

**Town of Oak Bluffs**  
**Finance and Advisory Committee**  
**Thursday, June 4, 2009 3:30PM**  
**Oak Bluffs Library**

Present: Chair Mimi Davisson Thad Harshbarger,  
Bill McGrath, Mac Starks,

Others: Selectman – Kathy Burton  
Finance Director – Paul Manzi  
Tax Collector – Cheryl Sashin  
Recorder - Marni Lipke

Absent: Doug Best, Frank Case, Linda Marinelli,  
Mike Perry, Hans Von Steiger

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

**NOTES**

The meeting was called to order at 3:40PM. There was no quorum.

- At the end of the meeting those present expressed their frustration with those members who were absent without notification.

**Adjust Agenda as Needed**

- Thad Harshbarger requested a discussion on School Choice.
- There was some interest the Revenue Enhancement Committee.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**• Finance Update (INFO SHARE -- Manzi/Dutton (in absentia)  
Including Harbor Fuel and “Big Dig” in Fire Station Parking Lot**

- Thanks were extended to Finance Director/Treasurer Paul Manzi for his extra work to complete the May 2009 data for this meeting (see documents on file).
- Local revenue shortfall for Fiscal Year 2009 (FY09) was estimated at about \$500,000.
  - State revenues were unchanged, although Ch. 70(schools) would include some stimulus funds to remain level.
  - Expenses were being controlled so Paul Manzi and Town Administrator Michael Dutton were reasonably confident of a balanced FY09 Budget
- At this point the FY10 revenue shortfall was estimated at a similar figure (see documents on file); for example Mass. State might eliminate Quinn Bill reimbursement entirely.
- Revenue enhancement proposals included:
  - Town fuel sales in the Harbor,
  - hotel/motel, and restaurant meals tax (not likely before FY11).

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- Expense reductions included:
  - reduction of staff through early retirement packages and consolidation of Town Government,
  - elimination of trash pick up or increase in sticker price,
  - reduction of Senior Center and Library hours.
- The OB FinCom discussed the probability of an October Special Town Meeting to reduce the FY10 Budget and reset the tax rate appropriately. Issues included:
  - how the revised budget would be presented,
  - planning and preparation timeline,
  - FinCom role and participation.
- Contrary to more rumors the Fire Station parking lot renovation was estimated to cost about \$2,000 (below the Capital Plan cut off).
- Costs of installing a Harbor fuel station was likely to be reduced by leasing. The matter was complex and governed by Mass. State procurement laws (see below: Actions).
  - The FinCom considered public perception versus realities, e.g. mistaking previously funded building projects for current spending.
- There was a brief discussion on the temporary quality of the prototype section of seawall fencing.

• **Review Current Capital Plan – Status and Update Plans (INFO SHARE) – McGrath / Perry (in absentia)**

The Committee continued to have difficulties with meeting attendance. Lack of funds, substantial draws and a number of priority requests were discussed.

- The Committee had not yet approved any capital expenditures.
  - The Committee could set its own “capital” threshold and/or have a five year capital plan as well as a working capital plan for lesser projects. All departments should bring all major expenditures (see below: Actions)
  - The current draft encompassed about \$11,000,000 worth of projects (see documents on file).
- Chair Mimi Davisson was commended for her letters to the schools (see documents on file).

• **Decide FinCom Goals for Coming Year and Create Teams to Accomplish Them (DECIDE)**

- There was a discussion on internal morale, hierarchy and diplomacy in requesting an independent analysis of the Police Department.
- The FinCom discussed the proposed goals (see documents on file) in terms of what could be accomplished while overseeing Town budgets in the current uncertain economic climate. The following goals were chosen.
- #1 Decide approach to stipends and implement for FY2011 Budget.

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- #2. Pursue a study with the OB School (OBS) to identify objective standards for measuring performance (must find funding before June 30 if to be done). There was disagreement on whether this study should include the MV Regional High School (MVRHS).
- #4. Pursue aggressive communications program with public and other stakeholders to get input and to explain budget issues and other matters. Use a variety of communication techniques – website / public hearings / press releases / OpEds / Letters to Editor / Survey Monkey.
  - #10 Work with Island Finance Association members on areas of mutual interest was recognized as part of the regular (non-discretionary) FinCom operating activities.

**NEW BUSINESS**

• **Decide Calendars – FY2010 budget Revisions and FY2011 Budget Prep (DECIDE)** (See documents on file.)

