

Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee
6:30PM, Wednesday, March 27, 2024
by Zoom Cloud Conference

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Present: Acting Chair Louise Clough, Abbe Burt, Alex Meleney,
Rachel Orr, Louis Pashman, Allan Rogers,
Others: Recorder – Marni Lipke,
Town: Town Administrator Jay Grande, Elena DeFoe,
Treasurer Jonathan Snyder, Town Clerk – Hillary Conklin,
Planning Board – Ben Robinson, Amy Upton,
Press: Louise Hufstader – Vineyard Gazette

* TFC members late arrivals or early departures.

Call Meeting to Order

- The Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) was called to order at 6:33PM.

(Recorder's note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.)

Discussion and Potential Votes

Late Filed Articles

(See documents on file, & Minutes: 3/6/24 p.1, & 3/13/24 p.1.)

- *ALLEN ROGERS MOVED TO ACCEPT LATE FILED ARTICLES AS FOLLOWS:*
 - *AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (\$40,000)*
 - *LOCAL DROP OFF (\$135,000),*
 - *POLICE CRUISER (\$70,000),*
 - *OTHER POST EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (\$150,000),*
 - *FINANCE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESERVE FUND INCREASE (\$100,000),*
 - *SICK/ VACATION FUND (\$200,000),*
 - *PRIOR YEAR BILLS (\$43,408), AND*
 - *WITHDRAWAL FROM WASTEWATER (\$5,000) AND WATER (\$5,000) FUNDS;*
- RACHEL ORR SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, LOUIS PASHMAN—AYE, ABBE BURT—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE.*

Planning Board

(See documents on file.)

The Board originally proposed a lean \$155,000 budget, however Chair Ben Robinson advocated for reducing anticipated needs for a final vote at \$149,678.

- The Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) professional/legal services contract to re-codify the Zoning Bylaws was delayed (see 11/29/23 Minutes p.2-3) leaving unspent funds and requiring they be re-budgeted for FY25.
- The Board would be uncomfortable taking out any further funds—including the 1% FinCom request—although Mr. Robinson offered to comply if it would a make or break the override.

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- The Planning Board had sole authority over its finances and had not been informed of the Town Administrator's \$30,000 cut of the assistant. The Department continued to explore efficient staffing options such as sharing other Annex staff.
- The Board submitted a Special Town Meeting (STM) article to amend zoning bylaws.

Review of Select Board (TSB) Budgets and Warrant Articles

(See documents on file.)

The TSB worked hard to decrease it's main budget by 7%.

- There was some planning with available staff on coverage for when Executive Assistant Elena DeFoe (central purchases, support contracts, front desk, etc.) was out on leave.
 - Ms. DeFoe was hoping to cover some duties (e.g. TSB meetings) from home.
 - With a number of big capital projects in progress (Tisbury School, Library, New Town Hall...) procurement was a major factor. Town Administrator Jay Grande and Department of Public Works (DPW) General Foreman Marie Maciel were both procurement certified, although it was noted that Ms. Maciel was often doing field work and Mr. Grande was already over-burdened. There was interest in having Assistant Town Accountant Libby Cleary move into procurement.
 - Parking permit applications, etc. would be shifted to the Police Department.
 - The FinCom asked if stipends would be offered for current personnel's additional work.
- The budget included Part-Time/Seasonal funds to hire temporary staff (pay was not attractive) but there was some pay-rate and blended raise flexibility through combinations with the Purchased Services and Consultants lines.
 - Mr. Grande reported that both Elena DeFoe and Human Resource Director Pam Bennett were in need of permanent assistance but qualified personnel with municipal purchasing experience were scarce and current staff had scant time to train new hires.
 - The FinCom suggested and Mr. Grande agreed, that without changing the Department bottom line, funds could be recalibrated from Part-Time/Seasonal to the Contract Specialist line in case suitable staff was found.
 - Mr. Grande could cut \$25,000 from the Budget but it would have an impact on staff coverage. He thanked the FinCom for their concern about staffing.

Articles:

- The Board of Health (BOH) Watershed Article was withdrawn.
- Hospital Road Resilience (see 2/21/24 Minutes p.2) was from Free Cash.
- There was \$74,000 remaining from the previous \$80,000 Consolidated Town Hall article (see 3/8/23 Minutes p.2). The final recommendation of the

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Consolidated Town Hall Task Force was a \$600,000 Feasibility article to advance design, engineering and bid documents for a new Town Hall at 55 West Williams St. Lot history was briefly reviewed: purchased for \$675,000 (see 3/7/18 Minutes p.9), \$225,000 to demolish existing buildings, \$2,000 appraisal, and some DPW site work, currently used as staging/offices for the Tisbury School Project.

