

**Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee  
& All Island Finance Committee  
at the Tisbury Emergency Services Building  
5:00PM, Thursday, September 28, 2017**

Present: Chair - Jeff Kristal, Pamela Brock, Nancy Gilfoy, Jynell Kristal,  
Mary Ellen Larsen,  
WT FinCom: Chuck Hodgkinson, Gary Montrowl,  
OB FinCom: Jason Balboni, Maura McGroarty, Bob Gaffey,  
Edg. FinCom: Paulo DeOliveira, Mort Feary,  
Others: Tisbury: Treasurer – Jon Snyder, Fire Chief – John Schilling,  
Police: Edgartown –David Rossi, Chilmark – Johathon Klarin  
Sheriff's Office: Sheriff Robert Ogden, James D. Nevil,  
Peter Graczykowski, Susan Schofield,  
CPC: Aquinnah – Derrill Bazzy,  
Edgartown – Edward Vincent, Kristy Rose,  
Tisbury Heidi Diettrich, West Tisbury – Bea Phear,  
Island Housing Trust – Philippe Jordi,  
Minutes – Marni Lipke

**Call to Order**

The All Island Finance and Advisory Committee (AIFC) and Tisbury Finance Committee (FinCom) were called to order at 5:04PM. *(Recorder's Note: Discussions have been summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.)*

**• Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Discussion**

**Analysis of Prior Recommendations,  
Definition of "Regional",**

The CPCs had met regionally on a regional projects and funding configurations:

- some were so iconic to the Island that all Towns were asked to participate (e.g. the Gay Head Lighthouse, the Oak Bluffs Tabernacle);
- others had shared use, (e.g. the ball field, Dukes County Courthouse windows, the High School track, etc.) or, more prominently, affordable housing;
- some were allocated by the 50/50 real estate/population Dukes County formula,
- others were divided into sections where one Town was asked to restore a porch, another to repair a roof, or
- finally some were by town use proportion such as affordable housing located in and credited by the State to one Town but offering unit availability to other towns.

• Sometimes a project would require all towns to contribute or the funding failed, others requested funding from all towns but if a Town voted it down there was that much less funding available to the project.

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- Some CPCs considered that there was a give and take that worked out to be egalitarian for all Island Towns.
- However, last year, in keeping with the Tis. FinCom directive, the Tisbury CPC did not participate in any regional projects except the local Lagoon Pond Herring Run shared with Oak Bluffs. It was suggested that Tisbury objected to some towns being asked to contribute to regional projects but not others and the regional projects should include all six towns. Chair Jeff Kristal reported that the Town saw its facilities failing and CPC revenues leaving the Town. Departments were trained in CPC application process. He also reported that when the FinCom had some power over CPC recommendations by speaking out at Annual Town Meeting (ATM).
- At one time Chilmark noticed that 90% of their CPC revenues went to regional projects after which they capped the amount at 10%.

**How FinComs Can/Should Assist CPCs**

- The AIFC discussed requesting the State Legislature regionalize affordable housing credits to encompass all of Martha's Vineyard instead of each Township. This would allow the Island to better meet State standards. It was also noted that the State only credited affordable housing receiving State or Federal funds and not a number of Island measures, such as accessory units or homesites. In addition, due to the Island cost of living, affordable housing often encompassed units for those earning more than 100% of Median Average Income.
- Tis. FinCom members described their exploration of CPC elimination/reduction when they wanted to lower taxes and their conclusion that it was too valuable and advantageous an income source. However with so many other towns joining the CPC program State matches might be significantly reduced.
- The CPC representatives pointed out that the Island received about \$3 million in CPC funds and could do some great things if it acted regionally. In fact the head of the CPC statewide organization used the Island as an example of regional projects.
- The AIFC suggested and the CPCs were interested in all regional projects being presented to the AIFC, which would allow:
  - CPC's more efficient presentations;
  - all Town FinComs to hear the same facts;
  - and the AIFC to exert leverage on those FinComs expressing reservations.
- Thanks were exchanged all around.

