

Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee
6:30PM, Wednesday, September 6, 2023
By Zoom Cloud Conference

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Present: Chair Nancy Gilfoy, Louise Clough, Ruth Konigsberg, Alex Meleney, Rachel Orr, Louis Pashman*, Allan Rogers,
Others: Carolyn Henderson – Public, Recorder – Marni Lipke,
Town: Climate Committee – Melinda Loberg,
* TFC or Task Group members late arrivals or early departures.

Call Meeting to Order

The Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) was called to order at 6:31PM. (*Recorder's note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.*)

Approve Minutes from 3/22/23, 4/5/23, 5/17/23, 6/21/23, 7/20/23, 8/10/23

- LOUISE CLOUGH MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:
 - MARCH 22, 2023,
 - APRIL 5, 2023,ALLAN ROGERS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSTENTIONS (not members at the time); RUTH KONIGSBERG—ABSTAIN, RACHEL ORR—AYE, ALEX MELENEY—ABSTAIN, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.
- ALLAN ROGERS MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:
 - MAY 17, 2023,
 - JUNE 21, 2023,
 - JULY 20, 2023 AS AMENDED,
 - AUGUST 10, 2023 AS AMENDED,LOUISE CLOUGH SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, ABSTENTIONS AS ABSENT; RUTH KONIGSBERG—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, ALEX MELENEY—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.

Discussion of Draft Letter to Tisbury Select Board (TSB) about Special Event Fees (See 6/21/23 Minutes p.2 & documents on file.)

- * During this discussion Louis Pashman entered the meeting at 6:38PM.
- Town financial accounts for the Beach Rd. Music Festival were examined.
 - 2021 expenses and damages payment had a \$33,000 residual which was applied to 2022 Damage deposit. 2023 figures would be available on completion of all accounting.
 - Concert Venue (Veterans Field) Fees were deposited as Parks & Recreation revenue, to be consistent with other Town property rental events.

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- There was confusion over contract clause 3.9 *Community Contribution* which was currently interpreted to mean Innovation Arts and Entertainment (IAE) would only pay the Town \$25,000 or 5% of the profits *if* the net profits exceeded \$100,000, so the Town never received a contribution. It was advised the clause be renegotiated/clarified to be interpreted as: \$25,000 or 5% of the profits over \$100,000, whichever was greater.
 - According to the press, IAE donated over \$100,000 to Island non-profits. Melinda Loberg reported Tisbury Waterways received a \$50 IAE donation.
- There was disagreement over whether the 3-day Festival made a profit. The cheapest tickets were \$150 per day with reported attendance at 11,000 on one day. Tickets were advertised at Red Sox games and on Metro-North in New York. However, Festival costs were substantial: musicians, transportation, enforcement/traffic, management, set-up/breakdown, etc.
 - The event used not only Tisbury police and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) but also other Island resources such as Edgartown and West Tisbury departments, Dukes County Sheriff's office, etc.
 - In order to get a Town alcohol permit IAE registered as the non-profit MV Concert series.
 - Non-profits should not be confused with charities since non-profits did not exclude large salaries and general income; for example note the extreme wealth of the "non-profit" medical industry. There were requests that the Town require IAE financial transparency.
- The Beach Road Music Festival charged for tickets and so could not be compared with events such as the Edgartown July 4th or Oak Bluffs Illumination Night. It was noted that both Edgartown and Oak Bluffs had strong business associations who helped manage big events, since businesses benefited most from such things whereas the Tisbury Business Association was currently non-functional.
 - (A large portion of attendees were Island residents—although it was highly disruptive for those living in close proximity.)
- The introductory paragraph of the letter draft could be stronger. It was clear the Town was undervaluing its worth and not adequately compensated for staffing time and energy. Accountant Suzanne Kennedy reported the 2023 \$25,000 in expenses only covered the Event service payroll.
 - The FinCom emphasized that even payroll reimbursement should, but currently did not, include Town Hall staff time for coordination, management, enforcement and accounting; for example Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Kirk Metell calculated his staff spent 2 full weeks preparing for the event—and DPW augmented IAE's pedestrian traffic staff.

