

**Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee
6:30PM, Wednesday, January 25, 2023
by Zoom Cloud Conference due to Covid-19 Restrictions**

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Present: Chair Nancy Gilfoy, Louise Clough, Mary Ellen Larsen,
Rachel Orr, Allan Rogers,
Town: Select Board – Abbe Burt, John Cahill,
Treasurer – Jonathan Snyder, Moderator – Deborah Medders,
Schools: Tisbury School – Prin. John Custer, TSC Chair – Amy Houghton,
Supt. Richie Smith, Asst. Supt. of Operations – John Stevens,
Business Administrator – Mark Friedman,
Student Support Director Hope MacLeod,
MVRHS – Prin. Sara Dingley, Finance Director – Suzanne Cioffi,
Coordinator of Career Pathway & Special Projects Sam Hart,
Others: Vineyard Gazette - Louisa Hufstader, Recorder – Marni Lipke,

* TFC members late arrivals or early departures.

Call Meeting to Order

• The Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) was called to order at 6:46PM. (*Recorder's note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.*)

Review of Tisbury School Budget Article – John Custer, Principal Amy Houghton – Tisbury School Committee (TSC) (See documents on file.)

The Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Budget came in at 4.96% or \$393,237 increase, the highest portion being contractual raises from union negotiations (salaries, steps, benefits, Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs), etc. Without the contractual increase, the FY24 budget would be a -1.18% decrease over FY23.

- Student accident insurance increased universally, but Transportation was slightly down.

- Repairs/Maintenance was cut \$93,000 retaining a residual for any problems with the modulars.

• Administrative Salary Increments was the estimated pool for management and non-union increases. It showed a large increase because of a lean FY23 due to union negotiation unknowns.

• Each town managed Residential Tuitions differently. Tisbury relied on School Choice funds, State Circuit Breaker or Extraordinary Relief funding (for mid-year unexpected tuitions) and if necessary Special/Annual Town Meetings (ATM/STM). Current School Choice reserves were ~ \$225,000 + \$100,000 committed to the FY23 Budget. No School Choice funds were committed to the FY24 Budget as they were needed for modular or Project unknowns.

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- Massachusetts Chapter 70 reimbursement was based on a foundational budget, the minimum amount the State considered the locality needed to service its students. The Cherry Sheet showed the amount of reimbursement and the draws for the Martha's Vineyard Charter School and School Choice tuitions.
- This year the State added Student Opportunity Act (SOA) funding to its Ch. 70. SOA was restricted to educational sub-group spending: Special Education (SpEd), English Language Learners (ELL), low socio-economic students, etc. as determined by each school. School officials informed Towns that any Ch. 70 funds above the previous year had to be earmarked as SOA and spent accordingly. The FinCom noted Tisbury School demographics and asked how the Tisbury Finance Dept. handled the funds (see below: Actions).
- The modulars were running smoothly, with kitchen/cafeteria in the American Legion Building and gym in the field behind the Emergency Services Facility (ESF). The transition went better than expected thanks to the tireless efforts of Prin. Custer, Asst. Prin. Melissa Ogden, the teachers, staff, and the polite, humble and professional construction team.
- The move from fossil to electric renewable energy was very costly, so there was a general push for grants and funding for solar panels. A solar-ready roof was part of the Project. However, municipal restrictions on non-profit, donation and grant moneys complicated alternate funding options.
- FinCom and School representatives exchanged thanks.

Review of Superintendent's Shared Services Budget – Richie Smith, Superintendent, Mark Friedman – School Business Administrator

(See documents on file.)

