

Town manager meeting tonight

By JEDD COULD
Register Column Staff

WINSTED — A special meeting of the Board of Selectmen has been scheduled for tonight but a reversal of the vote to fire Town Manager Wayne W. Dove is unlikely, selectmen said yesterday.

But Mayor William H. McCabe and Selectmen Francis J. O'Neill Jr. and Nancy P. Habbel all said last night they would not even consider changing their votes to fire Dove while litigation they believe dangerous to Winsted's form of government is outstanding.

The special meeting requested by Selectmen Walter D. Miller and Brian W. Sullivan is scheduled for 7 p.m. at the town hall. The agenda for the meeting includes Dove's employment as well as a discussion on the litigation.

filed this week. It could go into executive session, leaving the public from attending.

A Litchfield Superior Court judge Wednesday issued a restraining order stopping the selectmen from terminating Dove's employment until a complaint by community lawyer Charlene LaVoie to bring the issue to a referendum is heard.

Until now selectmen have passed a motion of intention to fire Dove. In order to complete the deal, a second vote is needed.

The court order prevents selectmen from taking that second vote. However, it does not prevent them from reversing the vote that states an intention to fire Dove, LaVoie said.

That is what Miller hopes will happen at tonight's meeting.

"What we are doing is giving selectmen one more chance to rescind their votes and save the town a lot of legal fees," Selectman Walter D. Miller said yesterday.

Miller, Sullivan and John F. Gauger Jr. are all supporters of Dove's who voted to retain him. There are four who voted against him.

One of them is Habbel, who said she believes the issue raised in LaVoie's complaint is too important to shift by reinstating the town manager under pressure.

"The issue here is how we are going to run our government," Wayne Dove is a pawn in this whole game. This is what it has become for Charlene LaVoie — a

What's happened so far

- WINSTED** — Here is a chronology of suspended Winsted Town Manager Wayne W. Dove's tenure:
- Dec. 17, 1990 — Colebrook resident Wayne W. Dove hired.
 - Nov. 5, 1991 — Democrats keep majority on the Board of Selectmen on Election Day.
 - Nov. 9, 1991 — Newly-elected Republican Mayor William H. McCabe asks Dove to resign.
 - Nov. 11, 1991 — Dove publicly refuses McCabe's request.
 - Nov. 12, 1991 — Selectmen pass a motion of intention to fire Dove by Dec. 31 and suspend him immediately.
 - Dec. 3, 1991 — About 300 people attend a public hearing in support of Dove.
 - Dec. 4, 1991 — Litchfield Superior Court injunction prevents selectmen from acting on any motion to formally fire Dove.

game and a power struggle over what Winsted's government will be like.

Habbel, along with Town Attorney Mark J. Swankin, argue that if the court allows the people to vote on the dismissal of a town

manager, he then becomes an employee of the people and not the town.

An employee of the people is a mayor, not a town manager, they say. See SELECTMEN, page 20