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- Another suggestion was that while fees should be slightly raised, given the Festival's size and nature, the deposit should be \$100,000 to cover all eventualities and Town expenses—with any residual returned to IAE.
- Town inconvenience and disturbances should also be compensated, limited or eliminated. For example, in contradiction to the contract's 3-day set-up clause, IAE equipment started arriving August 8th and Veterans Field playground, basketball court and 2 parking lots were roped off and guarded starting August 14th making them unavailable for the majority of the August high tourist season. Soccer fields were unusable pending field repair.
- Most other municipalities had event-dedicated fields and forbade the use of playing fields. Rare use of playing fields demanded free public access while still requiring event cost and repair compensation. Larger cities might have municipal event funding as well as special event management staff.
- The FinCom noted the importance of Veterans Field as a vital Town property with many stakeholders:
 - athletic events and practices,
 - Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation – Highways (MassDOT-Highways) 5 Corners drainage plans (see 1/18/23 Minutes p.3),
 - \$225,000 field renovation Town Meeting article that was withdrawn (see 1/18/23 Minutes p.3);
 - Open Space Committee work to draft a renewal/management plan, hire a turf specialist, etc.,
 - Town Master Plan discussions.
- The contract stated the promoter payed for everything: staff, field repair, etc. consequently it was the Town's responsibility to enforce the terms of the contract. It was currently unclear who was responsible for these tasks and the FinCom strongly recommended the Town designate and/or hire staff for this purpose.

Committee Reports

- The Master Plan Implementation Committee was strongly soliciting input first from Town Board and Committees and then from the larger public participate (see below: Meetings/Events).
- There were two short summer Tisbury School Committee (TSC) meetings reporting the School Project on time and on budget. The \$400,000 Community Preservation Committee (CPC) playground funding was formally returned (see 12/7/22 Minutes p.3).
- The FinCom expressed concern about lack of progress on funding for the School's roof solar panels.
- The CPC started meeting this month for the next round of applications/recommendations.

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

- The FinCom would likely consider the reserve fund transfer request for a Police Dept. generator followed by Treasurer Jonathan Snyder's and Accountant Suzanne Kennedy's Town finances orientation.

Adjournment

- *RACHEL ORR MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 7:49PM; ALLEN ROGERS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: RUTH KONIGSBERG—AYE, ALEX MELENEY—AYE, LOUIS PASHMAN—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.*

Appendix A: Meetings/Events

- **TFC – 6:30PM, Wednesday, September 20, 2023 – ESF**
- Master Plan – Senior Center:
- Town Boards – TBD, 5:30PM, Thursday, September 14, 2023
- Public – 5:30PM, Friday September 22, 2023
 & 10:00AM Saturday, September 23, 2023

Appendix B: Actions

Nancy/Jon/Suzanne – email Levy Limit sheet before 9/20/23 meeting.
Rachel/Ruth/Nancy – redraft special event fee letter for October meeting.
All – Please remember not to hit “Reply All”.

Future Agendas

- Minutes: 9/6/23

Budget Season Notes

- No new positions in FY25
- FY25 salaries/budgets will be higher due to classification raises.
- include budget deadline ultimatum in FinCom letter,
- department budget drafts posted on Town Website (password protected)? or
- attach budget/narrative modules to agendas.
- request/demand foundational information, levy, free cash estimates, etc.
- contact Planning Bd. re: zoning bylaw revision.
- 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.

\$100,000 FY24 Reserve Fund spending tally – Balance: \$100,000

Appendix C: Documents on File

- Agenda & cover email (2 p.) 9/6/23

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Appendix C: Documents on File (cont.)

- Draft Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee memo re: Special Event Fees (2 p.)
- License Agreement for Vineyard Haven – Located Concert Beach Road Weekend Music Festival by and between The Town of Tisbury, Massachusetts and Innovation Arts & Entertainment, Ltd. DBA Martha's Vineyard Concert Series (23 p.) 10/22/21
- Gilfoy email re: 2022 Beach Road Weekend Staff Expenses 9/6/23
- Beach Road Weekend Cost Estimate, 2022 M.V. Concert Series Festival August 22-28, 2022 &
- Doyle email re: Discuss Master Plan Implementation Program (2 p.) 8/31/23
- Tisbury School Renovation/Addition Project Update Newsletter July 2023 (2 p.)
- Tisbury School Renovation/Addition Project Update Newsletter August 2023 (2 p.)
- Austin Parks
- Chat: Melinda Loberg to Everyone (Sep 6, 2023, 7:19 PM)
Thank you to Fin Com for having this discussion. I appreciate the opportunity to pose questions and hear that you are doing the same with town decision-makers. I have to leave the meeting and just wanted to thank you!

Nancy Gilfoy – Chair

Date

Minutes approved 12/6/23