Town Clerk Budget Discussion and Vote

(See below: Actions & Minutes: 3/15/23 p.4, & 3/13/24 p.3.)

Town Clerk Hillary Conklin advocated strongly for including the Assistant Town Clerk in the FY25 Budget, repeating many of her former reasons.

- Only the Town Clerk could fill many of her duties: working closely with the Town Accountant on tax-rate recap, Local Services gateway application, debt notes and bonds certification, election results, etc.
- She repeated her budget history dedicated to reducing taxpayer burden, and her projection that current staff could not fulfill the necessary duties in FY25 which included an STM and a presidential election.
- A clerical position would not be sufficient and that \$3,400 had been transferred into the Asst. Clerk line. The State would not issue another State computer without an employee to operate it.
- The position added \$79,000 (benefits were not raised as the Treasurers Other budget was flexible enough to absorb it).
- Several FinCom members attested to this as a critical need, quoting the FinCom mission: what could the Town afford to reduce and what could the Town not afford to do without, this was a position that the Town could not afford to cut.
- Both Town Hall staff and the FinCom considered Town department strengths and weaknesses around staffing support and succession planning—a standard problem with small town governments.
- This would significantly impact the levy capacity goal of a \$350,000 margin. Finance Director Jon Snyder reported that with the latest data, an override might be avoided but with the slimmest of margins (see documents on file).
- The FinCom asked again about a more accurate projection for local receipts to give more wiggle room.

Discussion on Funding for the Fall Special Town Meeting (STM)

Mr. Grande firmly expected a fall STM to address the Library repairs/renovation now estimated at \$3,000,000; as well as a \$400,000 wastewater expansion article.

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Discussion and Votes on Previously Reviewed Budgets and Articles

(See below: Actions)

- *ABBE BURT MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE **MARTHA'S VINEYARD REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET** AS PRESENTED: ALLAN ROGERS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED **UNANIMOUSLY: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS**: ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, ABBE BURT—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, LOUIS PASHMAN—AYE, ALEX MELENEY—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE. (See 2/7/24 Minutes p.4-5.)*
- Mr. Snyder strongly recommended the OPEB article as a contributing factor to the Town bond rating (see Minutes: 3/13/24 p.5, & 3/20/24 p.2).
- *ALLAN ROGERS MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING FISCAL YEAR 2025 OTHER POST EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (OPEB) ARTICLE AT \$150,000** AS PRESENTED: ABBE BURT SECONDED; MOTION PASSED **UNANIMOUSLY: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS**: ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, ABBE BURT—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, LOUIS PASHMAN—AYE, ALEX MELENEY—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE.*
- *RACHEL ORR MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING FISCAL YEAR 2025 HEAR AND RECEIVE REPORTS ARTICLE** AS PRESENTED: ALLAN ROGERS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED **UNANIMOUSLY: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS**: ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, ABBE BURT—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, LOUIS PASHMAN—AYE, ALEX MELENEY—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE.*
- The FinCom questioned the price of the Fire Chief's personal Ford Explorer which was significantly higher than the DPW truck/snowplow.
- It was unclear if the Harbormaster \$1,500 stipend and \$6,000 transition funding were cut or retained. The position was advertised but had not received a large response—some certification was required.

Approve Minutes from 3/20/24

- *RACHEL ORR MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 20, 2024 MINUTES AS AMENDED; ABBE BURT SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSTENTION due to absence: ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, ABBE BURT—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, LOUIS PASHMAN—ABSTAIN ALEX MELENEY—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE. The FinCom thanked Marni Lipke for the prompt minutes.*

Committee Reports – None

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Future Meetings (See below: Meetings/Events.)

The FinCom was looking forward to the April 10, 2024 in-person meeting.

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair – None

Adjournment

The FinCom thanked Acting Chair Louise Clough for filling in for Nancy Gilfoy who they wished a speedy recovery.

• *ABBE BURT MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:16PM; ALEX MELENEY SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, ABBE BURT—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, LOUIS PASHMAN—ABSTAIN ALEX MELENEY—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE.*

Appendix A: Meetings/Events

- **TFC TBD – 6:30PM, Wednesdays, April 3 & 10, 2024 – Zoom**
- **Special/Annual Town Meeting – 7:00PM, Tuesday, May 28, 2024 – PAC**
- **Town Election – Tuesday, June 11, 2024**

Appendix B: Actions:

Kirk/Mike –

Jon S./Jay G./Elena – Article edits:

- Police Cruiser to Unreserved Fund Balance
- Prior Year Bills needs funding source
- Hospital Rd. Resilience – appropriate from Unreserved Funds
- Correct Ambulance to 50% Stabilization 50% Unreserved Fund Balance.

