

Finance Committee Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting 3-2-2018

Aquinnah Town Hall Selectmen's Meeting Room

Members present: Chairman Allen Rugg and Tom Murphy  
Members not present: Mark Foster

Also present: Board Administration Assistant Sophia Welch

- The meeting began at 10:08am

- First on the agenda was the review of minutes. Tom made a motion to approve the 2/23/18 minutes as presented. Allen seconded. The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.

- Next on the agenda was a review of the Special Town Meeting warrant articles.

*ARTICLE ONE: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds the sum of Three Thousand Two Hundred Eight Dollars and Seventy-three Cents (\$3,208.73) to pay the following bills incurred during FY '17: \$2,958.73 - John Keene Excavation, Inc. and \$250.00 - Island Water Source or take any other action relative thereto.*

The Committee was informed by Jeffrey, Town Administrator, that the John Keene bill has been paid, leaving the Island Water Source bill of \$250.00. Tom made a motion to support the payment of the Island Water Source invoice in the sum of \$250.00. Allen seconded. The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.

*ARTICLE TWO: To see if the Town will vote to the change the Board of Assessors from an elected to appointed Board as provided under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 1B, or take any other action relative thereto.*

Being that there is no financial implication with this warrant article, Tom made a motion to recommend deferral of a position from the Committee on the article. Allen seconded. The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.

*ARTICLE THREE: To see if the Town will vote to approve the establishment by the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School District of a Stabilization Fund to be known as the "Martha's Vineyard Regional High School Stabilization Fund" to provide a fund for expenditures for capital improvements with the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School District and for such other lawful purposes as provided by Massachusetts General Laws, c. 71, § 16G½ as it may be amended from time to time, or take any other action relative thereto.*

The Committee found that this warrant is before all towns and needs to be approved by all Towns for it to take effect. Tom made a motion to recommend approval of the warrant article because it does have a financial implication to our Town and is intended to offset large variances in financial obligations to the regional high school district. Allen seconded. The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed. Allen stated, in regards to the article, that it is prudent financial management to provide for stabilization funds for improvements that will be incurred in the future.

*ARTICLE FOUR: To see of the Town will vote to transfer the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars*

*(\$20,000.00) from available funds for the purpose of constructing a permanent walkway from the shops at the Cliffs to the Lighthouse, or take any other action relative thereto.*

Tom made a motion to support the warrant article upon the recommendation by the Lighthouse Advisory Committee. Allen seconded. **The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.**

*ARTICLE FIVE: To see if the Town will vote to transfer from available funds the sum of Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) for the purpose of constructing a divider between the pedestrian walking path and the traveled roadway at Aquinnah Circle from the shops to the Lighthouse, or take any other action relative thereto.*

Tom made a motion for the Committee to support the warrant article because it is a financial issue and has to do with public safety that is necessary. Allen seconded. **The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.** Allen stated that there is a possibility that these funds may be available through other services provided by the State, but in any case, the funds should be available for the project.

*ARTICLE SIX: To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of One Thousand Four Hundred Twenty-four Dollars and Eight Cents (\$1,424.08) from the FY '18 Assessor's expense account to a fund to be used as start up for Town operated tours at the Lighthouse, or take any other action relative thereto.*

Tom made a motion for the Committee to support the warrant article upon the recommendation of the Town Administrator. Allen seconded. **The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.**

*ARTICLE SEVEN: To see if the Town will vote to transfer the sum of One Thousand One Hundred Seventy Dollars from available funds to pay for additional modem bandwidth for the town assessors during FY '18, or take any other action relative thereto.*

Tom made a motion for the Committee to support the warrant article. Allen seconded. **The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.**

*ARTICLE EIGHT: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the local option of Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 41A Senior Tax Deferral, by furthering the limit that may be increased to any amount up to the maximum income limit in the State circuit breaker tax credit for senior single taxpayers starting July 1, 2018, for FY '19 or take any action relative thereto. (By request of the Board of Assessors).*

Allen noted that the warrant article involves a calculation that had been discussed a year ago when the Board of Assessors had brought this issue to the Finance Committee. At that time, the Committee had asked what the financial impact on the Town would be. As of today, the Committee still does not have the requested information. Based on that fact, Tom made a motion to defer any recommendation or decision on Article Eight. Allen seconded. **The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.**

*ARTICLE NINE: To see if the Town will vote to adopt local option of Chapter 59, Section 5, clause 41C-1/2 Senior Exemption, by further reducing the requisite age of eligibility to 65 (from 70); by increasing the exemption percentage to 20% (from 5%) and by increasing gross receipts in a household containing the applicant and a person other than the applicant's spouse to the combined gross receipts of all household members using the total income limit for ahead of household under the state circuit breaker income tax credit, starting on July 1, 2018, for FY '19, or take any other action relative thereto. (By request of the Board of Assessors).*

Allen noted that, similar to Article Eight, Article Nine had also been discussed a year ago and the Committee had requested a calculation for the financial impact. As of today, no information has been given to the Committee. Based on that fact and the previous comments on Article Eight, Tom made a motion to defer any recommendation

or decision on Article Nine similar to Article Eight. Allen seconded. The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.

*ARTICLE TEN: To see if the Town will vote to approve an amendment to the M.G.L. ch. 44B, sec. 3 to 7 inclusive that would provide an exemption for property owned and occupied as a domicile by a person who would qualify for low income housing or low or moderate income senior housing as provided for in M.G.L. ch. 44B, sec. 16. M.G.L. ch. 44b, sec. 3 to 7 as adopted by passage of a ballot question on May 8, 2001 established a Community Preservation Fund. (By request of the Board of Assessors)*

In the same regard to Article Eight and Nine, the Committee had asked for a fiscal quantification of the impact on the Town and no information has been provided. Tom made a motion to defer any recommendation or decision on Article Ten similar to Article Eight and Nine. Allen seconded. The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.

*ARTICLE ELEVEN: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the following by-law: (1) No person, nonprofit organization, association, firm or corporation, shall knowingly release, organize the release of or intentionally cause to be released into the atmosphere any helium or other lighter-than-air gas balloons in the Town of Aquinnah. Any violation of this by-law shall result in a fine of \$100.00. (2) The provisions of section 1 shall not apply to balloons which are used for the purpose of carrying scientific instrumentation during the performance of an experiment or testing procedure or by a person on behalf of a governmental agency or pursuant to a governmental contract for scientific or meteorological purposes. (By Petition)*

Although the Committee agreed that the article doesn't appear to have a financial impact on the Town, Tom made a motion for the Committee to support Article Eleven as presented. Allen seconded. The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.

- With no other business to discuss, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn.  
**The Committee voted 2-0 in favor. The motion passed.**

- The meeting ended at 10:18am

*Respectfully submitted,  
Sophia Welch  
Board Administrative Assistant*