TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 20, 2026

President Letterie calls the meeting to order at approx. 6:45 following the Executive Session

ROLL CALL
Present: Councilor Costigan, Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Millar, Councilor Romano, Councilor Dimes, Councilor Reardon, Vice President Swope, President Letterie

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Councilor Swope

MOMENT OF SILENCE
Virginia Wilder-Long time employee of the Town of Winthrop

MINUTES
Motion by Councilor Dimes to Approve the Minutes of December 16, 2025, as circulated.
2nd by Councilor Tassinari
Passed Unanimously

Motion by Councilor Romano to Approve the Minutes of January 6, 2026, as circulated.
2nd by Councilor Dimes
Passed Unanimously

GENERAL INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Council President presents our town "spotlights" of the DPW Dept.
All thank Director Calla and his staff for their hard work, especially during this last storm.

PUBLIC HEARING
None

PUBLIC COMMENT
Bill Deemo P5-Discusses a letter he wrote to the Winthrop Transcript reflecting his concerns of the new Town Council and the dilemma the new council has to face. Will it continue to be anti 3A or join the vast communities that have voted to comply? Good luck with their work ahead of them.

Karin Chavis P2-Statements to the Town Manager, requested evaluation of health insurance and progress on a chief information officer, has there been any progress on these requests.
Reviewing last year's budget and would like a review of the Capital Plan. A lot were funded and she would like to review what has been done and what hasn't.

Tom Derderdian P3-All the Ash Trees in town is infected and are dying. A group of citizens have collected funds for spring planting of trees and thanks all that donated.

Erin Barcello P5-Invites anyone and council to join them on Saturdays on the bridge for their standouts. Not for any particular reason but for due justice alone. What is the Town Council, Town Manager, WFD, WPD doing to ensure safety for all residents in this town. She believes there are a lot of people that do not feel safe with our government protecting them.

Lisa Plotnick P6-Requests information on the daily bus schedule and the cuts in the bus service.

CORRESPONDENCE
None

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT REPORT
Council President reports that the School Committee met last Monday and discussed math and reading, benchmark testing in the 2nd week in Jan. and Access testing is also on way. FY26 Budget on course. FY27 process is underway. Discussion is ongoing with union negotiations.

COMMITTEE REPORTS
FHBC-Progress continues with the WMS Demolition. Most of the main buildings have been demolished easily and going smoothly.

UPDATE POLICY MAKING COMMITTEES-
Please see attached.

TOWN MANGER REPORT-Please see attached copy of report.
Town manager reports there are size monitors in place on the middle school, there have been some concerns on the vibrations, but all seems to be intact.

Councilor Dimes asks DPW Director approx. number of cubic yards of materials out of Fishermen's Bend
DPW Director-approx. between 3-500 yards and will be hauled to the DPW yard and then trucked out to a landfill.

Vice President Swope asks for a running document of grants that town applied for and what results were.

Councilor Tassinari, thanks the Town Manager for submitting the letter for the earmarks….
Thanks, DPW Director for their hard work during the storm.
Comments on the auto calls for parking ban but yet some people received a ticket and stated they did not get a call.
Town Manager states you can sign up on our Town Website.
DPW Director adds that once the blue lights are lit which is usually several hours prior to ban. By ordinance any time during the winter months, a parking ban is in effect.

Councilor Costigan-thanks all for the crosswalk lights at Magee's Corner.
Telephone poles at the bottom of River Rd and Buchanan will be replaced and thankful for this safety issue being addressed.

OLD BUSINESS
Update to P6-
Council President states that there is still an opening on Precinct 6 for anyone from that precinct that would like to send a letter of interest. Right now, we have two that are interested, Marty Finn and Danny Floyd.
He is hoping to appoint by the middle of February.

NEW BUSINESS
MBTA 3A Exemption Status-Vice President Swope discusses a case in court that is addressing the density and an exemption from MBTA 3A, that is it, nothing else but the exemption.

Motion by Vice President Swope that the Town Council join the Town of Winthrop court case seeking to exempt the town from the MBTA Communities Act.
2nd by Councilor Costigan
This motion cannot be discussed in open session.
Councilor Dimes uses her Council Privilege to lay the current motion on the table as she still has unanswered questions and will need additional information prior to voting confidentially.

This discussion will end and it will be put back on for the 2-3-26 Town Council Meeting

2026 Town Council Sub Committees / Consolidation Appointment
Council President will ask for a consolidation of the current Town Council Standing Committees, mainly due to attendance and meeting minute issues…he feels consolidating will be best suited for the council and will be asking Town Council members to become liaisons for our policy making committees and report to the Town Council on each meeting.

