

Town Administrator Report
October 8, 2019

The following is a summary of the major activities of the Office of the Town Administrator for the previous week.

- 1. Farm Pond Culvert Update-**With the guidance of Selectman Gail Barmakian our Coastal Infrastructure Team met on Tuesday, October 1 to review the status of the Farm Pond Culvert project. This is an important waterway improvement and ecological restoration project for our Town to increase the flushing and improve the water quality in Farm Pond by increasing the size of the culvert. The project will also reduce nitrogen in the pond to meet our nitrogen goals for the watershed. It's a fairly complex, sensitive design project which involves the installation of a tidal gate and flood mitigation measures to allow for the greater flow without having unintended flooding. Project permitting has proved difficult due to the numerous agencies involved and the overlapping regulations. One of the latest holdups has involved the comments of Mass. DOT which has requested additional studies and has not commented positively on the project. Dave Grunden was a driving force on the project, and we are now putting our new project team in place with Chuck Fisher and Marissa Quell assisting with the management of this project which should greatly improve this area as a shellfish resource. We have organized our team and our next step is to have a conference call with our funding partners from the MA Department of Ecological Restoration (DER) and the US Army Corps. of Engineers (USACE). We are trying to hang onto our project funding given the length of time the project has been in the planning stages so that we can make this important project happen. The Town has a \$500,000 appropriation in place for the grant matching funds.
- 2. Meeting with the Finance Committee-**On Thursday, October 3 I met with the Finance Committee to review the status of a list of Town projects and issues on which they were interested in being updated. I was happy to meet with the Committee to help share information and discuss important topics. Many of the issues dealt more with major policy questions than specific financial issues, but all roads lead back to finances, so I try to serve as a communications bridge to let the Finance Committee know where we stand on all the major issues. I also distributed the draft warrant for the November 12 Special Town Meeting and reviewed our calendar for posting the meeting. Finance Committee recommendations are due by October 18. At the meeting I also put in a pitch for the Finance Committee to review and approve the draft financial policies at their earliest convenience so that these may be submitted to the Board of Selectmen for final approval. With everyone updated on all the major issues, we're ready to launch into the upcoming Capital Budget and Annual Town budget review process together, and I look forward to another smooth budget year.
- 3. Meeting with Martha's Vineyard Commission and Senator Julian Cyr.-**On Friday, October 4, Conservation Agent Liz Durkee, Gail Barmakian and I met with Senator Julian Cyr and Adam Turner, Executive Director of the Martha's Vineyard Commission,

to review a series of issues related to permitting and funding coastal projects. The Farm Pond Culvert project was a major point of discussion both in terms of permitting and funding. We also reviewed issues associated with the deficiency of the State portion of Seaview Ave which floods in almost every storm event. The Senator's office will be working to arrange a stakeholders meeting to coordinate all of the funding and permitting agencies to help make projects move forward more smoothly. We also reviewed efforts by the MVC to coordinate the Towns to become eligible to participate in the short-term rental wastewater fund by developing a Clean Water Act equivalent plan for watershed-based nitrogen mitigation. Finally, we discussed the process for getting the funds authorized in the recent State bond bills approved for local projects. We have sent in the letters of request, and now the Senator's office will be following up to help us get the actual funds.

4. **Bike Path Update-** Following our August meeting with the Bikeway Committee, Mass DOT and the design firm of Greenman-Pederson, we have been working to set up the State's Public Hearing for the proposed layout plan. We have been successful in arranging the date of Tuesday, October 29 at 6:00 PM in the Oak Bluffs Library for the Public Hearing. The State will take care of the advertising and notifications and will be responsible for conducting the hearing. We are invited to attend and participate. This is the last major step before the State takes over the final 75% design and construction of the project. We are awaiting word after the hearing on the process the State will use to complete the layout portion of the project, which is mostly located adjacent to the State portion of the roadway. If everything moves forward smoothly this portion of the project will be set to be constructed in 2021.

5. **Veteran's Services Update-**It is with a sad heart that we congratulate JoAnn Murphy for her many years of great work for our community as our Island's Veterans Agent and wish her well in retirement. JoAnn did a great job for our veterans and she will be sorely missed. Bruce Montrose has taken over officially as Veterans' Agent and we look forward to working with him in the coming years. After many, many years of service our own Buddy Debettencourt is also retiring as our Graves Officer for Oak Bluffs. JoAnn Murphy has approached David Berube to step in and take over this role. I feel that Mr. Berube would be a great addition to our veterans' team as he already has such a strong presence. With the Board's approval I will formalize this change.

