

Winsted

Residents hawkish in support of Dove

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WINSTED — About 135 indignant residents rallied Sunday at the Gilbert School to protest the firing of Town Manager Wayne W. Dove and plan ways to pressure the four selectmen responsible.

Many who attended said they feel embarrassed for their town, because of the behavior of the board of selectmen.

"This whole thing has blown up," said one resident, Larry Volovelski, as he signed a petition calling for the firing to be reversed. "It's like the Hartford Whalers. You can't run a town like this."

The rally was sponsored by the Citizens' Coalition for Open Government, a group formed last week by Charles LaVoie, a "community lawyer" whose position is funded by a private trust.

Dove lost his job at a town hall meeting Nov. 18, when four of the seven selectmen voted to fire him, despite objections by more than 150 residents.

Many of the residents protested that the selectmen gave no solid reason for their action; some contended a back-room deal must have been struck.

The same four selectmen, Dennis

TV station to replay board meeting

WINSTED — Monday Night Football probably won't be the most watched program on television in this town tonight.

That's because the town's public access channel, Mad River Television, plans to show a tape of the Nov. 18 selectmen's meeting tonight. At that meeting, Town Manager Wayne W. Dove was fired amidst heated protests from more than 150 spectators.

Public access coordinator Par Rasmussen said the tape will be aired at 8 p.m. on channel 13 and runs for about 3½ hours. People who did tape the original broadcast of the meeting have been passing it around to others who

may have missed the political fireworks.

Charles LaVoie, founder of Citizens' Coalition for Open Government, said the group has arranged for a call-in poll on the firing issue during the broadcast.

The station is also planning to air the first meeting of the Citizens' Coalition for Open Government, which was held Sunday, but not until later this week.

Rasmussen said he was sure someone, either a resident or station volunteer, would videotape the meeting.

The coalition was formed as a response to Dove's firing.

At Sunday's rally, LaVoie and others James A. Pettit and Nancy Peters Habbal and Republicans William H. McCabe and Francis J. O'Neill Jr. voted McCabe into the mayor's seat Nov. 6, before Democrat John P. Gauger Jr. had been sworn in as a board member and after Democratic selectmen Brian W. Sullivan and Walter D. Miller had walked out in protest.

At Sunday's rally, LaVoie and other speakers repeated the theme that the "gang of four" behind the firing had acted on a secret agenda, without properly informing the public.

"The honorable gentlemen have not been honorable to us," said Leona LaChaire, town historian. "It was an absolute sham," said Norman Newfield, a resident and

substitute teacher. "The only thing we can do is put pressure on them."

Newfield and LaVoie called on those present to help circulate more petitions against the firing. About 500 signatures have already been gathered, LaVoie said, adding that the petitions will be presented to the selectmen at a public hearing on the firing, scheduled for Dec. 3.

Newfield and LaVoie also said residents should deluge the selectmen and town hall with phone calls in protest.

Dove attended the rally, along with Miller, Sullivan and Gauger. Asked how he felt about the show of support, Dove smiled.

"I'm glad they're coming out for their town," Dove said. "That's what counts."