

Finance Committee Meeting
Minutes of Meeting 3-29-19

Aquinnah Town Hall Selectmen's Meeting Room

Members present: Chairman Allen Rugg, Mark Foster
Not Present: Tom Murphy

Also present: Town Administrator Jeffrey Madison, Selectman Gary Haley, Selectmen Julie Vanderhoop, Town Accountant Emily Day, Town Treasurer Sibel Suman, BOA Elise LeBovit, DPW Director Jay Smalley

- The meeting began at 9:40am

- First on the agenda was the review of minutes. Mark moved to approve the 3/8/19 minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Allen. The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed. Mark moved to approve the 3/22/19 minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Allen. The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.

- The Committee met with DPW Director Jay Smalley to review his proposed FY'20 budget. The Committee first reviewed the Lighthouse budget: maintenance line item increase from \$10,000 to \$20,000 (only proposed change in budget). The main reason for the increase being erosion of the Lighthouse pathway, which has affected the DPW budget as well. The following was discussed: increasing the budget would enable DPW to purchase a more suitable material, however, it is expensive and comes from off-island; whether CPC funds can be used to address the pathway; other island materials that could be used to fix the issue and cut down the cost and maintenance. After further discussion, the Fin Comm was uncertain about the proposed 100% maintenance line item increase and requested to revisit the issue once Jay spoke with the Lighthouse Committee on alternative solutions. There was brief discussion concerning the wage line item for the Lighthouse and the gross revenue from last season. Next, the Committee reviewed the DPW budget. Last year the Assist. Forman was paid approx. \$10,793 in overtime due to the cleaning of the Cliffs restrooms (town was not able to keep an attendant). Jay proposed two options to avoid this situation next year: increase the Forman's hours by 5hrs (35 to 40 which would be a \$6,823-line item increase) or hire a seasonal worker (Memorial Day to Labor Day – 320hrs) at \$18.50/hr (\$5,920). Fin Comm stated that their inclination is to keep the budget as presented with the principle change of hiring a seasonal worker and step increases and COLA. The Committee discussed the proposed \$1500 increase (\$2,000 to \$3,500) in the cemetery maintenance line item. Increase would allow for a mowing contract. Emily noted that the Recreational Facilities budget will be remaining the same. The Committee thanked Jay for his time.

- Next, the Committee reviewed the Board of Assessors budget: principal changes being the COLA and step increase for the Assistant. Elise LeBovit informed the Committee that the \$600 for data query can be deducted from the budget. Elise requested that the GIS contract be reversed out of the BOA budget because they don't need it. Emily noted that the GIS contract is coming out of the Town's data processing budget and not the BOA. Elise questioned whether Fin Comm was recommending Assessor outsourcing. Fin Comm stated that they have not taken a position, nor have they been presented any proposals. Elise presented the Committee with multiple MV Times articles dating back to the hiring date of the Assist Assessor in 2008 for background on the Town and Assessors. Fin Comm and Elise agreed that the proposed FY'20 budget for BOA only reflects the step increase and COLA for the Assist Assessor.

- The Committee discussed the town debt budget: Manning property purchase principal currently at \$210,000 and

the fire truck purchase principal currently at \$400,000. Total debt increase for FY'20 is \$10,000, due to interest charges and slight change in base amount for fire truck. For FY'20, the budget will be approx. \$80,000 in principal payments. It was noted that this amount is exempt from the override. Fin Comm requested that this be confirmed. The Committee requested that they keep town debt on the list to revisit.

- Liz Witham will attend the next meeting to review the web master budget. Jeffrey noted that the town is paying \$1,800 for three separate websites (town, police and library) and with the new website, all three websites can be under one umbrella which will cut down on costs. Elise stated that the town had already paid for a new website prior to Jeffrey's hire and questioned whether the new website could be deferred to another year. Fin Comm stated that they will continue the conversation at the next meeting when Liz is able to attend.

- Next, the Committee discussed the Harbormaster budget. Jeffrey noted that it is unlikely that the Harbormaster shack will be completed this year and therefore the \$10,000 that had been allocated from free cash can be used against the override. Emily noted that the only change with the Harbormaster budget is a step increase and COLA. The Committee requested that the Harbormaster attend the next meeting to confirm his budget.

- The Committee discussed the Library budget. Emily will review the Library budget with the Director. Fin Comm noted that if the Library needs to meet with them then they would schedule a separate meeting to accommodate the Directors work hours.

- The Committee briefly discussed the MV Housing Bank. Jeffrey noted that the Housing Bank articles have been presented to the Selectmen as petition articles and will not be included in the budget. Jeffrey gave a brief overview on his discussions with Town Counsel regarding the legality of the Housing Bank article as presented. Fin Comm did not feel that they needed to discuss the matter further.

- Next, the Committee discussed warrant articles. Emily noted that the only new warrant article was the request from the Police Dept for \$47,00 for a new vehicle. The Fin Comm confirmed that the Police Chief will be at the next meeting to discuss the article. The Committee discussed the County warrant articles. Jeffrey informed the Committee that the proposed warrant articles are deceiving: originally, they presented a separate article requesting an additional 5% administration fee on each of the budgets and now the County is adding that 5% to the gross budget of each individual program. Jeffrey plans on suggesting to the Selectmen that they reduce each request by 5% or combine all of the articles and present them as one and reduce the total by 5%. The Committee requested that an analysis be done on past County requests to determine if this year's requests are over and above the normal increase. Emily noted that she has already done a breakdown on each article pointing out the 5% admin fee. There was brief discussion concerning the Council on Aging budget and programs. Council on Aging will be attending the next meeting. Fin Comm requested that the County also attend the next meeting.

- 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 10:53am

Respectfully submitted,
Sophia Welch
Board Administrative Assistant