

**Tisbury Finance & Advisory Committee
at the Tisbury Emergency Services Building
6:30PM, Wednesday, November 6, 2019**

Present: Chair – Mary Ellen Larsen, Nancy Gilfoy*, Seth Gambino,
Larry Gomez, Lolly Hand, Jynell Kristal, Laura Rose, Lesley Segal,
Town Staff: Jonathon Snyder – Town Treasurer, John Crocker – Harbormaster,
Others: Recorder Marni Lipke, * Late arrivals or early departures

Call to Order

The Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) was called to order at 6:32PM. *(Recorder's note: discussions are summarized and re-grouped for clarity and brevity.)*

**Minutes –review and approval - October 15, 2019
- October 16, 2019**

• LARRY GOMEZ MOVED TO APPROVE THE TISBURY FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 15, 2019 AND OCTOBER 16, 2019; JYNELL KRISTAL SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, WITH ABSTENTIONS AS ABSENT.

All Island Finance Committee (AIFC), Martina Thornton, County Budget Review of Non-Profits? Non-Profits Separately or All at Once. She Would Like to Come Before the All Island Finance Committee. Once. Recommendation.

The FinCom revisited previous issues with the Dukes County budget (see 6/5/19 Minutes p.1) such as:

- distrust of County Management,
- 5% administrative fees,
- Annual Town Meeting (ATM) politics, and
- duplication of services.

• IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE TISBURY FINANCE COMMITTEE TO AGREE TO THE REQUEST TO PRESENT THE DUKES COUNTY AND NON-PROFIT SPONSORSHIP FISCAL YEAR 2021 DRAFT BUDGET ONCE AT THE ALL ISLAND FINANCE COMMITTEE.

Harbormaster Request for Reserve Fund Transfer – John Crocker

• *Laura Rose recused herself due to the appearance of conflict of interest.*

This request was for October 2019 patrol boat invoices:

- \$9,000 - Offshore Engineering for salvage; and
- \$2,325.55 - Martha's Vineyard Shipyard hauling, flushing, power washing.

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The insurance claim was still pending—any reimbursement would be deposited in the Town general fund. The Harbormaster wished to pay invoices in a timely manner, and had stepped out of process to request FinCom permission before a Selectmen decision at their November 12, 2019 meeting.

• *LARRY GOMEZ MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE WITHDRAWAL OF \$11,325.33 FOR THE HARBORMASTER PATROL BOAT INVOICES, PENDING SELECTMEN'S APPROVAL AS SHOULD HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY DONE; JYNELL KRISTAL SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSTENTIONS—SETH GAMBINO, (LAURA ROSE due to recusal).*

Preliminary Review of Capital Budget – Jay Grande, Jon Snyder, Larry Gomez
(See documents on file.)

Tisbury put much of its capital into its budget, which was not a common practice. This was a preliminary draft, presented here for Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) budget planning. The Departments were directed to list 10 years of capital planning however the farther out, the less firm the projections.

- Capital costs were offset by a number of Town funds such as: Embarkation and Waterways, as well as other sources like insurance, donations and grants, thus reducing the FY21 total estimate from ~ \$3,000,000 to ~ \$1,500,000. (A 20-year bond for \$1,500,000 would cost \$135,000 per year or about 5¢ per \$1,000 on a tax bill—however the Town only bonded for large projects.)

FY21 requests were reviewed:

- Ambulance - no FY21 spending but a good planning schedule;
- Assessors – for software to integrate personal property taxes;
- Building – replacement of the failing 2003 Toyota Highlander;
- Assessor – a new vehicle (see below: p.3);
- Dept. of Public Works (DPW)/Facilities (see below: Actions):
 - re-shingle Council On Aging (COA) side walls,
 - exterior and interior municipal building painting,
 - paving: parts of Spring St. and Main St. around West Chop;
 - Townwide drainage,
 - truck replacement (1 per year or 2 every other year);
- Harbor:
 - dredging,
 - patrol boat replacement,
 - Owen Park Pier grant match (including Seaboard Economic Council grant)
- Library:
 - Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning (HVAC) repair (16 pumps),
 - ceiling repair/weather tightening;
- Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) –unknown amount/timing;
- Tisbury School - unknown amount/timing;