Motion by Councilor Dimes to approve the appointment made by Council President Letterie of Landon LaPort to the Conservation Committee for a term to end June 30, 2029
2nd by Councilor Tassinari
Passed Unanimously

Motion by Councilor Dimes to approve the appointment made by Council President Letterie of Wendy Millar Page to the Firehouse Re-Use Committee
2nd by Councilor Romano
Yes-(7)
Abstention- (1) Councilor Millar
Motion Passed

Motion by Councilor Dimes to approve the appointment made by Council President Letterie of Debbie Chavis to the Board of Registrars for a term to end June 30, 2029
2nd by Councilor Tassinari
Discussion
Vice President Swope comments that both candidates are very good and happy people applied. She hopes all are ready to make sure all feel confident that it is fair and there are no problems in the election. Ms. Viens has legal experience and since she was not appointed hopes the Council takes caution and oversees the election process since there have been questions about the elections.

Council Presidents states he is confident in the past Board of Registrars that we have had and confidence in the Town Clerks and the department in all the elections the town has had. He believes the elections have been impeccably run and the results come out in a very timely manner and has utmost confidence and it will continue.

ROLL CALL VOTE
No: Councilor Costigan, Councilor Romano, Councilor Reardon, Vice President Swope
Yes: Councilor Tassinari, Councilor Millar, Councilor Dimes, President Letterie
Motion Does Not Pass
Council President states that when he has another applicant that he deems worthy, he will bring them forward.

Climate Commission Summation-Council President reports on a comment from Celeste Ribiero Hewit on the email sent from the Climate Commission to the Town Council, which has been reviewed. He thanks the climate commission for their hard work and refers to the email. Again he thanks the committee and will get back to their recommendation as right now they are focusing on Tileston, Morton and Pico. He is making a special request in our FY27 Capital Plan and hopes that in the future we will have access to grants. He realizes the flooding issues in these areas but states that for total funding we are potentially looking into a storm water fee that we could adopt to create a fund for storm water issues or could look at funding through water and sewer fund which would raise rates or a debt exclusion of which he believes no one is interested in any increases in taxes….

Dedication to Charlie DeMinico-A Request from the Veterans Agent that the baseball diamond at Ingleside Park be dedicated to Charlie DeMinico, this will be done in the spring.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Celeste Ribiero Hewitt P1-Just to ducktail of the email from the climate commission. Concerns continue on the lack of funding and concerns for the town on repercussions on the town for the residents that have been suffering from this flooding issue. This is not an ideal situation for a coastal community as we are.

Jack Dowd P4-States that he has always felt safe in our town and the services provided to us, the town, the WFD, the WPD…. In his opinion that the people that are demonstrating are in harm's way, including the people on the bridge. He is fearful it only takes one car for a tragedy to occur.

Erin Barcellos P5-Addresses her first public comment she was not talking about the white people standing on the bridge, they feel safe….there are people in our community that do not feel safe living day to day feeling like they do not know what is going to happen because shades of their skin, their accent. They would like to come to Town Council Meetings but sometimes due to what people are wearing, they do not feel safe attending. Also, she wants to speak of her support for all teachers in this town.

Diane Sands P5-She does not believe why the exemption case was not voted on. She states that in her collection of signatures she claims they are not accurate and this is one thing she would like to review.
States people at the bridge are doing what they want, because they want to. There was a comment on shades of skin, and she feels it is more of a legal issue.

Colleen Murphy P2-Comments on the tree in memory of Michael Cellucci and asks what will happen to this dedication?

Erin Barcellos P5-Again, clarifies first and second comment, when she speaks of people with different shades of color is their experience, not her experience. Talk to people.

PUBLIC RELATIONS / UPCOMING EVENTS
Committee Openings:
Board of License-Board of Appeals-Nautical Aviation-Board of Registrars
Please submit an application to the Town Council

Councilor Swope announces that the last Wednesday of every month 6-7 from now to May she will be holding a "Listening Post" for all to join in and have an open discussion for our residents to speak and ask questions.

ADJOURNMENT
Motion to adjourn by Councilor Millar at 7:58pm
2nd by Councilor Romano
Motion Passed Unanimously

Public Documents used in the meeting are available at Town Managers Office.
Documents Used in this Meeting: Handwritten Notes / Committee Openings Documents Roll Call Log
Written Motions / Verbal Motion
Respectfully submitted.
Denise Quist
Town Clerk
Council Clerk