

Winsted must wait week for

By JEDD GOULD
Register Citizen Staff

WINSTED — Litchfield Superior Court Judge Anne C. Dranginis yesterday postponed a hearing that town officials are hoping will solve, once and for all, the question of exactly who has the right to fire a town manager.

The delay was granted at the request of Town Attorney Mark J. Svonkin, who told the court he wanted time to continue preparations and bring expert witnesses to the stand. He is defending the town against a complaint filed by the community lawyer's office attempting to bring the recent firing of suspended Town Man-

ager Wayne W. Dove to a referendum.

In accordance with Svonkin's request, the judge postponed the case until Dec. 18 at 11:30 a.m., making the attorney who filed the complaint furious.

Charlene LaVoie, the community lawyer, told Dranginis "there is no need for expert witnesses. The charter stands on its own." LaVoie is "an employee of the Shafeek Nader Trust, which was created by the Nader family for purposes of promoting open government in town."

While Dranginis appeared to agree with LaVoie, she granted the continuance anyway, saying

her law clerk would review the need for expert testimony before next week's hearing.

The disagreement over the testimony of witnesses goes to the heart of the differences between the two sides.

LaVoie believes the issue of Dove's employment is being distorted by Svonkin, who is attempting to divert attention to a charter question while putting up a smokescreen over what she believes to be the real issue — the Board of Selectmen's vote last month to fire Dove by the end of the year.

"The central focus of this issue was, is, and remains, will the