- Supt. Richie Smith introduced Assistant Supt. of Operations John Stevens who had signed on for a year to oversee major construction projects, and Student Support Director Hope MacLeod.
- There was a brief summary of the Shared Services programs which were instituted to save money by regionalizing the education of students with severe needs:
 - Project Headway for 2.9 to 5 yr. olds with moderate to severe challenges;
 - Bridge for school age students with needs (e.g. autism spectrum) beyond the resources of their home schools;
 - Compass for school age students with intensive emotional needs.
 - The law allowed 7 challenged and 7 peer students per classroom.
 - Related services to all Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) included:
 - physical and occupational therapy (PT & OT), Speech/Language,
 - specialists to visit/counsel teachers on special needs management,
 - Early Childhood (EC) Coordinator and EC Outreach Educator,
 - Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) who worked with all programs.

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- Despite aggressive savings, the Central Office FY24 Budget total increase was 5.97% or \$460,270, although proportional enrollment changes set Tisbury assessment at 7.64%.
 - Job and economy job market fluidity raised union negotiation results above the 2-2.5% norm to 5% with COLAs, steps, hours, differentials, etc.
 - Health insurance increase was estimated at 7.5%.
 - The only ask was an additional and mandated Project Headway teacher (hired in FY23) needed for expanded enrollment—additional space was being explored.
 - Other staffing needs, for example to administer grant funds, were managed by shifting duties and hours of existing staff. A SpEd Education Support Professional (ESP/Assistant) was moved to grant funding.
 - About \$144,000 in cuts avoided anything that would directly affect children.
- The Office budget was assessed through the local schools, based on foundation enrollment, i.e. not how many students were in the Tisbury School Building but how many Tisbury resident children the Town was responsible for, such as any school choice, shared program and Charter School students.
 - The High School was only assessed for the services it used.
- In keeping with Commonwealth trending, MVPS were having post-pandemic difficulties recruiting staff in some areas, particularly ESPs and transportation.
- The FinCom and Administrators exchanged thanks.

Review of Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) Budget and Warrant Article – Sara Dingley, Principal (See documents on file.)

The School Committee (MVRHSC) and Towns requested a budget at or below 2.5% increase, so after 10 versions this Budget was 2.11% operating expenses, assessed at 3.46% while still supporting teachers and students as well as maintaining contractual class sizes—despite 2-year 100-student growth.

- The increase drivers were:
 - the unusually high new union contractual obligations for 160 MVRHS staff,
 - 14-15% higher Residential Placements (about 9-10 students total),
 - supplies and goods inflation, e.g. audit services, insurance, etc.
 - Drivers Ed move from a contracted vendor to 2 newly certified staff teachers.
 - A prior year Excess and Deficiency (E & D) offset was reduced, which raised the FY24 assessment.
- \$1,182,000 in savings included:
 - capital investments reduced in anticipation of the pending construction project while retaining corrective/preventive maintenance;
 - administrative positions dropped from 13 in FY19 to 10 in FY23;
 - realigned contract with Martha's Vineyard Community Education and Training (MVCET—formerly ACEMV);

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- contingency reserves;
- reductions in one-time expenditures;
- teachers filling in for substitutes (which were in short supply);
- professional development (PD),
- elimination of a bus purchase,
- cafeteria salaries shifted to the Revolving Lunch Fund.

FinCom questions and discussions covered several issues.

- Administrative Support Professionals (ASPs) included, guidance, shared Central Office payroll services, and the MVRHS Principal's ASP.
- The official October 1st census showed 200 current Tisbury students out of 762 total.

