

**Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee,
6:30PM, Wednesday, January 26, 2022
by Zoom Cloud Conference due to Covid-19 Restrictions**

1

Present: Chair Nancy Gilfoy, Louise Clough, Jynell Kristal*,
Mary Ellen Larsen, Rachel Orr, Allan Rogers, Lesley Segal*,
Dan Seidman, Sarah York,
Town: Town Administrator – Jay Grande, Treasurer – Jonathan Snyder,
Police Chief – Christopher Habekost, Lieutenant – William Brigham
Animal Control Officer – Kathleen Hoffman,
Others: 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 6:30PM and roll was called. (*Recorder's note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.*)

Review of Animal Control Budget – Kathleen Hoffman, Animal Control Officer (ACO) (See documents on file.)

Budget: The 50% increase was mostly one-time expenses that would be reduced or eliminated in Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24).

• The 2013/14 Ford truck was a major component. It had neither been equipped for animal control nor maintained and was dangerous for animal transport. The cab leaked—damaging new equipment, it needed lights, reverse camera, screens, brakes, tires, etc. The cost was spread among 3 lines:

- \$5,000 in #5850 Equipment (new),
- \$3,000 in #5242 Vehicle Repair, and
- \$2,000 in #5480 Vehicle Supplies.

• Office Supplies laptop (\$3,000) would be shifted to Information Technology.

• A part-time permanent position was an ongoing increase request, to provide coverage/relief for weekends, vacations, trainings, etc. ACO Kate Hoffman suggested \$75/day or \$200/wknd which worked out to ~\$18,000/yr. This was common Island practice and was less expensive than paying the ACO overtime plus it relieved the Police from covering the absences. (Over the 10 week summer season the ACO had only 7 non-consecutive days off.) The position could be filled by 1 or 2 people looking for extra work or considering a career in the animal field. Recent hires by other towns showed enough candidates.

• The Town was negotiating a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Sandy Paws that would include some rent and/or utility and other expenses. In cooperation with Town Sandy Paws substantially improved the building (Town cost \$6,000): heavy cleaning, new dryer, drainage, etc. Kate Hoffman

Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee
January 26, 2022

2

reported their presence was a support and they did not overstep or interfere with her duties. Maintenance would include regular cleaning, heat for the animal cages, etc. These finances were not included in the draft because the MOU was not yet executed.

- At the end of the meeting, the FinCom welcomed and thanked new ACO Kate Hoffman, and:

- *DAN SEIDMAN MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE **ANIMAL CONTROL DEPARTMENT #292 FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET***

- *PENDING TRANSFER OF THE LAPTOP COST IN THE OFFICE SUPPLY LINE*

- #5420 TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/CENTRAL PURCHASING BUDGETS;*

*SARAH YORK SECONDED; MOTION PASSED **UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYE, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS**: SARAH YORK—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, LESLEY SEGAL—AYE, DAN SEIDMAN—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.*

Warrant Article

Tisbury animal control bylaws were poorly worded, outdated and hampering Kate Hoffman in her enforcement, e.g current leash-law fees were too low:

- 1st time – warning, 2nd time \$25, 3rd + times \$50.

Massachusetts General Law (MGL) was pushing for more technical and standardized animal control regulation (Ch. 140 §136A-175). This article would bring Tisbury bylaws more inline with State standards and give the ACO more discretion and greater deterrents to charge penalties up to State standards—e.g. leash law violation penalties:

- 1st time – \$50, 2nd time \$100, 3rd time \$300, 4th+ times \$500.

The FinCom discussed this here and at the end of the meeting, mostly around voter understanding and lack of clarity in the article language, possibly rectified by attaching the appropriate State law. At the end of the meeting:

- *MARY ELLEN LARSEN MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE **ANIMAL CONTROL BYLAW WARRANT ARTICLE**; DAN SEIDMAN SECONDED; MOTION WITHDRAWN (see below: Actions).*

Review of Police Department Budgets – Christopher Habekost, Chief

(See documents on file.)

