

Town of Oak Bluffs
Finance and Advisory Committee
Thursday, May 2, 2019, 5:00 pm
Oak Bluffs Library Second Floor Conference Room

Present: Chair – Bill Vrooman, Bernie Crossland, Maura McGroarty,
Mike Taus*, Greg Thornton, Walter Vail*,

Absent: Bob Gaffey, Ray Moreis, Richard Weiss,

Others: Town Accountant – Deb Potter,
Sharon Cooke,
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 5:06PM.
(Recorder's Note: Discussions have been summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.)

• **Minutes Approval (4/25/19)**

• **MIKE TAUS MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL 25, 2019 MINUTES AS AMENDED; GREG THORNTON SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

• **Ray's Replacement**

Ray Moreis acknowledged to Chair Bill Vrooman that he was resigning. Members were recruiting possible candidates. Sharon Cooke was observing the meeting. Steve Auerbach was interested on condition that it be for one year to advocate for affordable housing funding. The matter was tabled pending a larger quorum.

• **Accountant's Comments** (See below: Actions.)

Town Accountant Deb Potter reviewed the first round of transfers.

- The Affordable Housing recorder billing was sporadic so a cushion would be convenient.
- Treasurer's Salary was reassigned to the Treasurer/Collector department along with a small retroactive Administrative Assistant pay raise.
- The Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) interest was paid.
- \$45,000 was transferred from Fire Dept. Salary to Professional/Technical to cover training consultants (see Minutes: 1/10/19 p.3 & 1/24/19 p.2).
- The Town Clerk had to hire extra workers for the latest Special Town Meeting (STM).
- **BERNIE CROSSLAND MOVED TO AUTHORIZE MAY FISCAL YEAR 2019 OAK BLUFFS BUDGET TRANSFERS AS PROPOSED; MIKE TAUS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**
- As the budget became more tightly managed Departments had less turn-backs, and seemed to be working within budget limits. Deb Potter was reminding Dept. Heads weekly to apply for necessary transfers as soon as possible.
 - Police Chief Erik Blake projected a substantial residual, but Deb Potter was doubtful.
- Possible Reserve Fund draws were:
 - Selectmen Unclassified due to legal costs, and
 - Claim Strategies for self-insured workmen's comp.
- There was a brief discussion on correct budgeting for insurance, Affordable Housing assistant and the Town Report.
 - The Audit expenses (\$32,000) line added \$10,000 for consulting services as needed.

Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee
May 2, 2019

2

• Allocation Formulas (See below: Actions.)

- Oak Bluffs was currently in a stronger political position due to Annual Town Meeting (ATM) no votes on both the Sheriff's Regional Communications and the MVRHS Feasibility Study. Nonetheless there was the constant difficulty of being fair to and getting agreement from all six Towns.
- The All Island Finance Committee (AIFC) had lost momentum--only three towns showed continued interest: Oak Bluffs, Tisbury, West Tisbury.

County

The County used two formulas:

- the mandated formula for County Assessment (with weighted votes in equal proportion);
- the 50% assessed valuation/ %50 population formula.
- Currently the County mandated formula favored Oak Bluffs, but also meant Oak Bluffs had less say in County decisions—it took three towns to oppose the 38% Edgartown share.
- The FinCom objected to the lack of consistency in funding: failing to use the mandated formula for all County Departments (social services, Vineyard Health Care Access Program (VHCAP), and for other non-profits.
- There was a fairly free-wheeling discussion on all allocation formulas:
 - determining the difference to Oak Bluffs of using the mandated County formula;
 - objections to the new 5% non-profit administrative fee as part of County duties covered in their budget (see 1/31/19 Minutes p.2 & 4);
 - additional 14% Martha's Vineyard Community Services (MVCS) administration fee;
 - ability to pay partial assessments;
 - ability of non-profits to submit articles by petition that countered moves to limit funding;
 - six towns' ability to sign separate contracts independent of the County;
 - Town budget payment on non-town employees, and implications for benefits;
 - historical movements to disband the County;
 - member confusion on funding complexity and convolutions.

Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS)

The MVRHS as a separate municipality formed a Regional Agreement Subcommittee, and was examining possible allocation alternatives. There was some agreement/sympathy over changing the capital formula, but Towns favored by the status quo often blocked proposals.

- OB FinCom comments included:
 - multi-year averaging to smooth out enrollment variances that spiked Town assessments (see 2/13/14 Minutes p.1);
 - per capita Town population capital assessment (vs. Town enrollment);
 - legal penalties for refusal to pay assessments;
 - demographic projections;
 - commonality of the problem with all regional school districts.

Sheriff's Office

The FinCom debated:

- reducing Oak Bluffs by three regional non-profits: Martha's Vineyard Hospital (MVH), MVRHS and Woodside village;
- division by taxable property units;
- Sheriff Dept. record keeping;
- division of capital by equal Town flat share;
- household statistics: Barnstable 17,677, Oak Bluff 4,658, Aquinnah 482, 62% vacation.

Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee
May 2, 2019

3

• **GREG THORNTON MOVED TO INCLUDE IN A MEMO TO THE SELECTMEN A RECOMMENDATION TO WITHHOLD THE 5% ADMINISTRATIVE FEE FROM DUKES COUNTY; WALTER VAIL SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

• IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE OAK BLUFFS FINANCE COMMITTEE TO SEND A MEMO TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDING THAT PRIOR TO ANY NEGOTIATIONS ON ANY OF THE THREE ALLOCATION (MVRHS, DUKES COUNTY, REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS) THE SELECTMEN HOLD A JOINT PUBLIC MEETING WITH THE FINCOM ON CONCERNS INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING PROPOSALS:

- WITHHOLD THE DUKES COUNTY 5% ADMINISTRATIVE FEE;
- FUND THE REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS ALLOCATION AS FOLLOWS:
 - 50% NUMBER OF PROPERTIES (COMMERCIAL, RESIDENTIAL NON-PROFIT),
 - 50% CALL VOLUME REMOVING ALL REGIONAL SERVICES IN ALL TOWNS, AND DIVIDING THE REMAINING CALLS PROPORTIONALLY.

• **Member Comments** - None.

The trailer costs were funded through the new Town Hall BAN. The Oak Bluffs School roof bond costs would show up in FY21.

• **Public Comments** - None

• **Adjourn**

• **WALTER VAIL MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 6:52PM; GREG THORNTON SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Meetings/Events:

OB FinCom - 5:00PM, Thursdays, May 16 & June 6, 2019 - OB Library

Audit Exit Interview - 4:30PM, Tuesday, June 11, 2019 - OB Library

Action List

- **Bill** - research and send out County mandated formula
- **Maura/Deb** - calculate County services by both allocations for last 3 fiscal years.
- **Deb P.** - email object codes expense/revenue report.
- **Bill** - send memo/letter to Selectmen re: regional allocations & 5% administrative fee.

Ongoing Action List from previous meetings (cont.)

• **Future Agenda Items:**

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

Documents on file:

- Agenda 5/2/19
- Sign In Sheet 5/2/19
- Vrooman cover email re: 5/2 Agenda 4/28/19
- My Suggestions
- Gaffey email re: 5/2 Agenda 4/28/19

continued >

Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee
May 2, 2019

4

Documents on file (cont.):

- Brough email re: Public Input Notice – ADA Survey for Town of Oak Bluffs (2 p.) 5/1/19
- Town of Oak Bluffs Americans with Disability Act Survey for Island Residents, Individual with Disabilities or Any Interested Individuals that Wish to Participate (5 p.) 5/1/19
- Chapter VIII Finance and Advisory Committee (2 p.)
- Town of Oak Bluffs Requested FY19 Budget Transfers under MGL 44:33B 5/2/19

- **Minutes approved as amended by the OB FinCom 5/16/19.**