- Beach Rd.
- Seawall replacement within 10 years but with sizable State/Federal grants;
- decorative street lights (see below);
- Information/Technology – upgrades to Town systems and website;
- Shellfish – shift truck to DPW replace with smaller truck;
- 10 year Town-wide American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance - \$4,000,000.
- Enterprise funds (sewer and water) had their own grant sources and lists of capital projects—some of them very large. Such funds were independent and supposedly self-supporting. The Tisbury Water Fund was in good standing. The Sewer Fund was just breaking even without capital project spending.
- In an attempt to use sewer capacity to restrict zoning, the plant was created too small for Town needs and was now within 35,000 gallons of capacity.
- A \$700,000 US Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) grant for wick leaching fields was being modified to cover much needed plant upgrades. The leaching field capacity was larger than previously expected so the wick fields project (which turned out to be more complex and expensive than first proposed) was currently decommissioned and dormant.
- The Capital list should include funds for engineering, design and tests for the State Rd. expansion.

The FinCom discussed a number of issues.

- The 3 Town Leafs difficult were parked at the Annex and Senior Center and so not often available to the Assessor.
- The DPW truck estimates seemed very high.
- The Library Trustees raised moneys for capital projects (e.g. the new meeting room(s)), however the Town paid building maintenance and staffing.
- The Beach Rd. seawall might be the responsibility of Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation (MassDOT) Highways.
- MassDOT would only fund standard “cobra-head” lights along Beach Rd. consequently the Town would have to fund any lights that matched its others.
- ADA compliance projects would be prioritized at \$400,000 per year.

Recommendation on Budget Increase Vote (See below: Actions.)

Traditionally Mr. Snyder drafted the FinCom letter. This year it was almost identical to the previous year, requesting level funding for all discretionary expenses (i.e. not salary, wages, benefits) unless justified. A request for 0% increase would entail departmental personnel cuts since salaries and fixed expenses (such as health insurance) projected a 3-4% increase. (The 2019 request for a theoretical 2% cut received little response.)

- The FinCom discussed the budget calendar that was tight again this year. Union payscale information was not available until November, which always pushed Department drafts towards the December holidays.

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• *JYNELL KRISTAL MOVED TO APPROVE THE DRAFT LETTER WITH THE DATE CORRECTION; LOLLY HAND SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

- The FinCom was interested in interviewing large Departments (Police, DPW, Fire, etc.) but agreed that if a Department met the recommendation (i.e. 0% discretionary increase) there was no reason to meet.

- Any Department not making the Budget deadline would be level funded.

- Town Administrator Jay Grande conveyed Department complaints regarding lack of proper funding over several years. The FinCom emphasized that any justified increases were given a fair hearing and often approved.

- Marni Lipke gave two comments as a member of the public:

° when she substituted at Town Hall there were not enough office supplies to complete the fiscal year; and

° if she were a Department Head receiving the same letter eight years in a row in good economies and bad, she would cease to pay attention to it.

The FinCom suggested the first sentence should mention upcoming capital projects such as the Tisbury and Martha's Vineyard Regional High Schools as well as salary increases and the need to replenish Stabilization. Others noted:

- the FinCom obligation to express appreciation for Departmental frugality;

- the effect of long term stringency;

- business versus residential tax rates.

At the end of the meeting:

• *SETH GAMBINO MOVED TO AMEND THE PREVIOUS MOTION TO APPROVE THE LETTER WITH MODIFICATIONS AS DISCUSSED; LARRY GOMEZ SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Committee Reports (See below: Actions & Meetings/Events.)

Community Preservation Committee (CPC) - had heard all requests and would deliberate on November 18th.

Embarkation – set it's first meeting to draft the annual letter for applications.

Energy – met with the Planning Board on a municipal building energy master plan encompassing electricity, propane and oil.