6. **Town Hall Update Meeting.** As you know, ICON Architecture has completed their draft report to the Board for the renovation of the Town Hall facility. In the report they lay out several options for approaching the project. Architect Stephen Moore has reached out to me to schedule a meeting for them to present their findings and report to the Board of Selectmen. They have suggested meeting during the afternoon of Wednesday, October 16. I would like to get the approval of the Board to schedule the review meeting for the 16th, or a more convenient day if required.

Robert Whritenour

From: Gail Barmakian <gailmaritza@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 1:21 PM
To: Chuck Fisher
Cc: Robert Whritenour
Subject: Re: Farm Pond

Thank you for your response.

Some of those questions concern me because they should know the answers. The important factors are that this project enhances flushing of the Pond thereby providing nitrogen reduction after many studies and has been approved by DEP for that purpose in so many words. It is part of WW's regulatory formal Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan. I don't think Nils may respond because he left the Dept. he was in when he did this.

First of all this project NEVER went dormant, we were held up by a regulatory process.

The letter in my opinion shows a fundamental misunderstanding and it is our job to shed light..

The study was done on the tidal gate and increased likelihood of increased threat from flood during storm culvert would have on the area. It was minimal and the gate would only be put down during an event. It obviously would not serve protection for a catastrophic storm which was never intended.

She thinks no one has been paying attention or has cared about this and she needs to know the hold ups. She also needs to know that we have sophisticated and in the know people here even though David has retired. The Town has dedicated funds up to \$500,000 that still exist and are waiting.

We need a phone call to her privately so she can get on board.

We can talk about that net week.

I ask that you forward Georgeanne's e-mail for his comments because he has the most accurate history of this project as well as requesting whatever additional files we have on this OR Bob may have by way of written correspondence.

On Thursday, September 26, 2019, 3:12:33 PM EDT, Chuck Fisher <cfisher@oakbluffsma.gov> wrote:

Hi Gail,

I am working on pulling the facts together. The following is a copy of an email that resulted from a phone conversation I had with Georgeann Keer. During our conversation I stressed the importance of this project. She suggested we develop questions and possibly redefine goals in preparation for an upcoming conference call. The call has not been set yet but should take place during the week of 10/7. My hope is the call will firm up my understanding and put everyone on the same page.

I have also been in touch with Grace Moses from ACOE. She told me they need current project costs and asked if there are any other land owners involved. I have asked Nils Wiberg from Fuss and O'Neil if he is able to provide current project numbers and at what cost. I have not heard back from him yet.

Greetings Constable Fisher,

It was a pleasure speaking with you this morning briefly regarding the status of the Farm Pond project in Oak Bluffs. For the benefit of the group I've copied here, I will summarize the nature of our conversation, and **recommend that we follow-up with a mutually agreeable time for a conference call, to review this project, and determine if there is a potential path forward / next-steps.**

Summary: DER (my program) is a State Agency dedicated to facilitating implementation of pro-active aquatic restoration projects for the benefit of the Commonwealth, and the natural resources therein. DER accepted Farm Pond many years ago (around 2005 / RFR # ENV-04-CZM-04) as a Priority Project – this means that our Division would assist the Town, as the Lead Project Sponsor (LPS) in working to advance the project as it was considered to have potential to restore aquatic resources within Farm Pond – namely salt marsh, coastal pond, and even eel grass resources. However, **over time, the project was slow to advance,** and we've recently also identified that our LPS contact – Dave Grunden- has **retired.** The combination of inactivity, changing science and thoughts on how / if tide-gates could be integrated into restoration projects and the lack of staff continuity have left the **status of the project uncertain.** DER is considering removing the project from our Priority list (it can always re-apply if conditions or information change). But before doing so, Constable Fisher brought to our attention that the Town concurrently re-examining the status of this project themselves.

During my call this morning, I learned that Constable Fisher has very recently started to get up to speed on this project (through internal files) as well as by reaching out to Grace Mosses at the Corps (copied above). Given that the Town may be re-establishing both an understanding of the history of this project, and considering its status internally as a Town Priority, outside of DER's review, I **recommended that the Town connect with both Corps staff (Larry Oliver and Grace Moses copied above) and NOAA / Restoration Center Staff (Eric Hutchins also copied above) to hear from folks with past history on this project.**

There is an important aspect to this project, that I did highlight on our call, and I would like to reiterate here. **The project, as some partners knew it, included the need for a tide-gate.** During the time in which this project was being developed, and then went dormant, **much has changed regarding the thinking on / and use of tide gates for restoration projects.** Given the evaluation and design was based on older data and views of tide-gates, this project may need some re-evaluation, **both from a feasibility perspective, as well as a restoration perspective.** At the very least, some re-assessment of conditions with respect to SLR are likely needed and the challenges of how to manage what the natural resource needs (greater tidal flushing) **with respect to what protections any low-lying structures / properties may need, will be an important focal-point.** At a higher level, some important questions to address include, **what is the justification for a tide-gate (today)?, what alternatives exist (if any) that might negate the need for a tide gate? , does funding still exist to support this project even if it needs a tide gate?, is the project and its goals still in alignment with being a restoration project / or is the project more appropriately an infrastructure and mitigation effort lead / funded by others? When and how will DOT be engaged if the Town moves this as a renewed priority?**

So – this brings us back to my initial introduction, that we collectively consider a conference call, to discuss the background and status of this project (both the Town, and our agencies) and see if there are collectively some recommendations the Town might consider, if the Town is seeking to advance a project at this site.