- The FinCom discussed the logistics of the coming budget deadlines including:
  - School and Selectmen timelines,
  - how Special Meeting timing would effect the FY10 Budget,
  - the feasibility of budget work during the summer tourist season,
  - Selectmen / FinCom meetings and cooperation.
- School Choice (See documents on file.)
  - The FinCom considered School Choice students in the Oak Bluffs School (non-Oak Bluffs residents accepted by request) in terms of:
    - higher number of School Choice students coming in to the OBS than Oak Bluffs students choosing other schools,
    - school choice students as permanent OBS pupils,
    - small size of OBS kindergartens,
    - per pupil cost versus school choice reimbursement.
- IT WAS THE SENSE OF THE MEETING TO REQUEST INFORMATION ON SCHOOL CHOICE STUDENT POPULATION AT THE OAK BLUFFS SCHOOL.
- Cheryl Sashin was commended for attending more FinCom meetings than some FinCom members.

• **Next Meetings: Thursday, June 18, 2009, 3:30-5:30PM**

3:30PM Thursday, July 9, 2009

3:30PM Thursday, August 13, 2009

- The meeting ended at 5:44PM.

**Action List:**

- Michael Dutton/Paul Manzi – research Harbor fuel finances and report back.
- Mimi Davisson/Bill McGrath – contact Travis re: updating minutes to website.
- Mimi Davisson – request school choice information from schools.
- Bill McGrath/Mike Perry – contact all departments for capital projects large and small.

**continued**

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**6/18/09 Agenda:**

- Minutes - 5/21/09, 6/4/09

**Ongoing Action List from previous meetings.**

- Chair and Vice Chair
  - keep up timely communications with FinCom members and Town Government.
    - Inform the Selectmen in writing of all significant FinCom decisions.
- FinCom - talk about Federal Stimulus money at Town Meeting.
- FinCom – Continue to emphasize \$2,000,000 Stabilization Fund goal.
- 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.

**Future Agendas:**

- Capital Planning Com. Report (quarterly)
- Ambulance Fund Report.
- Board of Health – solid waste issues
- Dukes County Charter Commission Report
- CDC - Cost of Services Survey Results.
- Reconsider Finance Dept. Reorganization

**Documents on file:**

- Agenda 6/4/09
- Dutton Memo re: Harbor Fuel Issues 6/3/09
- Dutton Memo re: Harbor Fuel Issues (2 p.) 6/3/09
- Potential FinCom Goals for Coming Year (2 p.)
- OB Five Year Capital Program Plan FY09 Through FY13 (2 p.) 6/1/09
- OB Five Year Capital Program Plan FY09 Through FY13 6/1/09
- Draft OB FY2010 Budget Review Calendar (2 p.) 6/2/09
- Oak Bluffs Revenue Fiscal 2009 Update Local Receipts and State Revenue (2 p.) 6/4/09
- Oak Bluffs May Report for 2009 (20 p.) 6/1/09
- Oak Bluffs May Report for 2009 (2 p.) 6/1/09
- Finance Director and Town Administrator's Report OB FinCom 6/4/09
- Changes to Estimated Revenue Fiscal 2010 (5 p.) 5/27/09
- MMA letter to budget Conference Committee Outlining Local Priorities for State Budget (4 p.) 5/29/09
- Motion 1 Draft re: Reserve Fund withdrawal for Independent Analyst
- School Choice

**Official Correspondence**

- Move that the FinCom request that the Superintendent's Office...
- FinCom letter to Schools re: Early Alert about Oak Bluffs' FY2010 Budget 5/28/09
- FinCom Memo re: FinCom leadership for May 2009-April 2010 5/13/09
- FinCom Memo re: Affirmation of Michael Perry as Personnel Board Member 5/13/09
- FinCom Memo re: FinCom leadership for May 2009-April 2010 5/13/09
- FinCom Memo re: Appointment of Bill McGrath to Capital Program Committee 5/13/09
- FinCom Memo re: FinCom preparation for the coming year 5/11/09
- Davisson email re: Follow-Up Questions from May 19 OBSC Meeting (2 p.) 5/23/09
- Davisson email re: Summer Meetings with MDutton and PManzi (2 p.) 5/22/09

**• These Minutes approved as amended by the Oak Bluffs FinCom 6/18/09.**