

**Town of Oak Bluffs  
Finance and Advisory Committee  
Thursday, August 13, 2009, 3:00 PM  
Oak Bluffs Library Conference Room**

Present: Chair Mimi Davisson, Doug Best, Frank Case  
Thad Harshbarger\*, Michael Perry\*,  
Bill McGrath\*, Mac Starks, Hans Von Stieger

Others: Town Administrator - Michael Dutton,  
Town Finance Director - Paul Manzi  
Emergency Director - Peter Martell

Selectmen Kathy Burton, Greg Coogan, Ron DiOrio, Kerry Scott  
Schools Supt. Jim Weiss, Asst. Supt. Laury Halt,  
OBS Prin. Laury Binney, Asst. Prin. Jennifer Arnold,  
School Committee – Melanie Marchand, Lisa Reagan,  
Priscilla Sylvia,  
Kate Hudson

Personnel: Sheila Brace, John Lolley  
Steven Myrick – MV Times  
Recorder - Marni Lipke

Absent: Linda Marinelli,

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

The meeting was called to order at 3:01PM.

**• 3:00 – 3:30PM FINCOM INTERNAL TOPICS**

**• Approval of July 9 Minutes**

The minutes were in summer backlog.

**• Emergency Management Request for Transfer from Finance Reserves**

Emergency Management Director Peter Martell outlined preparatory measures for a possible outbreak of swine flu (H1N1 virus) which was expected to be a pandemic off and on for the next 2 or 3 years. He requested \$12,000 from the Reserve Fund to buy supplies. The OB FinCom and Mr. Martell discussed the matter thoroughly.

- Island health agents, schools, police, Vineyard Nursing, municipalities, etc. were attempting to coordinate efforts although there was some confusion.
- Both regular flu vaccine and H1N1 vaccine had to be coordinated. Peter Martell laid out the current estimation of a timeline. Supplies would become scarce if ordered too late.
- The Martha's Vineyard Regional High School and Oak Bluffs School were designated as over flow hospital and flu vaccine sites, and/or the vaccine clinic might be mobilized to go from elementary school to elementary school.

• The FinCom felt it was too early in the planning process to know what was needed. In addition they had concerns about Oak Bluffs funding supplies for the entire Island.

**• BILL MCGRATH MOVED TO POSTPONE THE MATTER UNTIL THE SEPTEMBER 3RD MEETING; DOUG BEST SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 7 AYES, 1 NAY – THAD HARSHBARGER, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

**Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee**  
**August 13, 2009**

2

- **THAD HARSBARGER MOVED TO GRANT \$2,000 FROM THE FISCAL YEAR 2011 RESERVE FUND TO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TO START ORDERING THE HIGHEST PRIORITY HEALTH SUPPLIES FOR THE POSSIBLE H1N1 PANDEMIC; FRANK CASE SECONDED;**
- **THE MOTION WAS AMENDED TO BE CONTINGENT ON COORDINATION WITH THE POLICE CHIEF, SCHOOL OFFICIALS, HEALTH AGENT AND SELECTMEN, AND TO CLEARLY ARTICULATE THE INTER-TOWN AGREEMENT;**
- AMENDED MOTION FAILED: 3 AYES – FRANK CASE, THAD HARSHBARGER, MIKE PERRY; 5 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.** (See below: 9/3/09 Agenda).

• **3:30 – 5:00PM Meet with Selectmen, School committee, Personnel Board**

• **FY2009 Year – End Financial Results**

The Auditors were reviewing Fiscal Year 2009 (FY09). Local and State revenues were down about \$5-600,000 and turn backs from the Departments came to about \$300,000, so an operating deficit of about \$2-300,000 was predicted. To put the matter in perspective It was reported that other municipalities in Massachusetts (Mass.) were in much worse positions. There were hopes of Oak Bluffs making up the deficit in 2010. The deficit would affect the tax rate.

• **FY2010 Forecasted Revenue and Potential Budget Changes**

(See documents on file.)

