

Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee
By Zoom Cloud Conference due to
Gov. Baker's Covid-19/Corona Virus Executive Order
6:30 pm, Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Present: Chair Nancy Gilfoy, Jynell Kristal, Mary Ellen Larsen,
Kelley Metell, Allan Rogers, Laura Rose, Lesley Segal,
Sarah York,
Others: Recorder Marni Lipke
Schools: Superintendent Matt D'Andrea, Asst. Supt. Richie Smith,
MVPS Interim Finance Manager – Mark Friedman,
Student Support Nancy Dugan,
Tisb. Sch. Principal John Custer, TSC Chair– Amy Houghton
Town: Administrator – Jay Grande, Treasurer – Jonathan Snyder,
* Late arrivals or early departures of FinCom members

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.)*

Review of Tisbury School Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Budget – John Custer, Principal (See documents on file.)

- The Budget was up 3% of which 0.69% was the Tisbury share of the Superintendent's Shared Services Office budget and 2.31% was contractual costs—i.e. a level service budget.
- Kindergarten through 4th grade students were in-person, with 5th through 8th grade in-person by hybrid and technology. There was a sizable portion of Tisbury students that chose Cohort D total remote learning. Families could switch cohorts February 1st, the start of the second semester. Hats off to teachers and staff for finding amazing, creative ways to engage the students.
- Before FY21 maintenance lines historically ran in deficit with the administration hoping for end-of-year residuals, school choice or alternate funding, so the increase maintenance line greatly relieved the pressure. Problems were unpredictable in the aging building.
- The School Building Project was discussed at some length.
 - If the new school did not pass, there was no 'Plan B', in fact being the second proposed design the current one was Plan B.
 - Despite building maintenance over the years, the current facility suffered from weather, use, and age such that infrastructure failures could neither be upgraded, nor solved with short money—previous \$7,000,000 quotes were only a beginning.

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- For one thing the school would have to be shut and students housed elsewhere.
- It was hoped the Project would safely and healthily support education programs, students and staff for the next 100 yrs.
- The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) would join the Select Board (along with the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)) every second meeting to focus on the Project. As the center piece of the Town and a prime, and large investment, government was working on strategies to meet with residents to explain the issues and funding as well as how to support those struggling with a tax increase.
 - The Supt. Shared Service Office, new hires Other Post Employee Benefits (OPEB) line, was a policy to address the OPEB obligation of each new employee (about \$7-9,000 per person)—a strategy to contain rising liability costs (see below: Actions). Town Administrator Jay Grande commended this policy as a wise action that the Town should also adopt, emphasizing that when hiring staff the Town made a lifetime commitment.
 - Special Needs staff was stable at 4 full time teachers. Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) Special Education spending was not only for excellence in education but also to reduce off-Island (residential) tuition costs which were often \$100-200,000 per year (see Minutes: 1/8/20 p.3, & 2/19/20 p.2).
 - At the end of the meeting:
 - *ALLAN ROGERS MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE TISBURY SCHOOL FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET AS PRESENTED; LAURA ROSE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYE, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, LAURA ROSE—AYE, MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, KELLEY METELL—AYE, LESLEY SEGAL—AYE, JYNELL KRISTAL—AYE, SARAH YORK—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.*

Review of FY2022 Embarkation Fund Recommendations – Jynell Kristal, Embarkation Committee (See documents on file.)

- The funds could only be used to address impacts to the Town from ferry service, so many projects did not qualify. \$258,700 in funds was slightly down from last year's \$276,600—although some years not all funds were spent and could be rolled over.
- The Committee committed to recommending at least \$50,000 each year in Harbor dredging, and both last and this year granted higher \$75,000 requests.
- Other repeating requests were: seasonal traffic officers and replacement of emergency medical or firefighting equipment.

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- The FinCom liked the:
 - \$50,000 for traffic and transportation planning towards a Master Plan;
 - information booth relocation (possibly with additional grant moneys);
 - and beautification of the taxi-pickup and ferry dock.
- At the end of the meeting:
 - *MARY ELLEN LARSEN MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 EMBARKATION RECOMMENDED ARTICLES AS PRESENTED; KELLEY METELL SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYE, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: LESLEY SEGAL—AYE, JYNELL KRISTAL—AYE, SARAH YORK—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, LAURA ROSE—AYE, MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, KELLEY METELL—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.*

Review of 2021 Cherry Sheet – Jon Snyder, Treasurer

(See documents on file.)