- * During this discussion Jynell Kristal left the meeting.

- The FinCom welcomed and thanked new Police Chief Chris Haberkost.

- The personnel increase included the re-establishment (by internal promotion) of a Lieutenant position to help manage personnel, establish a clear command structure and support and fill in for the Chief.

- Other personnel changes reflected the Police Reform Law that mandated as of July 1, 2022 all full-time police officers had to complete the full Police Academy training. This eliminated all Police Specials, who only required 1/3 Academy

Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee
January 26, 2022

3

training, and were paid at 30-40% of the contracted salaries with no benefits.

- There were 4 specials in the Department, which would change from 14 to 17 full-time officers. The net number of Department personnel would not change.
- Chief Habekost consulted other experienced Police Chiefs. All State (and Island) Police Chiefs were having similar trouble recruiting and maintaining officers, partly due to recent changes in public attitude.
- The Town decided to encourage specials to pay for their Academy training and return to full-time jobs. Academy training was rigorous and costly. Specials might choose to advance, might or might not qualify for the Academy, or decide against policing careers or continue part-time.
- Fees, equipment and maybe 6 months room/board could run \$30-35,000 for an individual or \$40-50,000 for the Town with full salary. Other issues were:
 - Academy locations in Cape Cod and Plymouth;
 - the need for financial support/loans unless the family was well-off;
 - scholarship opportunities such as MV Youth Workforce Development;
 - Town subsidy options such as payback over a number of years.
- Academy training was stringent including military style physical endurance, flexibility, strength, self-defense, weaponry, driving skills, and academics. Candidates were further screened/tested before hiring.
- Additional higher education incentives were part of the Police union contract.
- Traffic officers were not specials and were only authorized to write tickets and direct traffic.
- Despite inter-Town and State Police cooperation, if vacancies could not be filled, the Department might have to cut services (vehicle lockouts, non-violent arguments, etc.).
- The Island could also attract lateral moves by fully trained, experienced officers looking for a change in life-style or location. The Department was a competitive, attractive destination with good morale. Police Chiefs preferred full Police Academy trained officers and the Department would prefer current staff to advance and be re-hired.
- The lengthy hiring process (advertising, reference/background/employment checks, priority ratings, etc.) meant that new hires would not be a financial drain on FY22, and there was a salary residual from the one unfilled vacancy.
- The Specials constituted ~ \$85,000 of the \$168,000 Part-time Seasonal line. Chief Habekost had been advised not to reduce this line in order to maintain a contingency reserve and was awaiting clarification on Embarkation funds (see 1/19/22 Minutes p.3).
- Ammunition was used largely for mandated semiannual firearm trainings and had greatly increased in price.
- There was a substantial increase in computer repair which might be the service contract, software price increases or upgrades (see below: Actions).

**Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee
January 26, 2022**

4

- Tisbury had delayed paying the FY22 Islandwide Communications fee over a question on correct assessment. Software and communication fee increases were in many department budgets.
 - The Department #211 Police Training \$18,000 increase would cover certification and equipment for more full-time officers, and increased pricing.
 - Department #212 Police Vehicles - After previously considering other options (see 2/12/20 Minutes p.2), the Town chose to purchase one vehicle per year on a rotating basis. (Oak Bluffs chose to replace its entire fleet every 3 years.) The Department had 6 vehicles plus the Police Chief's car.
 - The FY22 vehicle was ordered but delayed by the large, Covid-impact backlog.
 - Police cruisers was so heavily used that trade-in value was minimal.
 - At the end of the meeting the FinCom discussed:
 - lack of resolution on the Town's approach to Police Academy training costs;
 - this year's contract negotiations that included substantial raises;
 - overtime costs versus full staffing.
 - *SARAH YORK MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE **POLICE DEPARTMENTS #210, #211 AND #212 FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGETS***
 - *PENDING \$100,000 REDUCTION IN DEPARTMENT #210 LINE #5122 PART-TIME SEASONAL;*
- LOUISE CLOUGH SECONDED; MOTION PASSED **UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYE, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS:** SARAH YORK—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, LESLEY SEGAL—AYE, DAN SEIDMAN—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.*