Constable Fisher – if you'd like to move forward with a call please identify a few dates / times (I suggest at least 1.5 hours) to advance to the group, and I can offer to arrange a screen share, develop an agenda, and welcome the Town's additional questions to be incorporated.

Cheers,
-Georgeann

Georgeann H. Keer Division of Ecological Restoration, Mass. Department of Fish & Game, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 400, Boston, MA 02114 Georgeann.Keer@mass.gov Ph: 617-626-1246 Fax: 617-626-1505 <http://www.mass.gov/der>

Hi all,

I'm coordinating a meeting between us to figure out our stance and come up with questions about moving forward with the Farm Pond restoration project. Bob and I are available 9/30 or 10/1. Can anyone not make one of these days? Mornings are best for me, if there is a time that is best for anyone please say so. There will be a conference call with other involved parties the following week, either 10/7, 10/9, or 10/10.

Thank you,

Chuck

Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee
Oak Bluffs Library

10-3-2019

5:00 Call to Order

- Approval of Minutes (7/18, 8/28, 9/4)
- 10/7 MVRHS Mediator meeting
- Discussion of Oak Bluffs Issues with Bob Whritenour
 - 1) Town Hall (what's happening)
 - 2) Use of the trailers
 - 3) East Chop Bluff
 - 4) Debt Service (current and projected)
 - 5) Several of the budget lines under Selectmen Unclassified that have been underfunded
 - 6) How to handle social services going forward (both current line items and others)
 - 7) Personnel changes (such as joint building inspector with Tisbury and shellfish part time to full time change as well as salary structural change approved by Personnel)
 - 8) Ambulance Fund and MVH *Financial Policies*
 - 9) Other
- Accountant's Comments
- Member Comments
- Public Comments

Adjourn

Bill Vrooman

Chairman, OB Finance and Advisory Committee

TOWN OF OAK BLUFFS
2013-2037
TOTAL TAX LEVY DEBT SERVICE EXISTING AND PROPOSED
Total All Declining Principal and Interest Payments

Existing Debt								Proposed Debt					
Fiscal Year	Total Principal	Total Interest	Building Maintenance	Highway Program	Fire Station	Fire Station Design	TOTAL EXISTING	School Roof	Town Hall	Future Wastewater	Farm Pond Match	Center For Living	TOTAL PLANNED DEBT
2012													
2013	2,314,313	865,456					3,179,769						3,179,769
2014	2,272,385	703,942	38,425				3,014,752						3,014,752
2015	2,001,767	602,288	37,483				2,641,538						2,641,538
2016	1,802,677	510,616	36,540		185,234		2,535,067					46,950	2,582,017
2017	1,833,742	426,425	35,598	101,377	640,947	44,720	3,082,809					45,609	3,128,418
2018	1,864,861	340,203	34,655	99,210	626,703	41,725	3,007,357					44,268	3,051,625
2019	1,666,139	256,668	33,713	97,193	615,540	41,241	2,710,494					42,926	2,753,420
2020	1,542,981	181,274	32,770	95,175	604,376	35,461	2,492,037					41,585	2,533,622
2021	1,555,535	110,041	31,828	93,158	593,213	34,681	2,418,456	623,708				40,243	3,082,407
2022	644,201	62,139	30,885	91,140	582,049	33,901	1,444,315	612,008	790,400		32,500	38,902	2,918,125
2023	462,316	38,029	29,943	89,123	570,886	33,120	1,223,417	600,308	775,580		31,750	37,560	2,668,615
2024	335,493	23,419		87,105	559,722	32,340	1,038,079	588,608	760,760	750,000	31,000	36,219	3,204,666
2025	163,736	11,864		85,088	548,559	31,560	840,807	576,908	745,940	750,000	30,250	34,877	2,978,782
2026	167,044	8,556		83,070	537,395	780	796,845	565,208	731,120	750,000	29,500		2,872,673
2027	170,419	5,181		81,053	526,232		782,885	553,508	716,300	750,000	28,750		2,831,443
2028	173,861	1,739		79,035	515,068		769,703	541,808	701,480	750,000	28,000		2,790,991
2029				77,018	503,905		580,923	530,108	686,660	750,000	27,250		2,574,941
2030					492,741		492,741	518,408	671,840	750,000	26,500		2,459,489
2031					481,578		481,578	506,708	657,020	750,000	25,750		2,421,056
2032					470,414		470,414	495,008	642,200	750,000			2,357,622
2033					459,251		459,251	483,308	627,380	750,000			2,319,939
2034					443,087		443,087	471,608	612,560	750,000			2,277,255
2035					432,058		432,058	459,908	597,740	750,000			2,239,706
2036					421,029		421,029	448,208	582,920	750,000			2,202,157
2037							0	436,508	568,100	750,000			1,754,608
2038							0	424,808	553,280	750,000			1,728,088
2039							0	408,108	538,460	750,000			1,696,568
2040							0	396,828	523,640	750,000			1,670,468
									508,820	750,000			1,258,820
										750,000			750,000
										750,000			750,000
Totals	18,971,470	4,147,840					35,759,411						74,693,580