This 5 year history of State revenues and charges to the Town showed a fairly consistent net of charges outweighing receipts at \$215-305,000 annually. The Town had almost no control over these figures which were derived from State reimbursement funds for such things as education (Chapter 70) and road repair (Chapter 90).

- Ch. 70 funds were allocated by a complex formula on student population, demographics, etc. The current Governor's budget draft included a 3% Ch. 70 increase.
 - The largest charges were School Choice and Charter School tuitions—taken off the top the Ch. 70 reimbursements; so a beautiful new school to attract students could change Cherry Sheet proportions.
 - Federal funds (through the State and deposited directly into a revolving school lunch account) subsidized school lunches for those qualifying for “free and reduced”. State lunch subsidies for all students were minimal.

Follow Up to Tisbury School Building Project Funding Discussion

(See 1/13/21 Minutes.)

- The Town expected to borrow on a 30 year/level debt bond but all further action depended on voter approval. Treasurer Jon Snyder hoped to take advantage of the current unprecedentedly unusual bond market. The FinCom would be pivotal in joining the united support of the Select Board and TSC. With no Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) grant, the School did not have to conform with MSBA standards.

Committee Reports

- The Energy Committee invited Tisbury School Building Committee (TSBC) Chair Harold Chapdelaine to its next meeting, to discuss how to

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assist in funding and including solar installation in the School Building Project. The Emergency Services Building solar installation was delayed by several years and the connections had to be modified/retrofitted.

- Water Resources Committee would have its first meeting shortly.
- Select Board - To avoid conflicting events the Special and Annual Town Meeting (STM/ATM) dates were now June 12th, 13th and 14th. Town Moderator Deborah Medders hoped to devote one night to the School Building Project.
- Early voting meant ballots could be cast before STM/ATM.

Future Meetings (See below: Meetings/Events.)

The Budget/Warrant calendar was unchanged with FinCom recommendations due in early April. The FinCom agreed that:

- a number of shorter meetings were preferred to marathons;
- department budgets/warrant articles could be voted when presented;
- department interviews could be restricted to large departments or large increases (see below: Actions).
- As pandemic financial impacts became better known and after the FY20-21 Covid-19 hiring freeze, a number of new positions were being proposed, some not under Select Board jurisdiction e.g.: a County Emergency Manager, a Planning Board secretary, a natural resource officer under the Harbormaster.

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair - None

Adjournment

• SARAH YORK MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 7:53PM; LAURA ROSE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, KELLEY METELL—AYE, LESLEY SEGAL—AYE, JYNELL KRISTAL—AYE, SARAH YORK—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, LAURA ROSE—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.

Appendix A: Meetings/Events:

- TSB/TSC on TSBC Project – 4:00 Tuesday, February 16, 2021 by Zoom
- **TFC – 6:30 Wednesdays, February 10, 17, 24?, 2021 by Zoom**
- **STM/ATM – June 12, 13, 14, 2021 TBD**

Appendix B: Actions

All – contact Chair re: what Dept. budgets should be interviewed

Nancy – request warrant articles from each Dept.

Prin. Custer – email employee list to FinCom.

- send rough tally of FY21 school maintenance spending

continued

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Appendix B: Actions (cont.):

Mark Friedman – confirm Tisbury share of Supt. Of. OPEB

Jay Grande – correct Embarkation Article language to “Select Board”.

Agenda

- Minutes: 9/30/20, 10/14/20, 10/20/20, 11/4/20, 11/18/20, 1/6/21,
1/13/21 as amended, 1/27/21

FY21 Reserve Fund spending tally – Balance: \$75,000

1/13/21 – Selectmen/TSBC Voter Education - \$25,000

Appendix C: Documents on File:

- Agenda 1/27/21
- Tisbury School FY’22 Budget Analysis #3.0 Approved, January 12, 2021
- Tisbury School Fund Balances Fiscal Year 2020-2021 1/8/21
- Tisbury School Budget for 2019/2020, Approved Version #3 – January 12, 2021 (Shared Services Vote on 12 10 2020) (6 p.)
- Tisbury School Employee List for 2021-2022 Proposed Budget (3 p.)
- Superintendent’s Shared Services Budget, FY’22 Proposed Budget Listed by School District, Certified by A.I.S.C. December 10, 2020 (3 p.)
- Martha's Vineyard Public Schools Superintendent’s Office and Shared Services Programs FY’22 Certified Budget, Level Service Version #3 to A.I.S.C. December 10, 2020 (7 p.)
- Article ____ Embarkation Fund Expenditures
- Cherry Sheet History, Tisbury

Nancy Gilfoy – Chair

Date

Minutes approved 2/10/21