

Finance Committee Meeting  
Minutes of Meeting 4-12-19

Aquinnah Town Hall Selectmen's Meeting Room

Members present: Chairman Allen Rugg, Tom Murphy, Mark Foster

Also present: Town Administrator Jeffrey Madison, Selectmen Julie Vanderhoop, Town Accountant Emily Day, Dukes County Manager Martina Thornton, Harbor Master Brian Vanderhoop, Sarah Saltonstall, Police Chief Belain, Assistant Assessor Angela Cywinski

- The meeting began at 9:38am.

- First on the agenda was the review of minutes. Mark moved to approve the 3/29/19 minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Allen. **The Committee voted 2-0-1, the motion passed.** Tom moved to approve the 4/5/19 minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Allen. **The Committee voted 2-0-1, the motion passed.**

- The Committee met with Martina Thornton, Dukes County Manager, to review the County's requested warrant articles. In a prior Fin Comm meeting, the County 5% administration fee added to each article had been discussed (County is the fiscal agent for agencies that provide services to towns and the 5% is tied to each program). Martina informed the Committee that this year there was a loss of revenue due to the Sheriffs cancelation of the long-standing MOA for alarm fees (net loss of \$130,000). The County has made adjustments/revisions in the budget, but still have a shortfall of \$30,000. The 5% will cover payroll and benefits administration, facility maintenance and housing of programs. Martina noted that within the last 10 years, the County has only raised the assessment twice and within the past six years, the County has returned unspent revenue to the towns (approx. \$750,000). The following was voted in other towns: in Edgartown County warrant articles passed; in Oak Bluffs the 5% fee was discussed but all warrant articles passed; in Tisbury the 5% was heavily discussed but all warrant articles passed; in West Tisbury an amendment was made to reduce three articles by 5% (Healthy Aging, CORE and First Stop). The County's warrant article requests for Aquinnah is approx. \$37,000 and the 5% admin fee totals \$1,800. There was brief discussion concerning the Youth Task Force request and the County's substance abuse prevention program. The County's warrant article request for \$895 for the Substance abuse Prevention Program will be added to the warrant. The Committee thanked Martina for her time.

- The Committee briefly discussed the Board of Health request for increasing the BOH Assistant budgeted hours from 18hrs/week to 19hrs/week. Personnel Committee has adopted the BOH 19hr/week recommendation. Allen moved to stick with the 19hr/week recommendation. Motion was seconded by Mark. **The Committee voted 3-0, the motion passed.**

- The Committee met with Brian Vanderhoop, Harbor Master, to review mooring fee and shellfish permit fee increases. Brian presented a recommended fee increase schedule. Tom moved to accept and approve the recommendation of the Harbor Master on the increase of fees as provided in the presented document. Motion was seconded by Mark. **The Committee voted 3-0, the motion passed.** Fee increase will need action from the Selectmen. Brian requested information on the balance of the Waterway Improvements account. There was brief discussion on the need of West Basin dredging.

- Next, the Committee met with Chief Belain to review the Police Dept. budget and warrant article request. New requested budget showed a reduction of \$12,000 decreasing the requested budget to \$688,223 (without an additional officer). The Committee discussed the \$14,000 vehicle lease warrant article and terms for a municipal

lease. New vehicle would replace the Chief's vehicle which is also used as a backup (current mileage is at 104,000). Given the economic pressure of this year, the Fin Comm requested that the article be deferred to another year. The warrant article will be withdrawn.

- The Committee briefly discussed the Assessor budget, specifically reduction of the Assistant line item due to outsourcing the Assessor Assistant duties. Jeff noted that the Selectmen feel that the line item should be eliminated due to outsourcing. The Fin Comm has not reviewed any concrete outsourcing proposal and stated that they will not take any action until the Selectmen act on it. The budget will remain as presented and revisited if changes are made by the Selectmen. Currently, there is no line item or warrant article addressing the outsourcing. The Committee felt that for the budget to be realistic it should reflect projected actual expenses of Assessor operation whether that's done by an employee or outsourcing. The Committee deferred action to the next meeting. Jeffrey will discuss this with the Selectmen.

- Jeffrey updated the Committee on the Web Master consulting fees (falls under the Selectmen budgeted line item). Liz and Jeff came to the agreement to continue with the requested \$600/month fee for several months during which Jeff will monitor how much time is needed to be involved in the transition to the new website. If at the end of those several months there is a demonstrated need for Liz's services, she will continue at the \$600/month through next year. Jeff recommended to leave the Selectmen consultant services line item at \$6,360, which will cover the new website fees and the \$600/month fee for several months. Jeff will be requesting detailed/itemized invoices from Liz. Tom moved to level fund the Selectmen Consultant line item. Motion was seconded by Mark. **The Committee voted 3-0, the motion passed.**

- The Committee discussed the DPW budget. In preventing a heavy overtime payout of the DPW Foreman (last year overtime payout was approx. \$11,000), Jay, DPW Director, had proposed the following: increasing the DPW Foreman hours from 35hrs/week to 40 hrs./week or hiring a seasonal employee at a lower rate and reduced hours. The Committee discussed the two solutions. Hiring a seasonal employee would drive the budget lower. Jeff suggested to add a seasonal employee, at a certain level, to the budget and ask Jay to manage the Foreman overtime. The Committee agreed with Jeff's suggestion and agreed to review this again during next year's budgeting season. There was brief discussion concerning the Lighthouse maintenance line item and additional \$10,000 request to address the pathway. Jeff spoke with Len Butler who assured him that they will only need approx. \$3,000 this year to fix the pathway erosion.

