

**Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee**  
**6:30PM, Wednesday, April 5, 2023**  
**Emergency Services Facility**

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**Present:** Chair Nancy Gilfoy, Louise Clough, Jynell Kristal,  
Mary Ellen Larsen, Rachel Orr, Allan Rogers, Dan Seidman  
**Town:** Town Administrator – Jay Grande, Treasurer – Jonathan Snyder,  
Building Commissioner – Ross Seavey,  
**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. (*Recorder's note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.*)

**Reserve Fund Transfer Request**

(See documents on file & 1/11/23 Minutes p.5.)

All Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) budget funding having been exhausted, this request was an accurate projection of Building Commissioner Ross Seavey's contracted hourly wage for about 1 day per week transitional coverage including the following duties.

- Supervision and training for the new local building inspector—who should complete his certification within 6 months and his commissioner certification the following year.

- Continuing oversight of the large, complex Tisbury School building project. Town Administrator Jay Grande preferred to retain Commissioner Seavey's services for the remainder of the project. Ross Seavey was impressed with the contractor but emphasized the importance of experienced Town eyes.

- The FinCom asked about Town-supported training costs. All manuals and books were retained in the Building Inspector Dept. library—although Mr. Seavey's 2015 set would be updated with the new certification 2021 references. The local inspector also had Commissioner certification and should be able to fill in, in case of a Commissioner's absence. State law required each town to have a building commissioner.

- *LOUISE CLOUGH MOVED APPROVE THE BUILDING INSPECTOR DEPARTMENT REQUEST TO TRANSFER UP TO \$15,000 FROM THE RESERVE FUND TO COVER COMPENSATION FOR A TEMPORARY BUILDING COMMISSIONER; ALLAN ROGERS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

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**Review of 2023 Voter Guide and Martha's Vineyard Regional High School District (MVRHSD) Regional Agreement Summary**

(See documents on file & below Actions.)

- There were no edits on the MVRHSD Regional Agreement Summary. The FinCom affirmed the capital formula amendment was the more significant focus. MVRHSD representatives would attend Special/Annual Town Meeting (STM/ATM) to explain complexities and other amendments.
- The FinCom reviewed the Voter Guide, suggesting edits. Discussions were:
  - FinCom authority over or presentation of the budget, Warrant authority/presentation by the Tisbury Select Board (TSB);
  - Town Hall location fragmentation;
  - 6 Towns' approval chances for the MVRHSD Regional Agreement article (see Minutes 1/25/23 p.4 & 2/1/23 p.2);
  - MVRHSD Feasibility Study ballot question for debt exclusion purposes;
  - 18% debt as the deciding factor in Town AA+ bond rating.
  - With one exception, all FinCom recommendations were unanimous. Mr. Grande explained that FinCom discussion and controversy were part of the process that decided whether articles were postponed/eliminated.

**Committee Reports**

- In a discussion with Town officials and Vineyard Power, the Climate Committee reluctantly agreed to solicit 3<sup>rd</sup> party installation and ownership of Council on Aging (COA) solar panels (see Minutes: 1/18/23 p.5 & 2/22/23 p.6). Although the preference was to build and own the array, 3<sup>rd</sup> party installation had a number of advantages:
  - expedited installation;
  - taxpayer relief from capital spending;
  - solar repair/maintenance by professionals given reduced Department of Public Works (DPW) staffing and lack of a Facilities Manager.
- The Committee also met with Coastal Zone Management (CZM) representative John Ramsey on 5 corners flooding. General agreement by all the experts was to repair the Beach Road Extension pipe and extend it 40 ft. to facilitate drainage through gravity. This and dune construction were opposed by abutters because of pier and view disruption. Issues were:
  - Town liability for flooding damage;
  - ferry access;
  - alternate solutions such as moving piers;
  - inadequacy of Veterans Park/old Fire station cistern solution;
  - critical intersection for the Island and stakeholders—Steamship Authority (SSA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Martha's Vineyard Hospital (MVH), etc.

