

Town of Oak Bluffs
Finance and Advisory Committee
Thursday, March 7, 2019, 5:00 pm
Oak Bluffs Library Second Floor Conference Room

Present: Chair – Bill Vrooman, Bernie Crossland, Herbert Kiehn, Maura McGroarty,
Mike Taus, Walter Vail, Richard Weiss,

Absent: Bob Gaffey, Ray Moreis,

Others: Sheriff's Office - Peter Graczykowski

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 5:02PM.
(Recorder's Note: Discussions have been summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.)

• **Sheriff's Regional Emergency System Request** (See documents on file.)

Sheriff Office Assistant Superintendent/Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Peter Graczykowski explained that this proposal was different from last year's as it contained no operating costs.

• The Department obtained a \$1,500,000 State development grant for the first construction phase of a \$4,600,000 communications system on a three to five year schedule depending on various factors including Town cooperation/buy-in. The microwave system would be circular (rather than the current hub configuration) allowing for all stations to communicate directly with others, as well as providing redundancy and back up.

• The Article addressed system maintenance (i.e. Motorola service contract) and grant-ineligible development costs (- 10%: permits, boulders, archeological finds, etc.).

- Maintenance costs increased in proportion to the amount of equipment being maintained as the system progressed. However once completed grant-ineligible costs would drop off and the amount was likely to drop by about 50%.

- Funds would be under the fiscal oversight/authority of a committee of Town representatives. Island police, fire and emergency medical services (EMS) would be consulted on initial construction priorities. Town approval would be required for tower construction in their boundaries.

- The estimate was based on worst-case upkeep/repairs on as-needed basis. The oversight committee would direct any residuals: e.g. return to Towns or reduce next year's assessment.

• The largest hurdle was the allocation formula, worked out in a December meeting of all Town Administrators (including Oak Bluffs Town Administrator Bob Whritenour). Although some objected to the flat fee (unfair to Aquinnah, Chilmark, Edgartown, etc.) and others objected to proportional rates, this formula of 50% flat fee/50% call volume was reluctantly acceptable to all as a compromise—but would require six Town approval.

- Mr. Graczykowski was very wary of imposing a unilateral Oak Bluffs exception at this stage as likely to trigger other Town exemption requests and failure of the compromise.

• The FinCom stressed they whole heartedly supported the request but strongly objected to any call-volume based formula (see 2/28/19 Minutes p.7 #26). They asked about:

- technical semantics;

- bid procedures for Motorola;

- consultation with other municipalities using the same system;

- Oak Bluffs tower as a grant partner (tower location and line of sight requirements);

- Regional Communications Center (RCC) upkeep;

- tower rental of commercial space to defray costs (State regulations and best practice were no mixed use due to interference);

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- possible results of article failure—increased costs and grant fund reconfiguration;
- call volume determination by point of call origin (not phone number);
- non-emergency calls (water, wastewater, animal control officers, etc.);
- warrant error due to an earlier agreement.
- Most Massachusetts municipalities fully paid 911 costs with separate police, fire and EMS systems. There were only four other regional systems, one of which, Essex surrendered to State oversight from lack of support—likely results: an expensive upgrade and/or remote relocation. The State encouraged new regional systems with initial construction funds but no ongoing costs or capital.
- Originally funded through Dukes County the assessment was lost during transfer to the State. State funding was restricted to inmate population formula.
 - The primary discussion on the Oak Bluffs 23.82% share rested on the Oak Bluffs based Islandwide institutions that increased call volume: Martha's Vineyard Community Services (MVCS), Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS), Martha's Vineyard Hospital (MVH), ferry piers, etc. A number of statistics were requested (see below: Actions).
- Mr. Graczykowski suggested that Oak Bluffs pass the article and negotiate with the oversight committee for possible credit, tower lease payments, etc.
- He thanked the FinCom for their questions, which prepared him for Town Meeting discussions. The FinCom thanked him for his time and attendance.

• **Approve Minutes (2/28/19)**

• **HERB KIEHN MOVED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 28, 2019 MINUTES AS AMENDED FOR TYPOS; WALTER VAIL SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSTENTION—RICHARD WEISS** due to absence.

• **Warrant Recommendations** (See documents on file.)

- The FinCom debated the Sheriff's Article. Edgartown, West Tisbury, Tisbury and Chilmark generated different language, which the FinCom favored. There were three versions: the Sheriff's, Oak Bluffs, and other Towns. The FinCom agreed to table the vote until the next meeting.
- Fire Chief John Rose asked that the fire truck renovation be reconsidered (see 2/28/19 Minutes p.1), in light of about \$40,000 in savings re: a three-payment plan, future inflation and estimated lower interest rates. The Article would cover a down payment from the Ambulance Reserve (balance over \$200,000). Maura McGroarty emphasized the decision leave the Ambulance Reserve Fund fallow for a year.

• **Article – Fire Truck Renovation (Ambulance Fund)**

• **WALTER VAIL MOVED THAT THE OAK BLUFFS FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMEND ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLE FOR A \$125,000 DOWN PAYMENT ON REFURBISHING A FIRE TRUCK; RICHARD WEISS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 6 AYES, 1 NAY—MAURA MCGROARTY, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

- The FinCom reviewed comments on FinCom recommendations.

• **Member Comments** - None

• **Accountant's Comments** - None

• **Public Comments** - None

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• Adjourn

- **MIKE TAUS MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 6:37PM; WALTER VAIL SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Meetings/Events:

OB FinCom - 5:00PM, Thursday, March 14, 2019 - OB Library
AIBOS/AIFC - 7:00PM, Thursday, March 21, 2019 MVRHSC LCR
AIFC 5:00PM, Thursday, March 28, 2019
Special & Annual Town Meetings - Tuesday, April 9, 2019 – MVRHS PAC

Action List

- **Peter G.** – send OB FinCom the following statistics:
 - number of calls per Town resident tax unit for each Town.
 - list the top 20 call volume organizations in each Town.
 - call volume per Town for June to September.
- **March Agenda Items:** Minutes Format

Ongoing Action List from previous meetings (cont.)

- **Future Agenda Items:**

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| Police Department Finances | Trash/Waste Analysis |
| Parking Mitigation Follow-Up | Reserve Fund Increase |
| Town Cleaning Services Analysis | Assessor's Office re: PILOTs |
| Auditor Management Letter Update (January, March, June, September) | |
| Embarkation Fund Policy | |

Documents on file:

- Agenda 3/7/19
- Sign In Sheet 3/7/19
- Salem News excerpt State proposed takeover of regional dispatch center (4 p.) 3/5/19
- Martha's Vineyard Public Safety Communications System Development, FY20
Maintenance Cost Funding Request (11 p.)
- Vrooman/Graczykowski emails re: OB Dispatch Stats 3/4/19
- Lipke/Kristal/Grande/Rand emails re: Sheriff's Proposal 3/7/19
- Hagerty letter re: Edgartown Fiscal Year 2020 Warrant Articles 3/6/19
- Grande/Execsec@Chilmark emails re: Sheriff's Proposal 3/6/19

- **Minutes approved as amended for typos by the OB FinCom 3/14/19.**