- The Committee took a short recess at 10:48am.

- The meeting reconvened at 10:51am.

- The Committee reviewed a draft of the warrant dated 4/12/19 and made the following comments/recommendations:

Article 1 – Question One: language to be reviewed and revisited.

Article 2 – create a separate warrant article for the \$7,000 request from Waterways Special Revenue Fund making it Article 4 on the warrant. As for the \$450,000 override portion of the article, Fin Comm deferred action until a more concrete number was ready.

Article 5 (formally 3) – \$6,162 for County of Dukes County debt for a building - Finance Committee recommended

Article 6 (formally 4) - \$18,000 for Town OPEB Stabilization Fund - Finance Committee recommended

Article 7 (formally 5) - \$32,000 transfer from Highway Truck article to OPEB - Finance Committee recommended

Article 8 (formally 6) - \$22,559 Chilmark School Window replacement - Finance Committee recommended

Article 9 (formally 7) - \$2,840 MV Youth Task Force - Finance Committee recommended

Article 10 (formally 8) – Plastic Water Bottle Bylaw - No action taken by the Finance Committee  
Article 11 (formally 9) - \$1,642 West Tisbury School Parking Lot Design - Finance Committee recommended  
Article 12 (formally 10) - \$2,145 Chilmark School Flooring Project - Finance Committee recommended  
Article 13 (formally 11) – \$9,341 West Tisbury School Roofing Project - Finance Committee recommended  
Article 14 (formally 12) - \$7,703 West Tisbury School Outdoor Decking - Finance Committee recommended  
Article 15 (formally 13) - \$13,789 Dukes County Reg Emergency Communication Center & Radio System - Finance Committee recommended  
Article 16 (formally 14) - \$25,480 High School Feasibility Study & Schematic Design – Fin Comm did not take a position on the article  
Articles 17-23 (formally 15-21) – Dukes County Requests - Finance Committee recommended  
Article 24 (formally 22) - \$1,987 Adult and Community Education - Finance Committee recommended  
Article 25 (formally 23) - \$47,960.60 Transfer of Landfill Drainage Project 2012 Appropriation to offset 2020 budget - Finance Committee recommended but will revisit if Board of Health requests to discuss it  
Article 26 (formally 24) - \$31,795 Transfer of Highway Truck 2019 Appropriation to offset 2020 budget – Duplicate Article to be removed  
Article 26 (formally 25) - \$15,000 Transfer of Town & Library Parking Lot Design 2018 Appropriation to offset 2020 budget – Finance Comm requested to remove the article to allow for more time to develop a plan. Jeff removed the article from the warrant.  
Article 26 - \$35,338 State Highway Construction & Improvements Apportionment - Finance Committee recommended  
Articles 27-30 - CPC articles – No action taken by the Finance Committee  
Article 31 - \$5,000 for Maternity Leave Costs Payment - Finance Committee recommended  
Article 32 & 33 – Housing Bank articles - No action taken by the Finance Committee  
Article 34 – \$14,000 Leasing for New Police Vehicle – Article to be removed  
Article 34 (formally 35) – Map 9 Lot 153 Land Transfer - No action taken by the Finance Committee  
Article 35 (formally 36) - \$18,500 Fire Dept Gear Purchase - Finance Committee recommended  
Article 36 (formally 37) – Transfer of remaining money from previously appropriated warrant articles to reduce FY’20 tax rate – figures to be confirmed by Emily and Jeff – Finance Committee was in favor of the article  
Article 37-43 (formally 38-44) – Zoning Bylaws - No action taken by the Finance Committee  
Article 44 (formally 45) – Stretch Code Bylaw - No action taken by the Finance Committee

- Angela briefly reviewed two Assessor warrant articles to be added: transfer of \$12,000 from overlay account to help pay for vision software and combine approach to re-evaluation. Angela will send articles to Emily to add.

- Emily noted two articles that will be added: \$16,000 for the Sailing and Swimming Programs and the \$895 request from the County for the Substance Abuse Program. The Committee discussed the \$16,000 swim and sail program request. Fin Comm did not take any position on the article but suggested that it remain on the warrant. Finance Committee recommended the \$895 County request for the Substance Abuse Program. Emily and Jeff will update the warrant and send it to the Committee for review prior to the next meeting. Jeff informed the Committee that the Town had voted to appropriate \$5,000 for the Harbor Master shack and article 36 will be updated to reflect this amount.

- With no other business to discuss, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn. **The Committee voted 3-0 in favor. The motion passed.** The meeting ended at 11:52am

*Respectfully submitted,  
Sophia Welch, Board Administrative Assistant*