

**Town of Oak Bluffs**  
**Finance and Advisory Committee**  
**Thursday, February 5, 2009 3:30PM**  
**Oak Bluffs Library**

Present: Chair Thad Harshbarger, Joe Alosso,  
Doug Best, Frank Case Mimi Davisson,  
Bill McGrath, Peter Palches, Hans Von Steiger.

Others: Finance Director – Paul Manzi  
Board of Selectmen – Ron DiOrio,  
Dukes County – Manager Russell Smith,  
Pest Control – T. J. Hegarty  
VHCAP – Sarah Kuh  
MVC – Mark London  
Recorder - Marni Lipke

Absent: Mike Perry

\* Late arrivals or early departures  
noted solely to mark vote counts.

The meeting was called to order at 3:36PM.

**1. Revise this Agenda [all]**

The meeting was re-ordered to accommodate those who had to leave early.

**2. Current Projected 2010 budget. [Paul, Michael] Include full budget and  
MUNIS. Look for email from Paul prior to meeting, except not MUNIS**  
(See documents on file.)

**3. Status of FY 2009 spending and budget [Paul, Michael] Impact of reduced  
Town revenues and ways to deal with it.** (See documents on file.)

- Board of Selectmen (BOS) Chair Ron DiOrio reported on the proposed land auction (see documents on file).
- He recommended that the two acre lot beside the cemetery be sold in burial plots with the proceeds split between the Cemetery Board and the Town.
- As a benchmark, Finance Director Paul Manzi provided the uniform departmental give-back percentage necessary to cover the shortfall. There was some confusion over whether this was what the FinCom had requested.
- Town Administrator Michael Dutton would be presenting the 2010 Budget by March 1. Revenue and expenditures updates and discussions included:
  - the final figures for the MV Regional High School assessment and OB School budget,
  - cuts in Selectmen's Unclassified, and emergency management,
  - transferring some health insurance costs to the Ambulance Fund,
  - required Town Administrator sign-off on all purchases over \$500 (in addition to the hiring freeze already in force),

**Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee**  
**February 5, 2009**

**2**

- cuts in Mass. State Quinn Bill reimbursements – raising the line item in the Police budget.
- cancellation of expensive travel trips,
- postponement or extension of road paving projects,
- questions on revenue estimates for: building permit, car excise, harbor and trash.
- The FinCom revisited and debated a number of issues from the previous meeting:
- across the board give-backs as not practicable,
- property auction in view of poor market conditions, as a regular practice to dispose of excess property, the late timing of the proposed auction,
- reduction of Town Hall hours and effects on municipal workers.
- The Selectmen and Town Administrator were investigating the feasibility of various cost cutting measures; however, it was emphasized that discretion was important until issues were clarified
- **DOUG BEST MOVED TO REQUEST AN ANALYSIS ON THE TRASH /SOLID WASTE AND THE FEASIBILITY AS TO WHETHER TO CONTINUE ITS SERVICE; TO BE PRESENTED TO THE FINCOM AT THEIR FEBRUARY 19, 2009 MEETING; MIMI DAVISSON SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.** (See below: Actions.)

**5. Meet with Dukes County re: assessments** (See documents on file.)

- Five of the six Island Towns had asked the County to level fund their Fiscal Year 2010 (FY10) Budget, consequently the Budget had been cut, however reduced Registry of Deeds income would increase assessments.
- The agreed-upon shift of program costs to Town Warrant articles would continue as agreed to a 60% Town / 40% County split.
- The Pest Control program serviced municipal building and received revenues from private clients. A new Islandwide program to test mosquitoes for West Nile and EEE virus was funded on a shoe string with the cooperation of all six town's Boards of Health and T.J. Hegarty's volunteered time – there was a brief discussion on equal town contributions as an assessment method.
- Reductions in grant revenues and delayed or diminished Mass. State support had caused severe financial hardship, reductions in staff and vulnerability for the Vineyard Health Care Access Program (VHCAP) at a time of increased public need. Consequently, although program expenditures had been cut VHCAP requested two articles: the level funded County assessment and another to partially cover the funding gap. Several members praised the program.
- The County would therefore present four articles, the County FY10 Budget, the Pest Control Budget and the two VHCAP articles.
- The FinCom suggested the County as the appropriate umbrella for a number of Islandwide initiatives now forming small independent agencies – such as the proposed Islandwide solid waste district.
- **JOE ALOSSO MOVE TO ADJOURN; BILL MCGRATH SECONDED;**

**Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee  
February 5, 2009**

**3**

**4. Meet with Martha's Vineyard Commission**

The Commission representatives had waited their turn but had to leave to attend another meeting (see below: Actions).