- Mass. revenues continued to decrease and the added sales tax returned much lower results than expected so that it was feared that education funds would be cut, as well as the Quinn Bill, lottery, etc. The Oak Bluffs expected FY10 shortfall was estimated at \$500,000 – including the rolled over FY09 deficit. The Stabilization Fund was certified at \$1,366,000.
- It was proposed that as the Oak Bluffs School Budget (which was separately certified) encompassed about 40% of the entire Oak Bluffs Town Budget that the deficit be split with schools cutting about \$200,000, (40%) and the Town Hall cutting 300,000 (60%).
- A Fall 2009 Special Town Meeting would be held to vote a reduced FY10 Budget.
- In regards to the Town Hall:
  - Fixed or mandated costs (debt service, insurance, benefits, assessments, etc.) had been backed out of the FY10 budget leaving those items that could be reduced. Unfortunately a deficit of this size meant personnel cuts, reduced hours, or diminished services. If no one took the currently offered retirement options about 5 positions would have to be eliminated.
  - The Personnel Board and Selectmen had been discussing the reconfiguration of Town Hall personnel and departments. Licensing and permitting would be consolidated into one public desk. Other agencies would be grouped into departments such as: Natural Resources, Planning and Development, Finance and Budgeting, etc.
- In regards to the Schools:
  - The proposal was considered regrettable but sensible, however as the School Committee would not meet until September 1st they as yet had no proposals as to how the cuts would be configured. Administration and School Committee heard the message loud and clear.
  - In a discussion on what would happen if the shortfall were less than expected, Town Administrator Michael Dutton and Town Finance Director Paul Manzi promised to write the School a check. However it was highly probable it would be more than \$500,000 which would institute another Special Town Meeting and round of cuts in January.

**Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee**  
**August 13, 2009**

3

**• FY2011 Forecasted Revenue, Possibility for Deficit Reduction and Budgeting Guidelines**

- By the end of FY10 the Town and Town personnel would be cut to the core so that further revenue loss would mean cuts in services or consolidation of services with other Island towns.
- Other revenue sources were explored (see below: 9/3/09 Agenda):
  - a local option for lodging and meals tax (see 6/4/09 Minutes p. 1),
  - parking meters/fees,
  - refuse tax and/or sticker price rises,
- Time factors such as the tax rate, warrant and census deadlines, school meetings, personnel morale, etc. were explored in scheduling actions.
  - Cross training and changing responsibilities of municipal staff was expected to take time and patience. Unions would be kept in the information loop.
- All present were reminded that the FY11 budget guidelines were expected to request flat or 0% over the *revised* FY10 Budget.
- Town Meeting times were discussed in terms of elderly access, and it was noted the Saturday day meetings had been scheduled at one time and been poorly attended. Alternate solutions such as providing transportation were noted (see below: Actions).
- Although the Fire Station landscaping project funds were donated/fund raised it conflicted with the public image of a town in financial straits.
- Next Meetings: 3:30PM Thursday, September 3, 2009 at the Oak Bluffs Library

**BILL MCGRATH MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 5:02PM; THAD HARSBARGER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Action List:**

- Marni Lipke – Batch and send PDF minutes to Travis.
- Kathy Burton/Roger Wey – explore senior transportation/attendance to town meetings.
- OBS – report on proposed cuts by the September 3rd OB FinCom meeting.

**9/3/09 Agenda:**

- Emergency Management Request
- Public Hearing on new taxes procedure and schedule

**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.

**continued**

**Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee  
August 13, 2009**

4

**Future Agendas:**

- Capital Planning Com. Report (quarterly)
- Ambulance Fund Report.
- Board of Health – solid waste issues
- Finance Dept. Reorganization

**Documents on file:**

- Agenda 8/13/09
- 2008 Updated Finance Committee Handbook / CD
- Greetings... *letter* re: emergency supplies
- Request for Transfer from the Reserve Fund 6/23/09
  - OB Emergency Management Dept. letter re: request for \$12,000
  - Statements by HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano on WHO Decision to Declare Novel H1N1 Virus Outbreak a Pandemic 6/11/09
  - OBS Emergency Dispensing Site *inventory* (5 p.)
- OB Revenue Forecast 8/13/09
- OB FY2010 Draft 8/13/09
- FinCom Email invitation re: OB Budget Meeting Thur. August 13, 3:30-5pm. 7/27/09
- OB FY2010 Draft Estimated Revenue for Fiscal 2010 (4 p.) 8/6/09
- OB FY2010 Draft Estimated Revenue for Fiscal 2011 (4 p.) 8/11/09

• **These Minutes approved as amended by the Oak Bluffs FinCom 11/19/09.**