Natural Resources – will meet next week.

MVRHSC – The Budget Subcommittee was discussing different iterations of the budget: e.g. level service, level funding, etc. driven by the necessary expenses to address the poor status of the current facility and debating whether capital should take precedence over teaching/learning. They were examining reducing staff by attrition and merging of positions. Capital costs might be put in separate warrant articles.

MVRHS Building Committee – had not met since the Feasibility warrant failed.

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Personnel Board – Bill O’Connell chaired last week’s meeting on Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) recommendations.

Planning Board – Seth Gambino would substitute while Lesley Segal was away.

Affordable Housing Committee – Lesley Segal submitted a letter of request to be appointed but had not yet had a response. Appointments were on the November 12th Selectmen meeting agenda.

Tisbury School Committee (TSC) – The School hired Banner Environmental Services (~ \$300,000) and a certified hygienist (~ \$38,000) to start work Tuesday on a 4:00PM to 2:00AM shifts with the goal of finishing remediation by the winter holiday break. The student return goal was January 2020.

- The building still had weather tight issues.
- Gym roof repairs were completed today.
- The HVAC contractor had not yet sent a quote.
- The State granted two procurement waivers.
- Principal John Custer was so inundated with work he had not yet delivered an itemized list of Special Town Meeting article expenses.
- An August 2019 fire sprinkler test resulted in a requirement to upgrade. Facilities Director Kirk Mettall was still researching price quotes.

Wastewater – nothing to report.

Sewer Flow – was still waiting on survey results (see 10/16/19 Minutes p.4).

All Island Finance Committee (AIFC) Update Re: Mediator

Earlier in the meeting the FinCom discussed the continuing attempts at mediation. Two Towns had refused to mediate, although Chilmark was willing to talk to the Superintendent about separating capital costs (which might also clarify true education costs). Capital spending had to pass all six Towns to be approved; operating costs only had to pass a majority of Towns (4 of 6). Further AIFC discussion was awaiting mediation progress.

• Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair – None

Adjournment

- *SETH GAMBINO MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:17PM; LARRY GOMEZ SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.*

Appendix A: Meetings/Events:

- AISC – 4:30PM, Thursday, November 14, 2019 at the MVRHS LCR
- **TFC – 6:30PM, Wednesday, November 19, 2019 at the EMS Building**
- MVRHSC Budget Hearing – Monday, November 25, 2019 – MVRHS LCR/PAC
- MVRHSC Budget Certification – Monday, December 2, 2019 - PAC

continued >

Appendix B: Actions

Jay G./Jon S./Nancy – draft amendments to FY21 recommendation letter.
Mary Ellen – ask Town Accountant for list of warrant article residuals.
Kirk Mettall – send more accurate numbers for FY21 paving and drainage.
Town Admin. – draft comprehensive list of municipal vehicles.
Town Admin. – insure Facilities and Library Trustees are coordinating work.
Jon S./Jay G. – list large capital projects separately: e.g. seawall, School, etc.
Jon S./Jay G. – add State Rd. sewer expansion to capital list.
Heidi R. – send FinCom and Capital an itemized list of FY21 upgrades.

November Agenda:

Minutes: **7/3/19, 9/4/19, 11/6/19**

FY20 Reserve Fund tally = \$14,825.55

10/16/19 – BOH landfill monitoring application \$3,500

11/6/19 – Harbormaster – patrol boat invoices \$11,325.55

Appendix C: Documents on File:

- Agendas (3 p.) 11/6/19
- Request for Transfer from the Reserve Fund (4 p.) 10/31/19
- Larsen letter re: FY2021 Town Department Budgets 11/6/19
- Larsen letter re: FY2021 Town Department Budgets 11/6/19
- Larsen/Snyder cover email re: Guidance Letter 11/6-7/19
- FY2021 Budget / 2020 ATM & STM Calendar (2 p.) 11/5/19
- FY 2021 Capital Planning Worksheet (2 p.) 11/6/19

Mary Ellen Larsen – TFC Chair

Date

Minutes approved 11/20/19.