

# Oak Bluffs

## Community Development Council

Meeting #95

Minutes of 05.06.2009

9am Town Hall Meeting Room

### Members in attendance:

Nancy Phillips, Terry Appenzellar, Renee Balter, Priscilla Sylvia, James Westervelt and Alison Shaw (recorder). Also attending: Ron DiOio and Kathy Burton.

### Members absent:

Iona Pressley, Richard Westcott

### Item: Minutes

Minutes of the 04.15.09 meeting were read, amended and accepted.

### Item: Cost of Services

**Terry** handed out Leah Smith's response to the COS study and reviewed her comments and suggestions: item#1) **Priscilla** will research the open space parcels in town, and **Terry** will add the open space property tax income to the study. 2) There was discussion about the definition of "return on \$1 tax" vs "expenses per \$1 tax" – need to clarify it for the average reader. 3) Need to explain "add back." 5) **Terry** will add a note of explanation about the seasonal vs year-round allocations.

**Terry** will add a sub-section for additional expenses for Fire, Police and Ambulance.

**Terry** sent the COS document to Thad Harshbarger at the Finance Committee, but has not heard back yet. She also gave a copy of the report to Mimi Davisson. She received an email from Paul Manzi acknowledging receipt of the document.

### Item: Home Businesses

**Priscilla** pointed out that some of the work we've done as a committee has not been followed up on, i.e. Home Businesses and Vehicle Use policies. **Priscilla** provided a definition of "home business" and the difference between "by right" and "by special permit." She made the point that the rules are all in the by-laws, but the issue is that they are not enforced. **Jim** said that most people think that if they have a business certificate, that's all they have to do. **Terry** pointed out that we did publicize the changes to the Home Business policy – we created a clear permitting process with some teeth in it. We did the homework for the added workload for the Town. We're estimating that there are nearly 300 home businesses that have not yet registered. The main issues are: a lot of people didn't register to begin with, and 80% of those who did register have not re-registered (they need to do it annually). **Jim** said it is unfair to those people who have registered and paid their fee. There was discussion about the mechanism for following up. **Renee** suggested having postcards sent out as reminders to the businesses. **Nancy** asked if we could include reminders with the tax bills. **Renee** suggested sending the information in a packet prior to Town Meeting. But still, it comes back to follow-through and enforcement. **Ron** said that applications for home businesses need to go to the CDC as part of the process, and then to the selectmen. **Priscilla** asked whether there is anything in Adam Wilson's job description about home businesses. **Renee** asked to see that information for our next meeting.

### Item: New Business

**Priscilla** asked, now that the COS study is complete, does the CDC have another task. **Terry** suggested the multi-town Waste District – there is research that needs to go into the decisions that will need to be made: should we be doing curbside recycling, composting, etc. **Ron** said there is already a committee looking into these issues.

**Ron** noted that there are questions as to how CPA funds get allocated, and that we need a set of broader-based rules and criteria. **Terry** pointed out that the CPA legislation will be coming up for re-consideration,

and that maybe establishing some rules could clarify the use of CPA funds, and therefore make it easier to find support. **Nancy** suggested we could rate each application according to a point system. **Terry** said that broad-based evaluation criteria are necessary in order to have an equal and objective evaluation.

**Renee** suggested that the CDC should start to identify some new revenue sources for the Town. She also felt we should go back and continue the study of the use of the old Town Hall building.

**Terry** said she would like to see the figures for all of the fees the Town is currently receiving for services.

**Priscilla** added that no one has ever created a master list of all of those fees.

**Priscilla** said that a large number of properties in town are off the tax rolls because they are owned by non-profits, or for some other reason. **Ron** said he has already asked the Assessors to research this. He added that the issue of stipends to members of various Town boards and committees is also being looked into. It doesn't make sense that some committees receive stipends while others don't. **Renee** said that you should not expect a stipend for volunteer work for the Town. There should also be rules to govern Town committees – how appointments are made, posting meetings, minutes, etc.

It was agreed that the Town website needs a facelift – maybe we could get help from someone like Heather Goff. Also, we need an IT committee to work with Travis.

Assignment for next meeting: identify possible new revenue sources, including fees.

**Meeting Adjourned 10:30am**

Next meeting 05.20.09, in the Town Hall