Review of Dukes County Sheriff's Warrant Article to Fund the Regional Communications System – Peter Graczykowski, Chief Administrative and Fiscal Officer - Tabled

Committee Reports

- As part of the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan the Water Resources Committee and its consultants Environmental Partners, met with the Planning Board to gauge 20 year growth for wastewater needs and nitrogen loading. This would be coordinated with the Town Master Plan which was still in its initial phases.
- The Climate Change Committee met with the Cape Light Compact representative on funding and other resources—including free comprehensive energy audits for all Town buildings. The Committee set many goals: solar energy, Beach Road issues, long range Steamship Authority planning, etc. As a new Committee they were not likely to submit articles before the 2023 Special/Annual Town Meetings (STM/ATM).
- The Martha's Vineyard Regional High School Committee (MVRHSC) was hoping for a Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) grant and

Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee
January 26, 2022

5

requested letters of support from all Towns. The Oak Bluffs Assessor presented the current funding formula inequities (see documents on file) based on a 38% grant level. The FinCom hoped Towns would cooperate in addressing capital funding reconfiguration.

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

- February 2nd – MVRHS/Tisbury School/Superintendent's Shared Services
- February 9th - Housing Bank, IT, maybe Department of Public Works (DPW).
- February 16th – Joint meeting with Select Board re: their budget and articles.
- The STM/ATM date was still pending State legislation to allow it be held beyond Town boundaries (the Tisbury School would be under construction and without space for a tent). The MVRHS Performing Arts Center (PAC) was reserved for April 30, 2022.

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair

- RACHEL ORR MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE **\$23,518.28 50/50 FIRE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLE SHARE OF THE BREATHING (SCBA) EQUIPMENT** AS PRESENTED; ALLAN ROGERS SECONDED; MOTION **PASSED; 7 AYE, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSTENTION** due to absence: SARAH YORK—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, LESLEY SEGAL—ABSTAIN, DAN SEIDMAN—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.

Adjournment

- SARAH YORK MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 9:00PM; LOUISE CLOUGH SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SARAH YORK—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, LESLEY SEGAL—AYE, DAN SEIDMAN—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.

Appendix A: Meetings/Events:

- **TFC – TBD 6:30PM, Wednesdays, February 2, 9, 16, 23, 2022 – Zoom**
- MVPS VACATION – February 28 – March 4, 2022
- STM/ATM – TBD - Saturday, April 30, 2022 – PAC

Appendix B: Actions

Jay Grande/Suzanne Kennedy – move Animal Control Office Supplies to IT/Central Purchasing
Chief Habekost – investigate and report on Computer Repair increase.

continued >

**Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee
January 26, 2022**

6

Appendix B: Actions (cont.)

Nancy/Kate Hoffman – rewrite/clarify AC Bylaws article.

All – contact Nancy with any requests for department or article reviews.

Nancy – schedule: Fire/EM/Ambulance, Sheriff, FY23 big picture/override

Nancy – remind Chief Leland re: shared Fire/EM/Ambulance job description

2/2/22 Agenda – MVCS/Dukes County Vote(s),

\$100,000 FY22 Reserve Fund spending tally – Balance: \$75,000

8/25/21 – Selectmen Other/Finance - \$25,000 Insurance shortfall

Appendix C: Documents on File:

- Agenda 1/26/22
- FY 2023 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 210 Police (5 p.)
1/11/22
- FY 2023 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 211 Police Hiring &
Training (2 p.) 1/11/22
- FY 2023 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 212 Police Vehicle
(2 p.) 1/11/22
- Tisbury Police Department Structure
- Habekost letter re: New Police Staffing Plan (3 p.) 12/14/21
- FY 2023 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 292 Animal Control
(3 p.) 1/12/22
- Warrant Article Submittal Sheet Bylaw 5/20/21

Nancy Gilfoy – Chair

Date

Minutes approved 2/2/22