The FinCom returned to the discussion of the FY09 and FY10 Budget issues:

- the roles of the FinCom, Town Administrator and Finance Director,
  - frustration with information and progress or lack thereof. (See below: Actions),
  - cross training and departmental reorganization,
  - cuts and revenues,
  - balanced budgets with or without land auctions and withdrawals from Stabilization,
  - the town vehicle fleet,
  - public meeting / confidentiality issues and the possibility of calling an Executive Session.
- **THERE WAS A CONSENSUS TO MEET WITH MICHAEL DUTTON IN A SPECIAL MEETING ON FEBRUARY 12, 2009 TO DISCUSS THE FY2009 AND FY2010 BUDGETS (see below: Actions).**

- Members expressed their surprise and regret at the resignation of Joe Alosso (see documents on file). Peter Palches announced he was not likely to run again, consequently there would be four vacancies on the Committee. Election and appointment protocol were discussed.

**6. Plans for public hearing on the 2010 budget [Peter, Mimi, Hans, Thad]  
for budget presentation to Town Meeting [Thad, Michael]**

Mimi Davisson and Peter Palches presented a draft agenda for a public meeting (see documents on file and below: Actions).

**7. Review minutes of January 22 [all]**

- **BILL MCGRATH MOVED TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 22, 2009, MAY 15, 2008 AND JUNE 19, 2008 MINUTES: DOUG BEST SECONDED: MOTION PASSED WITH ABSTENTIONS AS ABSENT AND MIMI DAVISSON ABSTAINING** due to not having reviewed them.

**12. Adjourn [Joe]**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN PASSED BY CONSENSUS AT 5:37PM.**

**Action List:**

- Thad – Invite board of health to 2/19 FinCom meeting .
- Thad – Email Michael Dutton by Sat re: more detailed plan on balancing FY09 and FY10 budgets. The FinCom strongly recommends not relying on land auction.
- Thad – post 2/12/09 meeting.
- Michael D./Paul M. – Tiered plan for FY09 shortfall and FY10 Budgets.
- Michael D./Paul M. – Publish warrant and detail forms of FY10 Budget on all possible venues (website, papers, library, etc.) by Mid-March.

**continued**

**Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee  
February 5, 2009**

4

**Meetings**

- FinCom - 3:30PM Thursdays, February 12 & 19, 2009 at the Library
- Capital Planning – March 4th.

**Ongoing Action List from previous meetings.**

- FinCom – Continue to emphasize \$2,000,000 Stabilization Fund goal.
- Thad - Inform the Selectmen in writing of all significant FinCom decisions
- Inform Depts. - any item not in dept. budgets will not be recommended for free cash.
  - update Capital Improvement Plan regularly.
- Regular meetings with Bd. of Selectmen and Personnel Board re: Financial Team.
- Ask about end-of-year transfers in the FY09 budget season.

**2/12/09 Agenda:**

- Minutes 2/5/09
- FY09 Shortfall plan – Paul M./ Michael D.
- FY10 Budget – Paul M./ Michael D.

**2/19/09 Agenda:**

- OBS, MVRHS, Supt. Of.
- MVC Report
- Public Information / Public Hearing planning
- Assessors re: proposed changes in tax assessments
- Solid Waste Report – Board of Health

**Future Agendas:**

- Ambulance Fund Report.
- Dukes County Charter Commission Report
- CDC - Cost of Services Survey Results.
- Reconsider Finance Dept. Reorganization

**Documents on file:**

- Agenda 2/5/09
- DiOrio memo re: Properties for Auction 1/27/09
- Recommendation to Off Set The Revenue Shortfall
- Dutton email re: Balance of 2009 Spending 2/5/09
- Next Year / Current Year Budget Analysis Fiscal 2010 Budget (11 p.) 2/4/09
- County of Dukes Count Share of Non-Mandatory Programs 12/15/08
  - Integrated Pest Program (2 p.) 1/28/09
- OB FinCom Public Hearing on FY2010 Budget on or about March 15
  - Oak Bluffs Spending Trends Sample
  - Solid Portion Graphs Represent Spending Above Cumulative Rate of Inflation Sample
  - Sample *Graph*
  - Oak Bluffs Debt Schedule Sample 2/5/09
- Alosso emails re: Thank you 2/2/09, 2/5/09
  - attached Letter of Resignation

**• These Minutes approved as amended by the Oak Bluffs FinCom 3/18/09.**