WG), Matt Gorzkowicz (MG), Hannah Belcher (HB), John DaRos (JD), Brent Farrell (BF), Max Tassinari (MT), John Macero (JM)
Absent: Joe Hanlon, Shannon Poulos
Other: Jim Letterie (JL), Suzanne Swope (SS)

Meeting called to order at 6:09 pm by MG.

Rollcall vote completed by KC. All present except individuals noted above. Minutes approved from the prior meeting (5.14.25) approved by all members present at that meeting.

Presentation & Discussion: Veterans Affairs by Phil Ronan

- Creation of women's veteran's memorial and designations for purple heart, etc.
- Budget is static, not grant dependent – all towns above 12K population position is mandated.
- Outreach and coordination of care and improving lifestyle for various veterans is focus.
- Instituted preventative maintenance program for various plaques and statues.
- No issues or complaints with proposed budget from town manager.
- Salary adjustment was related to the town compensation survey.

Presentation & Discussion, Inspectional Services by Al Lagee & Russ Sanford

- Building clerk has been added to full-time position.
- Perfected building software processes.
- Coordination with assessors' office has been improved.
- Accessory Dwelling Units and Airbnb ordinances are coming online and being addressed.
- Goals for the upcoming year focused on completing inspections efficiently, completing certifications and education, and streamlining processes.
- Digitalization process has not been started, and it is still being discussed with the town manager.
- ADUs expected to be mandated for single-family homes also.
- JL suggested adding an additional full or part-time code enforcement officer (~\$30-\$35K for part-time addition).
- The expectation is to generate over \$1MM in fees, etc.
- Town manager discussing hiring a third-party company to track Airbnb rentals.

Continued Discussion, School Department by Lisa Howard

- Second meeting with LH, list of questions provided in advance by commission members.
- Teachers' union negotiations just began (umbrella for four of the seven unions).
- Collective bargaining not pursued due to various groups represented.
- No final numbers received related to federal funding, expected by July.
- Autism program transitioning to ATC, have third-party program built via New England Center for Children (saves \$1-\$1.5MM annually due to in-house services being provided). Follows children.
- Creating specific classroom at ATC, requiring teacher becoming "mobile" to accommodate space needs
- Earmark of \$200K from Lydia Edwards office expected to occur again this coming year
- One payroll, one accounts payable and shared business manager in business office – currently meets needs but more personnel would be beneficial

General Committee Discussion

- June 3rd is presentation by Finance Commission, followed by public hearing
- June 10th budget vote will occur by Town Council

MT motioned to adjourn; all seconded. Approved by all present members.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.