Jon S./Jay G./Elena – reconsider local receipt projections.

Jay G. – recalibrated Part-Time/Seasonal & Contract Specialist lines

Future Agendas

- Minutes: 3/27/24
- Previously Reviewed Department/Article Votes
- MV Public Safety Communications as Town Budget line item
- FinCom Support for Fire Inspection Fee/Fine Update
- Wastewater/Water Works re-configuration and possible crew sharing
- Late Filed Article(s)
- Reserve Fund Requests
- End-of-year transfer vote

Budget Season Notes

- No new positions in FY25
- FY25 salaries/budgets will be higher due to classification raises.
- Request data on how much each Department turned back in FY23.
- Request projects for grant funding.
- Request capital projects

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- attach budget/narrative modules to agendas.
- request/demand foundational information, levy, free cash estimates, etc.
- include 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: \$16,650.25

- 10/4/23 – Ambulance - \$43,000 – monitor/defibrillators

- 11/29/23 – Select Board - \$6,518 – salary step 2 & on-call stipend

- 11/29/23 – DPW - \$20,831.75 – Police Dept. generator rent

- 3/20/24 – Harbormaster - \$8,000 – dock repair & maintenance

- 3/20/24 – Finance Committee - \$5,000 – Minutes for additional meetings

Appendix C: Documents on File

- Agenda/Revised Agenda (2 p.) 3/27/24
- Gilfoy cover email re: Late filed articles 3/27/24
- To Fund the Affordable Housing Committee's Administrator 3/27/24
- Article Submission Form ATM, Late Filed – Article – To Purchase a Police Cruiser 3/18/24
- Annual Town Meeting, Revised, 3/22/2024 To Fund Local Drop Off Area 3/21/24
- Revised, Annual Town Meeting, 3/22/2024 To Fund Local Drop Off Area 3/21/24
- Town of Tisbury, Harbor Department, Revised Late Filed FY2025 Warrant Article, Funds to be Expended in FY2024 3/7/24
- Town of Tisbury, Harbor Department, FY2025 Warrant Articles, Funds to be Expended in FY2024 (applies to all articles) 3/11/24
- To Pay Bills of Prior Year 3/13/24
- To Add Funds to the Sick/Vacation Trust Fund 3/13/24
- Article Submission Form ATM, Article – To Increase and Fund the Finance and Advisory Committee's Reserve Fund 3/14/24
- FY 2025 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 175 Planning Board (6 p.) 1/18/24
- Planning Board, 2024 Special Town Meeting, Article: To Approve and/or Fund the Costs of Re-Codification and Amendments to the Town of Tisbury Zoning Bylaws 11/27/23

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Appendix C: Documents on File (cont.)

- FY 2025 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 122 Selectmen (10 p.)
1/18/24
- FY 2025 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 122 Selectmen (8 p.)
1/18/24
- FY 2025 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 122 Selectmen (2 p.)
- FY 2025 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 123 Selectmen-
Other
- FY 2025 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 189 Housing Trust
Fund
- FY 2025 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 192 Building
Maintenance (6 p.) 1/18/24
- FY 2025 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 481 Park & Ride
- Town of Tisbury, Article, To Establish a Town Charter Study Committee
11/8/23
- Town of Tisbury, Article, To Purchase a Replacement Off Island Vehicle
1/12/24
- ATM 24 General Fund – Prior Year Bills, Annual Town Meeting 3/27/24
- ATM 24 General Fund – Prior Year Bills, Annual Town Meeting 3/27/24
- FY 2025 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 210 Police
- FY 2025 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 210 Police
- Rogers/Gilfoy cover email re: Revised library budget (3 p.) 3/27/24
- Gilfoy/Custer email re: Tisbury School Committee meeting 3/28/24 to
recertify their budget 3/25/24
- Gilfoy/Snyder cover email re: Updated levy limit and articles list 3/27/24
- Town of Tisbury – FY2025 Budget & Levy Limit, March 27, 2024 (3 p.)
- 2024 Town Meeting Articles as of 3/27/24 (6 p.)
- Town of Tisbury, Annual Town Meeting Warrant, Tuesday, May 28, 2024 at
7:00PM (16 p.) 3/25/24
- Gilfoy/Friedman email re: MVRHS FY25 Budget – Recertified 3/04/2024
(10 p.) 3/6/24

Nancy Gilfoy – Chair

Date

Minutes approved as amended 4/3/24