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- climate resiliency remediation as an important factor in Town's bond rating.
- Beach Rd. seawall replacement bureaucratic difficulties due to its designation as a barrier beach.
- The Steering Committee attended 3 Master Plan meeting/presentations. The consultant's proposals showed a different perspective on Town problems.
  - Town businesses and residents expressed anxiety about perceived issues such as properties taking by eminent domain.
  - Residents' goals were sometimes at odds; for example, to bring people into the Town business district but to reduce traffic/crowding.
  - Since a lot of traffic passed through Tisbury only to get to other destinations, a roundabout outside Vineyard Haven village and a connector road to the Vineyard Haven/Edgartown Rd. could divert congestion. However it was premature to establish the road's exact location.
  - There was almost unanimous positive response to improving pedestrian and bicycle access around town.
  - This was a geographically small town with increasing industrial development needing to be managed for residential ambiance and well zone safety.
- The Water Resources Committee met to consider alternate ways to reduce/eliminate nitrogen, both in ground and other less plausible solutions. After further examination, there would be a public meeting on the subject. The FinCom suggested a revolving fund of subsidies to help residents install alternate septic systems, rather than only tax credits.
- The Embarkation State Senate Bill #1781 was referred to the Committee on Revenue. Senator Julian Cyr was advocating for speedy consideration and passage.

**Future Meetings** (See below: Meeting/Events.)

There was not likely to be a meeting before the STM/ATM.

**Celebration with Thanks to Mary Ellen Larsen and Jynell Krystal**

FinCom members, Jay Grande and Finance Director Jonathan Snyder thanked Mary Ellen Larsen and Jynell Kristal for their 5 terms and 15 years of service and presented them with flowers. Jon Snyder recognized all FinCom members for the tremendous amount of their incredibly important work. Everyone was welcome to stay for refreshments and conversation.

**Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair** – None

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**Adjournment**

• DAN SEIDMAN MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 7:44PM; MARY ELLEN LARSEN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

**Appendix A: Meetings/Events**

- TSB on Beach Wall – 4:00PM, Wednesday, April 12, 2023 KTC Theatre
- STM/ATM –Tuesday, April 25, 2023 – MVRHS PAC
- Town Election – 12:00N-8:00PM, Tuesday, May 9, 2023 – ESF

**Appendix B: Actions**

Voter Guide Edits

- Debt & interest account for 65% of that increase and 18% of the total budget.
- Personnel costs – put (salaries and benefits) in parentheses.
- Education – Jon S. estimate Tisbury School benefits.
- Municipal services – In March, Select Board offices moved...Town Hall remains fragmented. (1<sup>st</sup> sentence goes last) There is an article to assess the needs and create a plan...
- Reserve Fund – Amend balance to \$60,393.
- Stabilization Fund – A municipal “rainy day” savings account.
- Article #26 – FinCom unanimously recommends this article predicated on approval of regional agreement amendments by all towns.

All – Please remember not to hit “Reply All”.

Future Agendas

- Minutes: 3/22/23, 4/5/23
- (New School Maintenance Budget)

Budget Season Notes

- No new positions in FY25
- FY25 salaries/budgets will be higher due to classification raises.
- redraft FinCom letter
  - include deadlines and send to Committees/Boards
  - consider Budget/Free Cash anomalies;
- include Building Dept. fee revenues (offsetting expenses) in budget interview;
- ask departments to project all needs 5 years out i.e. like a capital plan but on other factors—staffing, program changes, etc.
- Ask departments: general energy efficiency and emergency preparedness:
  - insulation, window repairs,
  - turn down heat/air conditioning, turn off lights, motion sensor or timers,
  - under sink hot water heaters.

**continued >**

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**Appendix B: Actions (cont.)**

\$100,000 FY23 Reserve Fund spending tally – Balance: \$60,393

2/8/23 – Animal Control - \$14,607 heating repair

3/15/23 – IT - \$10,000 Hybrid Meeting Equipment

4/5/23 – Building Inspector - \$15,000 Temporary Commissioner Compensation

**Appendix C: Documents on File**

- Agenda 4/5/23
- Request for Transfer from the Reserve Fund Building Dept. Professional Services 1/5/23
- Tisbury Special Town Meeting Article #14, Martha's Vineyard Regional High School District Regional Agreement Amendments, Highlights (2 p.) Draft 1
- Tisbury Special Town Meeting Article #14, Martha's Vineyard Regional High School District Regional Agreement Amendments, Highlights Draft 2
- Voter Guide Special Town Meetings and Annual Town Meeting, Tuesday April 25, 2023 (8 p.) Draft
- Town of Tisbury – FY24 Budget Breakdown (2 p.) 4/12/23
- Gilfoy cover email re: Tisbury Master Plan, Supplemental Economic Development Analysis by FXM 4/7/23
- Town of Tisbury Master Plan, Supplemental Economic Development Analysis, March 2023 (45 p.)

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Nancy Gilfoy – Chair

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Date

Minutes approved 9/6/23