**Sheriff's Department Budget Discussion** *(Sheriff Ogden)*

The Sheriff introduced the members of his staff. Although Jeff Kristal who was Chairing the meeting requested that this be an informational presentation Sheriff Ogden was proposing assessing the Towns for Communication Center

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expense shortfall. The Center handled emergency dispatches (ambulance fire, police) and tracked, and sent information as requested (GPS location, criminal records, etc.). He reported the situation as follows.

- The State inadequately funded the Sheriff's Dept. through a formula based on house of corrections inmate population and not taking the Communications Center into account; leaving a shortfall that was previously funded through the State supplemental budget. However Legislators were now signaling that there would be no further supplemental revenues, despite Sheriff Ogden speaking to the Ways and Means Committee, the Island State Representatives, etc.
- Four other Massachusetts sheriff departments covered communications: Barnstable, Berkshire Dukes, and Essex. The other three Departments covered their State funding deficits with town assessments through fixed rate and/or call volume formulas.
- Currently the Communications Center infrastructure was phone lines that Verizon was no longer able to maintain, and for which there was no backup. Cell coverage was not reliable enough on some parts of the Island. In addition the Center's main communications board and equipment were aging out and becoming obsolete. A backup system planned for the Oak Bluffs Emergency Services Building had not acquired the necessary equipment. The recent hurricane season that devastated the Caribbean had been the impetus to push for more reliable and next generation infrastructure. If the Towns would pay personnel costs, State funds could be used to improve the infrastructure.
- Systems upgrades (AT&T, First Net, etc.) were expensive, for example fiber optic cable would be between \$2-5 million for the Island, but in the meantime starting with interim computer upgrades the cost would be \$170-200,000 per year. Grant opportunities were available but the Office had no staff for grant writing, and had missed a recent opportunity. They hoped the Martha's Vineyard Public Safety Communications Committee and Martha's Vineyard Law Enforcement Council would help with future grants.
- The Towns had paid \$170,000 to the County for Sheriff Dept. expenses until 2009 when the Dept. was taken over by the State. The AIFC asked about the \$170,000 still in the Dukes County Budget.
- The Emergency 911 fee paid on phone bills went to the State.
- Sheriff Ogden was bringing this up now as the new Sheriff. Sheriff personnel were the lowest paid law enforcement personnel.
- If approved the Towns would sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sheriff's Office, clearly delineating assessment and allocation of revenues, and the funds would be put in a separate, dedicated and transparent trust, similar to other such situations across the State.
- Jeff Kristal considered this a waiting game on who would give in first, the State or the Martha's Vineyard Towns.

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- State sponsorship carried some advantages:
  - Div. of Capital Asset Management & Maintenance (DCAMM) oversight, and
  - salary benefits trust reducing benefit costs from the usual 30-40% to 2.5%.
- The Police and Fire Chief's attending this meeting had nothing to add. Chair Jeff Kristal thanked the Sheriff's Office for their excellent service to the public.

• **Next Meeting Date and Topic:**

The AIFC would consider non-profit organizations on Thursday, October 26th.

**Meetings/Events:**

**AIFC/West Tisbury FinCom – 5:00PM, Thursday, October 26, 2017**

**AIFC/Edgartown FinCom – 5:00PM, Thursday, November 30, 2017**

**AIFC/ West Tisbury FinCom – 5:00PM, Thursday, December 28, 2017**

**AIFC -TBD – 5:00PM, Thursday, March 8 or 15, 2017.**

• **Adjourn**

• *BOB GAFFEY MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 6:37PM; GARY MONTROWL SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.*

**Action List:** None.

**Documents on file:**

- Agenda 9/28/17
- Sign In Sheet (3p.) 9/28/17

Minutes approved 1/3/18.