Office of the Town Administrator
For financial planning purposes only
Fiscal Year 2020



***Town of Oak Bluffs
Special Town Meeting Calendar
November 12, 2019***

Board of Selectmen votes to set Town Meeting Date	September 10, 2019
Deadline for the Submission of Special Town Meeting Articles	September 27, 2019
Final Draft and Execution of Special Town Meeting Warrant	October 8, 2019
Deadline for the Submission of Finance Committee Recommendations	October 18, 2019
Deadline for Warrant to be submitted to Newspaper	October 22, 2019
Special Town Meeting Warrant Newspaper Publication	October 25, 2019
Deadline for Posting Special Town Meeting Warrant	October 25, 2019
Special Town Meeting	November 12, 2019

Robert Whritenour

From: JoAnn Murphy <vetsagent@dukescounty.org>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 12:33 PM
To: Robert Whritenour
Subject: graves officer

Bob, I'm sorry that I haven't had the chance to write the letter regarding the graves officer for Oak Bluffs. I have spoken with Buddy Debettencourt and his family and he is no longer able to do the job. I have approached David Berube who would like to step in. He can be reached at 774-353-7536.

I am retiring as of tomorrow and Bruce Montrose is taking over. I hope that this will be sufficient. Thanks for all your help over the years.

Jo Ann Murphy

Robert Whritenour

From: Stephen Moore <smoore@iconarch.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2019 3:54 PM
To: Robert Whritenour
Cc: Ned Collier; Jesse VanCamp
Subject: RE: Oak Bluffs Town Hall Study Draft: Page Turn Date

Good afternoon Bob,

After going around the room for dates that work for us all we came up with Wednesday October 16th. Does that work for you?

Sincerely,
Stephen Moore Assoc. AIA, LEED AP BD+C

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101 Summer Street, Boston, MA 02110
T: 617.451.3333 x112 | D: 617.939.0712
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From: Robert Whritenour <rwhritenour@oakbluffsma.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2019 10:58 AM
To: Stephen Moore <smoore@iconarch.com>
Subject: RE: Oak Bluffs Town Hall Study Draft

That's great. Thanks Stephen.

-Bob

Robert L. Whritenour, Jr.
Town Administrator
Town of Oak Bluffs
PO Box 1327
Oak Bluffs, MA 02557

From: Stephen Moore <smoore@iconarch.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2019 9:09 AM
To: Robert Whritenour <rwhritenour@oakbluffsma.gov>
Cc: Ned Collier <ncollier@iconarch.com>; Jamar Moore <jmoore@iconarch.com>
Subject: Re: Oak Bluffs Town Hall Study Draft

Good morning Bob,

Let me send over another more up to date version to get your thoughts on and we can get those in the fold for a “final final” by the end of the week if that works for you.

Sincerely,
Stephen Moore Assoc. AIA, LEED AP

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On Aug 27, 2019, at 09:01, Robert Whritenour <rwhritenour@oakbluffsma.gov> wrote:

Hi Stephen,
I've been out for a bit, but I'm back now. Just checking in, do I still have time to look over the draft?
Excited with your progress.
Bob

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 20, 2019, at 4:41 PM, Stephen Moore <smoore@iconarch.com> wrote:

Good afternoon Bob,

I wanted to advance a DRAFT copy of the report to you ahead of Friday for a perusal to perhaps get in any edits or requests or clarification that we can roll into the deliverable we have queued up for Friday.

Have a look (some fussing with title placement, final spell checks and some enhanced graphic work are still in the works—but there is time to get other facets in as well.

Ned and I would love to come down at some point soon and perhaps have a page turn and Q+A session as you see working into the schedule. We can also bring some focused boards from the report (with some enhancements for clarity as necessary).

Sincerely,
Stephen Moore Assoc. AIA, LEED AP BD+C

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