Articles

- The MVRHSD was accepted into the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Feasibility phase on March 22, 2022 which would conclude with 2023 ATM votes. The School would conduct MSBA orientation and tours for Town Select Boards. If both articles (Feasibility Study & Regional Agreement Amendment) passed all 6 Towns, MVRHSD would start the procurement process for Owner's Project Manager (OPM) and then design firms.
- The original MVRHSD Regional Agreement based capital and operating cost assessment on year-by-year Town enrollment proportions, which balanced out to a fairly stable proportion over time.
- A condition of the MSBA acceptance was 6 town affirmation/support for 3 substantive amendments to the Regional Agreement:
 - Project specific fixed capital formula assessment (Tisbury share 22.9%) lasting throughout the life of the project and bonding;
 - Town enrollment 3-year rolling average to smooth out spikes and dips;
 - redefining Town student census from MVRHS attendees to foundation enrollment (e.g. residential placements and Charter School students).
- Having been part of many less than civil conversations on the matter, the FinCom was relieved the Island Towns were able to agree on the amendments.
- Administrative and legal costs were embedded in the \$2,000,000 Feasibility Study and future Project articles and were eligible for MSBA reimbursement.
- The borrowing agent would be the MVRHSD and the article language was specified by the MSBA and Bond Counsel. Each Town could decide on whether it would be a debt exclusion article (see below: Actions). Feasibility borrowing costs would not affect the Towns until FY25.
- MSBA per square foot reimbursement rate increases to be better reflect current pricing. However the higher costs and larger projects with limited funds would reduce MSBA programs and projects. The MVRHS was lucky to already be in the "pipeline".

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- FinCom and Administrators exchanged thanks and appreciation.

Vote on Articles and Budgets Reviewed 1/11/23

(See 1/18/23 Minutes p. 1-3.)

- The Council on Aging (COA) budget was clarified as follows.
 - The new copier (\$7,000) would be purchased and part of the Building Maintenance Department with all capital costs.
 - The current and new Directors' salary weeks started in July with the fiscal year, and the target New Director hiring date was October.
 - The training overlap was expected to be not more than 1 month, with additional contingency funds in case of recruitment delays or other problems.
- ALLAN ROGERS MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE **COUNCIL ON AGING #541 FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET AS SUBMITTED**; JYNELL KRISTAL SECONDED; MOTION **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS**: RACHEL ORR—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.
- ALLAN ROGERS MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS #422 FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET AS SUBMITTED**; JYNELL KRISTAL SECONDED; MOTION PASSED **UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS**: RACHEL ORR—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.
- RACHEL ORR MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING FISCAL YEAR 2024 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS ARTICLES AS PRESENTED:
 - **\$100,000 FOR UNION STREET UNDERGROUND UTILITIES;**
 - **\$150,000 FOR LANDFILL – LOCAL DROP-OFF;**
 - **\$200,000 FOR TOWN HALL, POLICE STATION AND COUNCIL ON AGING PAINTING;**
 - **\$70,000 FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FACILITY REPAIRS;**
 - **\$60,000 FOR A TILT TRAILER, DUMP BED, POLY WATER TANK, & SKID STEER;**
 - **\$50,000 FOR A RIDABLE SNOW REMOVAL MACHINE;**
 - **\$50,000 FOR TOWN HALL ANNEX REPAIRS;**
 - **\$20,000 FOR TWO NEW STANDING LAWN MOWERS;**LOUISE CLOUGH SECONDED; MOTION PASSED **UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS**: RACHEL ORR—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.
- IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE FINCOM TO TABLE THE \$225,000 VETERANS PARK REMEDIATION ARTICLE, because of a number of concerns:
 - coordination with Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation (MassDOT) on State Road flooding/drainage,

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- more comprehensive planning,
- leaching field use increasing the wetland areas,
- various park areas' use,
- possibility of Embarkation (ferry proximity venue), and/or Community Preservation Committee (CPC) funding,

Approve Minutes From: 10/13/22 Notes as Amended, 10/19/22, 11/16/22, 12/7/22, 12/21/22, 1/11/23 as Amended, 1/18/23

- *MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:*
- *OCTOBER 13, 2022 NOTES AS AMENDED,*
- *OCTOBER 19, 2022,*
- *NOVEMBER 16, 2022,*
- *DECEMBER 7, 2022, DECEMBER 12, 2022*
- *JANUARY 11, 2023 AS AMENDED, JANUARY 18, 2023;*
- LOUISE CLOUGH AND MARY ELLEN LARSEN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, ABSTENTIONS AS ABSENT.*

Committee Reports

- State Senator Julian Cyr submitted a simple Embarkation amendment legislation replacing the 50¢ fee with \$2. The State House of Representative bill only added 25¢ to pay the Barnstable Fire Department.
- The Tisbury Select Board (TSB) dropped Educomp building office rental in favor of leasing a 4-office trailer to reduce furniture/office removals.
- The FinCom TSB joint meeting was postponed (see below: meetings/events) to allow new member Abbe Burt to get up to speed. The FinCom congratulated Ms. Burt on her election. She found this meeting to be very informative.

