

Town of Oak Bluffs
Finance and Advisory Committee
Thursday, January 23, 2020 5:00 pm
Oak Bluffs Library Conference Room

Present: Chair – Bill Vrooman, Sherry Countryman, Bernie Crossland, Bob Gaffey*,
Maura McGroarty, Greg Thornton, Mike Taus, Walter Vail*, Richard Weiss,

Absent: None

Town: Town Administrator – Bob Whritenour, Town Accountant – Deb Potter,
Police Chief Erik Blake

Others: Recorder - Marni Lipke

* Late arrivals or early departures,
noted solely to mark vote counts.

- The Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) came to order at 5:00pm.
(Recorder's Note: Discussions have been summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.)

• Approval of Minutes (1/9)

- **GREG THORNTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 16, 2020 MINUTES AS AMENDED; MIKE TAUS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

• Police Department Budget Review (See documents on file: 12/5/29 & 1/9/20.)

This year the contracts and Cost Of Living Adjustments (COLAs) were not yet set so the Budget was fairly straightforward. (The Personnel Board was considering a 2% COLA. The Police Union was likely to negotiate for pay equity with Tisbury). All increases were included in the \$200,000 salary pool (see 1/16/20 Minutes p.2). "Island" Policing costs were not drastically different from Falmouth.

- An officer was leaving the Vineyard to join the State Police, and Chief Blake hoped to hire a replacement by July 1, 2020. The Department currently employed two special officers. Ten seasonal specials worked mid-May to September—with a couple retained till October.

- Training expenses were increased to cover command staff professional development, (budgeting, public speaking, management, etc.) in anticipation of Chief Blake's retirement.

- Vehicles were purchased with Ambulance Reserve funds. Three years was optimal rotation for trade-in or resell value, or use as an off-Island car. Charging stations were being installed and new cruisers were either electrical vehicles (EV) or hybrid. Only the Chief had a vehicle for personal use—although two cruisers could be parked at private homes.

- This year, Police vehicles would be delayed to allow two ambulance rebuilds.

- Only 4 staff (including the Chief) were still on the Quinn Bill (10% incorporated into base salary for a Bachelors degree and 12.5% for a Masters), however the State no longer reimbursed its share of costs. The bulk of the officers were on the new Education Initiative.

- There was a long discussion on compensatory time (comp-time). Federal regulations allowed accumulation of 480 hrs. Large comp-time banking had been eliminated going forward in the last contract negotiations (see 1/18/18 Minutes p.1-2), however there were still some large sums left from previous contracts. The Chief discussed:

- shift times and staffing;

- officers motivation to accept overtime or spend time outside of work;

- comp-time paid at separation salary rates;

- special officers at \$23/hr. versus \$65/hr. for full officers;

- Town liability and possible "separation" cost pool, as part of the FinCom Reserve Fund.

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- The Department was well staffed with younger, motivated officers. Stability depended on ties to the Island and housing availability (Nantucket maintained barracks).
- The Chief emphasized that traffic tickets were to ensure safe, efficient traffic flow and business district turnover and not to raise revenue. Today's technologically efficient parking meters would decrease staff hours.
- The Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) paid for the current School Resource Officer (SRO) in full, including ancillary costs (uniforms, vehicle, etc.). The SRO reverted to the Oak Bluffs during School breaks (e.g. summer).
- When asked, the Chief stated two wishes:
 - elimination of the comp-time unfunded liability, and
 - a pool of 4 or 5 special officers.

• Fire Department Budget Review

• Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department Budget Review

Chair Bill Vrooman was informed late this afternoon that this item was canceled. The FinCom revisited the Ambulance Reserve Fund issues (see 1/16/20 Minutes p.2).

- Town Accountant Deb Potter reported the Ambulance Reserve Fund balance would not support two ambulance rebuilds (-\$145,000).

• Accountant's Comments

- Cape Cod Municipal Health Group (CCMHG) announced level health insurance rates, reducing both the Town and MVRHS budgets by the projected 5% increase. The FinCom discussed transferring part of the "surplus" to Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB), but leaving a residual to cover health insurance cost shifts from staffing changes.
- Chief Blake requested a Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) transfer to fund medical/maternity leave costs.

• Member Comments (See below: Actions.)

- Maura McGroarty again requested a list of the three years of salary equity adjustments. The \$200,000 salary pool was considered adequate for all FY21 salary increases.
- The FinCom asked about the \$1,000,000 Town Hall Bond Anticipation Note (BAN)—expenses-to-date \$900,060. BAN/Bond regulations were discussed in terms of re-borrowing, active projects and further voter authorization.
- The Budget calendar was discussed and adjusted.
- Adult Community Education Martha's Vineyard (ACE MV) requested \$21,630 for FY21. The FinCom noted previous plans for 4 years of Town funding after which it would be financially independent. Tuition was 38% of ACE MV revenues.
 - ACE MV focus had shifted away from college courses to vocational/post high school trainings (see 2/7/17 Minutes p.1-2).
 - 425 Oak Bluffs students were 15.3% of the 3,579 total enrollment, but the funding formula requested 21.63% of the ACE MV Budget. Oak Bluffs had voted \$10,650 four years in a row.
- Members considered Chair nominations.
 - Bill Vrooman estimated he spent about 10 hrs./wk. outside of meetings on FinCom business during budget season, other times considerably less. This might include voluntary attendance at such things as MVRHS Budget meetings.
 - There was general agreement that a Chair should not be a newly elected FinCom member.
 - A straw poll showed no one wanted to be Chair.

• Public Comments – None

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• Adjourn

• MIKE TAUS MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 6:37PM; MAURA MCGROARTY AND GREG THORNTON SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meetings/Events:

OB FinCom - 5:00PM, Thursday, January 30, 2020 - OB Library
OB FinCom - 5:00PM, Thursday, February 6, 2020 - OB Library
OB FinCom - 5:00PM, Thursday, February 13, 2020 - OB Library
OB FinCom - 5:00PM, Thursday, February 20, 2020 - OB Library
Nomination Form Deadline - Thursday, February 27, 2020
OB FinCom Budget Hearing - 5:00PM, Thursday, February 27, 2020, TBD
OB FinCom - 5:00PM, Thursday, March 5, 2020 - OB Library
OB FinCom - 5:00PM, Thursday, March 12, 2020 - OB Library
OB FinCom - 5:00PM, Thursday, March 19, 2020 - OB Library
OB FinCom Budget recommendation deadline March 20, 2020
OB FinCom - 5:00PM, Thursday, April 2, 2020 - OB Library
Special & Annual Town Meeting - 7:00PM, Tuesday, April 14, 2020
Town Election - Thursday, April 16, 2020
OB FinCom - 5:00PM, Thursday, April 23, 2020 - OB Library

Action List

- Bill V. – request a 3-year list of pay equity changes from Bob Whritenour.
- Bill V. – resend budget meeting schedule.
- Deb/Bill – check with Chief Rose on EMS/Fire budget dates: 2/13/20 or 2/27/20.
- All – consider who to elect as Chair in April/May 2020.

Ongoing Action List from previous meetings

- Bob G. – keep Greg informed of all meeting issues.
- Sherry/Bob/Maura/Richard – pick up nomination forms for 2/27/20 submission deadline.
- Future Agenda Items:

Trash/Waste Analysis	Reserve Fund Increase
Town Cleaning Services Analysis	Embarkation Fund Policy

Documents on file:

- Agenda & Vrooman cover email (2 p.) 1/23/20
- Sign In Sheet 1/23/20

• Minutes approved as corrected for typos by the OB FinCom 1/30/20.