

**Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee
Tisbury Board of Selectmen
at the Tisbury Senior Center
6:30PM, Wednesday, February 6, 2019**

Present: Chair – Jeff Kristal, Mary Ellen Larsen, Pamela Brock,
Nancy Gilfoy, Larry Gomez, Jynell Kristal, Leslie Segal,
Selectman – Chair – Tristan Israel, Melinda Loberg, Jim Rogers,
Town: Administrator Jay Grande, Treasurer Jonathon Snyder,
Accountant Suzanne Kennedy, Moderator – Deborah Medders,
Executive Assistant Alexandra Kral, Principal John Custer,
Superintendent Matt D’Andrea, Asst. Supt. Richie Smith,
Business Manager Amy Tierney, TSC Chair Amy Houghton,
MVRHS Finance Manager Mark Friedman,
Others: Lynn Fraker, Seth Gambini, Rachel Orr
Recorder Marni Lipke, MVTV – Evgeny Mishchenko,
* Late arrivals or early departures

• Call to Order

The Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) and Tisbury Board of Selectmen meetings were called to order at 6:39PM. *(Recorder’s Note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.)*

• Budget Reviews

Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) Budget

(See documents on file.)

- School Administrators were welcomed. This year the MVRHSC budget process was long and interesting with eight drafts, delaying certification into January.
- Selectman Tristan Israel protested the Tisbury bottom line and stressed global conversations on the regional formula. Tisbury MVRHS enrollment rose 42 students in two years presenting unsustainable increases and forcing overrides. The Regional Agreement Subcommittee was struggling with these issues and had examined averaging enrollment over three years, as well as a ‘circuit breaker’ agreement to curb enrollment/assessment spikes. Mr. Israel reiterated his objections to the current State imposed formula which had cost Tisbury more than \$1 million. Tisbury School Committee Chair Amy Houghton spoke to the difficulty of accurate projections, with families moving from one town to another. The Schools were looking into how residence was established, e.g. divorced parents living separate towns.
- The Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) budget was assessed at 6.35% driven by the following increases:
 - \$344,000 in Other Post Employee Benefits (OPEB) Trust contribution,
 - \$328,000 in contractual increases,

Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee
February 6, 2019

2

- \$293,000 residential care tuitions,
- \$285,000 fixed costs modified to \$60,000 by 0% health insurance increase.
- Mr. Israel requested the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) explore on-Island residential schools.
- A long conversation focused on the OPEB contribution. Town officials applauded the drive to pay it down but protested the rate of increases that impacted Towns' ability to pay down their own OPEB liability.
- Due to MVRHS's large staff the latest actuarial study put its projected liability at \$32 million, (representing the 75% School contribution to each retiree's health insurance). Normal cost (annual cost to stop the liability from growing) was ~ \$2 million. Actuarially Determined Employer Contribution (ADEC) or 30 yr. pay-down would be about ~ \$3 million. The MVRHS would reach normal costs with FY20 \$344,000 increase plus ~ \$250,000 increase in FY21. \$7,800/yr. was added to all new employee costs to cover their OPEB costs. The issue was debated at three MVRHSC meetings where members from Chilmark, Edgartown and West Tisbury were focused on reaching ADEC.
- The Selectmen suggested that all that was needed was to cover current employees and enough financial standing to maintain a good bond rating. The FinCom suggested that the OPEB contributions be increased during lower budget years or with residuals at the end of each year.
- Amy Houghton offered to [re-open the issue at Monday's MVRHSC meeting and encouraged strong Town representation \(see below: Actions\)](#).
- FinCom Chair Jeff Kristal asked about the Youth Task Force (YTF) proposed article and suggested the Supt. Shared Services Office say no to acting as a fiscal agent pass-through. Tristan Israel did not necessarily agree.
- The MVRHSC reduced the \$1.4 million Feasibility Study article through commitments from Excess & Deficiency (E & D) and the previous Superintendent's Shared Services Office feasibility study article residual. The MVRHS would continue to apply for Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) funding. Superintendent Matt D'Andrea [proposed a presentation and student video at an All Island Selectmen/FinCom meeting](#).
- The [Tisbury School budget interview was scheduled for the next FinCom meeting](#) (see below: Meetings/Events).
- **Dukes County Budget** (See below: Actions.)
- This discussion focused on the structure of social service non-profit funding, especially the administrative fees charged by both the County (5%) and the Martha's Vineyard Community Services (MVCS) (14%).
- The Sheriff's Dept. had captured alarm fee revenues (as legally permitted) leaving a \$100,000 shortfall in the County budget. The County Advisory Board (CAB) after some hesitation and examining a very lean budget, agreed to the 5% fee to compensate for staff hours spent on being fiscal agents—particularly

Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee
February 6, 2019

3

for the Center For Living (CFL). Only Veterans Services and Vineyard Health Care Access Program (VHCAP) operated under the County, all others were independently run, several through the MVCS—and might choose to withdraw from County jurisdiction in FY21—this year was already budgeted.

- The FinCom proposed the non-profits be grouped in a consolidated article, similar to Embarkation and Community Preservation articles.

- There was praise for the hard work and competence of both MVCS Director Julie Faye and County Manager Martina Thornton.