Future Meetings (See below: Meetings/Events & Actions.)

- The meeting schedule was:
- Feb. 1st – Animal Control, Police and Harbor Departments;
- Feb. 8th – Planning Board, Fire/Emergency Management/Ambulance;
- Chair Nancy Gilfoy was talking to Town Administrator Jay Grande about the TSB, Human Resources Departments and Personnel Board scheduling.

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair - None

Adjournment

- *MARY ELLEN LARSEN MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:56PM; ALLAN ROGERS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: RACHEL ORR – AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.*

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Appendix A: Meetings/Events

- **TFC – TBD - 6:30PM, Wednesdays, February 1, 8, 15, 22, 2023 - Zoom**
- **TFC/TSB – March 1, 2023 - Zoom**
- **STM/ATM –Tuesday, April 25, 2023 – MVRHS PAC**

Appendix B: Actions

Nancy – contact Kirk re: Veterans Park article reservations.

Nancy – distribute first draft of the warrant.

Jon S. – report on how Ch. 70 & SOI funds are handled by the Town.

– consult Town and Counsel re: Feasibility Study debt exclusion.

All – contact Nancy with any department budget requests/questions.

All – Please remember not to hit “Reply All”.

Future Agendas

- Minutes: 1/25/23
- Dedicate some solar revenue to sustainability projects,
- Fund Energy Stabilization Fund
- New School Maintenance Budget

Budget Season Notes

- vote items/dept. budgets next meeting after they are presented/discussed;
- redraft FinCom letter to include deadlines and send to Committees/Boards;
- include Building Dept. fee revenues (offsetting expenses) in budget interview;
- ask departments to project all needs 5 years out i.e. like a capital plan but on other factors—staffing, program changes, etc.
- possible early votes: ° standard articles,
 ° smaller/level funded department budgets,
- Ask departments: general energy efficiency and emergency preparedness:
 - ° insulation, window repairs,
 - ° turn down heat/air conditioning, turn off lights, motion sensor or timers,
 - ° under sink hot water heaters.

\$100,000 FY23 Reserve Fund spending tally – Balance: \$100,000

Appendix C: Documents on File:

- Agenda/Revised Agenda (2 p.) 1/25/23
- Tisbury School FY’24 Budget Analysis, 2.1 Draft January 10, 2023
- Tisbury School Budget for 2023/2024, Version #2.1 - January 10, 2023 (5 p.)
- MVPS Student Support Services Update (2 p.) January 2023
- MVYPS FY24 680 Shared Services Budget, Budget Highlights Version #4
November 28, 2022 (4 p.)

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Appendix C: Documents on File (cont.):

- FY24 Draft Budget Highlights 12.14.2022, FY23 Operating Budget Before Revenue (2 p.)
- Martha's Vineyard Regional High School District, Certified Budget FY24, Version 8, January 9, 2023 (8 p.)
- MVRHS Census Data, FY20-FY24 Budget
- Warrant Article and Motion – Feasibility Study (MVRHS) (3 p.)
- Regional Agreement with changes (13 p.)
- Regional Agreement, Amendment and Restatement approved by School Committee... (11 p.)
- Martha's Vineyard Regional School District, Regional Agreement Amendments, September 1, 2022 (3 p.)

Nancy Gilfoy – Chair

Date

Minutes approved 3/1/23