

**Town of Oak Bluffs  
Finance and Advisory Committee  
Thursday, March 24, 2009 3:30PM  
Oak Bluffs Library**

Present: Chair Thad Harshbarger, Steve Auerbach  
Doug Best, Frank Case, Bill McGrath,  
Peter Palches, Mike Perry, Hans Von Steiger

Others:

Waste Water Director – Joe Alosso  
Personnel Board – Eleanor Beth, John Lolley  
OB School Committee – Priscilla Sylvia  
Schools Business Administrator – Amy Tierney  
Tax Collector – Cheryl Sashin  
Recorder - Marni Lipke\*

Absent: Mimi Davisson

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

The meeting was called to order at 3:41PM.

**I. Review of Minutes of Prior Meetings.**

**• DOUG BEST MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 12, 2009 MINUTES; BILL MCGRATH SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

**• PETER PALCHES MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 19, 2009 MINUTES; MIKE PERRY SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

• The Personnel Board was present to speak to the issue of the Town Clerk's salary (see 3/19/09 Minutes p. 4 #17). Although technically outside the jurisdiction of the Personnel Board the Compensation and Classification Study determined that the Town Clerk was at the appropriate mid-range of a clerk's salary for comparable towns with comparable duties in the region—with the exception of the Tisbury Town Clerk salary which was considerably outside of the normal scale.

**• PETER PALCHES MOVED TO RECONSIDER THE MOTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE TOWN CLERK'S SALARY: BILL MCGRATH SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

• The issues were:

- lack of longevity and past compensation for such,
- Personnel Board appeal process,
- job security in relation to elected officials.

**• PETER PALCHES MOVED TO ADOPT THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FOR THE TOWN CLERK'S SALARY TO GRADE 11 STEP D; DOUG BEST SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

The OB FinCom thanked the Personnel Board for their presence and attention.

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- All stipends had been included in the Fiscal Year 2010 (FY10) Budget contrary to the recommendation of the Stipend Subcommittee (see 1/22/09 Minutes p.4 #11). The FinCom discussed:

- Town Administrator opinion,
- sun-setting stipends through current terms,
- stipend suspension specific to difficult economic times,
- the changing roles/duties of elected positions.

The FinCom thanked Hans Von Steiger for the background documents.

- **HANS VON STEIGER MOVED THAT IN FY2010 THE TOWN OF OAK BLUFFS PAY THE SELECTMEN THEIR USUAL STIPEND (\$16,500 TOTAL) AND TO SUSPEND ALL OTHER STIPENDS, PAYING NECESSARY EXPENSES ONLY; DOUG BEST SECONDED;**

- **BILL MCGRATH MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION TO INSURE THE CONTINUITY BY GRANDFATHERING OF THE BENEFITS FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS FOR THE REST OF THEIR CURRENT TERM; FRANK CASE SECONDED THE AMENDMENT; AMENDMENT PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

- **AMENDED MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

**2 Review Current Projected 2010 budget dated 3/4/09. that Michael Dutton prepared and the Selectmen have approved, compare it to the budget we asked for, and decide what to do about the differences. Plan for meeting with Selectmen.**

The balance of the meeting entailed a discussion on the FY10 Proposed Budget, reviewing previous motions and Board of Selectmen decisions. Issues included:

- Town Administrator and Town Finance Director proposed balanced budget as requested by the FinCom,
- FinCom dissatisfaction with the method of the balanced budget re: the loss of Highway Dept. paving capital,
- Oak Bluffs School (OBS) and MV Regional High School (MVRHS) increases and ways to reduce them,
- the FinCom proposed balanced budget restoring the Highway paving capital and cutting OBS and MVRHS increases leaving the schools to request overrides if they see fit (see 3/19/09 Minutes p.5-6 #7),
- viability of overrides for the schools or the highway capital,
- possible revenue sources for the schools including chances of Federal Stimulus funds,
- reductions in staff, hiring freeze and reduction by attrition of OBS teachers and paraprofessionals,
- solid waste (garbage) reform time frame,
- upcoming Board of Selectmen meeting agenda and FinCom goals (see below: Actions).

- The FinCom briefly discussed the Warrant Article to allow affordable housing on sub-standard lots (see 3/19/09 Minutes p.4 #12) issues being: septic and Board of Health lot requirements.

- A warrant article to shift the MVRHS pipeline control to the Oak Bluffs Wastewater Dept. and to combine it with the solution to Ocean Park and use of the Leonardo lots would:

- be cost effective,
- reduce nitrogen loading and pollution to Sengekontacket Pond, and

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- allow Oak Bluffs better control of the project eliminating the necessity for approval by the five other Island towns.

Costs would be largely born by the MVRHSD. The YMCA had broken ground on its own initiative and at its own risk; however it was likely to hook into the line and pay its share.

**3 What about having an open meeting to discuss the 2010 Budget? If so, which meeting, and how to announce it?**

- IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE OAK BLUFFS FINANCE COMMITTEE THAT THE OPEN MEETING WAS NOT NECESSARY (see below: Actions).
- The FinCom considered the best and simplest way to present the FinCom positions at Town Meeting (see below: Actions).

**5. Adjourn [Peter]**

**PETER PALCHES MOVED TO RECESS THIS MEETING UNTIL 3:30PM THURSDAY MARCH 26, 2009; MICHAEL PERRY SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

**Action List:**

- Thad Harshbarger – draft notes for Town Meeting re: FinCom positions
- Thad Harshbarger – confirm cancellation of April 9 FinCom meeting.

**Ongoing Action List from previous meetings.**

- FinCom - talk about Federal Stimulus money at Town Meeting.
- 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.

**4/2/09 Agenda:**

- FY10 Budget.
- Reconsider vote on Article 12 – Affordable Housing Permits

**Future Agendas:**

- Discussion with School Representatives on school budgets / override decision.
- Ambulance Fund Report.
- Dukes County Charter Commission Report
- CDC - Cost of Services Survey Results.
- Reconsider Finance Dept. Reorganization

**Meetings**

- Bd. of Selectmen – 7:00PM Tuesday, March 24, 2009 at the MVRHS PAC.
- [OB FinCom - 3:30PM Thursday, March 26, 2009 at the Oak Bluffs Library.](#)
- [OB FinCom - 3:30PM Thursday, April 2, 2009 at the Oak Bluffs Library.](#)
- Town Meeting – 7:00PM Tuesday, April 14, 2009 at the MVRHS PAC.

**Documents on file:**

- Agenda 3/24/09
- Draft 03/10/2009 Fin com version
- *Stipend Chart*

**These Minutes approved as written by the Oak Bluffs FinCom 5/21/09.**