- Leslie Segal advocated for approaching the Veterans Administration for a Martha's Vineyard representative, in the event of the current, excellent Veterans Agent Jo Ann Murphy's retirement.

- Island Health Care clinic proposed using the second floor of the CFL building for offices, however financial compensation (if any) was unclear.

- The Sheriff proposed a placeholder article for \$54,000 as the Tisbury share of communications operating budget. Towns were debating an up-front agreement on program management and an assessment formula; (by call volume, or 50% real estate valuation/50% call volume, or County formula 50% population/50% real estate valuation).

- The Sheriff received a \$1.6 million grant for infrastructure. The Selectmen strongly advocated for upgrading the current water tower antenna instead of a stand-alone tower.

- *LARRY GOMEZ MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE \$54,000 SHERIFF ARTICLE ON COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS BE REMOVED FROM THE 2019 WARRANT; MARY ELLEN LARSEN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

- **Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC) Budget**

There were questions on health insurance costs, which had doubled.

- **Overview of Town Budget (Municipal & School)**

(See documents on file.)

- Selectmen Chair Tristan Israel acknowledged FinCom generated town Budget reductions in previous years, but now felt the Town was fairly lean and questioned further cuts in the face of a probable override.

- There was general protest on a proposed housing bank netting 3% of the new short-term rental tax revenue in view of Town needs (schools, harbor, wastewater...). It was suggested the Town was already contributing to its share of affordable housing. Administrators were still examining the new law regarding such issues as inspections.

- The Selectmen had been meeting with Oak Bluffs on the problem of the high cost of attracting a certified building inspector. Although there was some short-term redundancy, the goal was to pool Town resources for a shared qualified high-level official, while each Town hired a local inspector. Tisbury had been in need of an assistant inspector for some years.

Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee
February 6, 2019

4

- The FinCom and Suzanne Kennedy protested the recent Selectmen action on the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority (DCRHA) (see 1/30/19 Minutes p.8). Problems arose from lack of coordination and time delays resulting in disconnected actions. Ms. Kennedy stated other non-profits adhered to her requirements. Town Administrator Jay Grande noted the lack of clear policy.
- *Jim Rogers moved to direct Town staff to draft policy and procedures (including a list of required documentation) for regional agencies to be paid quarterly; Melinda Loberg seconded; motion passed unanimously: 3 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions.*
- Jeff Kristal encouraged the Selectmen and FinCom to send letters to the MVC facilitating procedure for a large restaurant proposed at the old Bowl & Board building on Main St., noting the increased tax revenue and Town business. The Selectmen were unwilling to circumvent the process, without researching the impact on traffic and parking.
- *Jim Rogers moved to adjourn the Selectmen's meeting at 8:08PM; Melinda Loberg seconded; motion passed unanimously.*
- Mr. Kristal continued his advocacy to the FinCom also pointing out the long process and permitting difficulties (Selectmen, Zoning, MVC, Planning Bd., etc.). At 130 seats it would be the largest restaurant in Tisbury. Other FinCom members felt this was outside FinCom purview.
- The FinCom could recommend articles at less than the requested amount, i.e. less the 5% County administrative fee.

• **Adjourn**

• *NANCY GILFOY MOVED TO ADJOURN THE FINCOM MEETING AT 8:22PM; LESLIE SEGAL SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.*

Meetings/Events:

MVRHSC – ~ 6:30PM, Monday, February 11, 2019 - MVRHS

TFC – 6:30PM, Wednesday, February 13, 2019 – EMS

Special & Annual Town Meetings - Tuesday, April 9, 2019 – Tisbury School

Action List:

- Jeff/All – attend MVRHSC meeting 6:30PM Monday, 2/11/19 at MVRHS
- Tristan - contact AIBOS and FinCom meeting on MVRHS article.
- Tristan – report on the 2nd floor of the CFL building at the 2/13/19 meeting.
- Jay G./Tristan – appoint Tisbury member to CFL Board.
- Jay G./Suzanne – draft regional/non-profit payment policy & procedures.
- Leslie/Tristan – contact Veterans Administration re: funding MV agent.
- Jay G. – correct Sheriff article sponsor (not Dukes County)

continued >

Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee
February 6, 2019

5

Documents on file:

- Agenda 2/6/19
- MVRHS FY20 Budget Highlights Certified 1/02/2019
- Martha's Vineyard Regional High School District Certification of FY20 Budget January 2, 2019
- Tisbury School FY'20 Budget Analysis Draft #5E 2/6/19
- Tisbury School Budget for 2019/2020 Draft #5E February 4, 2019 (7 p.)
- Kristal/Hall emails re: 35 Main Street Tisbury Restaurant Proposal-Seeking Letters in Support of Project Being Returned by MV Commission to Tisbury \ ZBA for Review (3 p.) 2/5/19
- Kristal/Grande emails re: Joint Meeting Budget Review 2/6/19
- Town of Tisbury, FY2019 - Selectmen Other Budgets 2/6/19
- Town of Tisbury, FY2019 - Selectmen Budget 2/6/19
- FY 2020 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 481 Park & Ride Facility
- FY 2020 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 123 Selectmen-Other
- FY 2020 Budget Plan Town of Tisbury Department 122 Selectmen (2 p.)

Chair Jeff Kristal

Date

Minutes approved 2/13/19.