

**Town of Oak Bluffs  
Finance and Advisory Committee  
Thursday, October 1, 2009, 3:30PM  
Oak Bluffs Library Conference Room**

Present: Chair Mimi Davisson, Frank Case  
Thad Harshbarger, Bill McGrath, Mac Starks,  
Others: Recorder - Marni Lipke  
BOS Kathy Burton, Greg Coogan, Ron DiOrio  
Town Administrator - Michael Dutton,  
Town Finance Director - Paul Manzi  
Tax Collector – Cheryl Sashin,  
Absent: Doug Best, Linda Marinelli, Michael Perry, Hans Von Stieger

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

The meeting was called to order at 3:36PM. Michael Perry was in Canada and could not attend.

**Adjust Agenda as Needed**

- Bill McGrath asked to report on the Capital Planning Committee.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**• Approval of Past Minutes (DECIDE)**

The Minutes were still in summer backlog.

**• Town Administrator's Report (INFO SHARE / M DUTTON / P. MANZI)**

**> "Boil Water" Issue** (See documents on file.)

- The FinCom expressed its disappointment that no water commissioner was present.
- Town Administrator Michael Dutton reported on the incident.
  - An increased coliform count triggered a warning to boil all town drinking water at 6:00AM Thursday, September 24th. The count indicated the probability of other contaminants but was not in itself considered serious.
  - The Water Commission followed protocol by informing the police however this proved seriously insufficient.
  - Poor communications greatly increased rumor blowing the incident out of proportion. In addition delayed citizen notification (by as much as four days) constituted a health risk. It was noted that Sharkey's Restaurant with an email database of customers, was the very efficient in spreading the word.
  - The Town purchased 6,000 cases of bottled drinking water which it distributed free to all residents; commendations to Emergency Manager Peter Martell who insisted on the correct quantity.
  - A debriefing meeting was in process and a report would be issued.
  - (The third consecutive satisfactory test result had just lifted the boil water warning.)
- The FinCom voiced a number of points.
  - There was general consternation that no one contacted the Selectmen.
  - Coincidentally the Town Website was not functioning which contributed to the problem.

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- The event was another blow to citizen confidence in Town government, although the bottled water was a supportive action which diminished panic.
- The incident could be used as a dry run to set up both an Incident Command System (ICS) and an alert system which could include a number of media resources such as MVTU, WMVY, email, newspapers, websites, fire horns, etc.
- IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE OAK BLUFFS FINANCE AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE THAT THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN, WATER COMMISSION, POLICE DEPARTMENT, BOARD OF HEALTH AND OTHER RELATED TOWN AGENCIES SHOULD GET THEIR ACT TOGETHER.

**> Re-Structuring Update and YTD Financial Status**

- The internal physical move in Town Hall was scheduled for Columbus Day and some resistance and difficulties were expected among the staff. Municipal employees would be given several months to acclimate (see below: Future Agendas).
- An updated Munis report would be presented at the October 15th meeting.
- July and August revenues were at more reasonable levels but monthly variations made estimates difficult.
- Three more military veterans had been added to the Town rolls.
- The MV Public Schools Census was today October 1st.

**> East Chop Acquisition Discussion**

The difficulties of finding public funds to repair private land holdings had resulted in the East Chop Association approaching the Board of Selectmen over the purchase of the East Chop Bluffs (the Town owned East Chop Drive). The Association wished to share the engineer's report with the Town. The Selectmen were considering the matter with care and prudence.

- The FinCom asked Mr. Dutton to proceed with caution and keep the Town citizens informed in a timely manner.

**• Final Warrant for Special Town Meeting (DECIDE / M. DUTTON)**

**> Proposed \$ Transfer for Old Library Renovation**

The State requirement for Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) certification had pushed construction bids on to non-local companies and who bid about \$300,000 higher than desired. The Resource, Inc. (TRI) as a quasi town agency could act as General Contractor satisfying the State requirements and hiring local subcontractors. Consequently a new Request for Proposal (RFP) would be drafted, advertised and awarded with a completion target of July 31, 2010.

- The Town received a \$950,000 energy grant to fund energy efficient windows, heating, etc. for private residences.
- The Town deemed the proposed pharmacy an important component of any community.
- Parking had already been reconfigured to accommodate the residents.
- Rental of the units would increase Town revenues.

• The project was funded with a combination of Mass. State grant moneys, Community Preservation Act funds and residuals from the old Resident Homesite account.

**• THAD HARSHBARGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF \$225,000 FROM RESIDENT HOMESITE FUND TO THE OLD LIBRARY RENOVATION PROJECT; FRANK CASE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

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- For the record Chair Mimi Davisson found the executive summary on this article unclear.
- Vice Chair Thad Harshbarger would represent the Finance Committee at the Special Town Meeting as Chair Mimi Davisson could not attend.

**> Other New Articles?**

Articles 5 and 6 on the meals and lodging tax were placed on the warrant for discussion purposes only and pledges were given to request the issue be tabled before any vote (see below: Actions).

- If a vote were called the Finance Committee would express their opposition in favor of further public discussion and a public hearing.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**• Approach To FY2011 Budgeting (BRAINSTORM)**

- FinCom members were asked to commit to cover MV Regional High School Committee (MVRHSC) Budget Sub-Committee meetings (see documents on file and below: Actions):
- The proposed budget schedule would depend on Town Department cooperation. The Annual Town Meeting was set for April 13, 2010.
- Michael Dutton was planning to instruct Department Heads to deconstruct their departments, prioritize their mission, and submit a 0 based budget on the Fiscal Year 2010 (FY10) Budget as revised at the October Special Town Meeting.
- The FinCom would interview only those departments not following these guidelines.
- Further Mass. State revenue cuts were expected.
- The Superintendent had requested municipal employee salary coordination, and FY11 budget guidelines to give direction to the upcoming contract negotiations (see below: Actions). Other town's guidelines were briefly reviewed.

**• FRANK CASE MOVED TO INFORM THE MARTHA'S VINEYARD  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND OTHER TOWN DEPARTMENTS**

**- THAT FY11 BUDGETS SHOULD BE 0% ABOVE THE FY10 BUDGET AS  
REVISED AT THE OCTOBER SPECIAL TOWN MEETING AND,  
- OF THE BUDGET CALENDAR AS PROPOSED,  
BILL MCGRATH SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5  
AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS**

- The Capital Planning Committee met with Travis Larsen on the wireless project and website and were disappointed that he was no more prepared than last year.
- The FinCom suggested a committee with project experience be created to give him guidance and support (See below: Actions).

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• **FinCom Meeting Attendance (DECIDE /T. HARSHBARGER)**

The FinCom noted that some members were regularly absent without notification/explanation. After some research it was clear that elected officials had no attendance requirements.

- Members were reminded to inform the Chair if they were unable to attend meetings. Meetings that failed to achieve quorum were inconveniences to attending members and hampered Finance Committee business.

• **THAD HARSHBARGER MOVED THAT THE CHAIR ASK ALL FINCOM MEMBERS WHO HAVE CONSISTENT UNEXPLAINED ABSENCES IF THEY WISH TO CONTINUE ON THE FINANCE COMMITTEE; FRANK CASE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

• **BILL MCGRATH MOVED TO ADJOURN 5:20PM; THAD HARSHBARGER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Action List:**

- All – choose an MVRHS budget meeting to cover:
- All – please inform the Chair if you are unable to attend a meeting.
- Marni Lipke – Batch and send PDF minutes to Travis.
- Special Town Meeting.
  - Ron DiOrio – clearly explain Bradley Sq. funding at Town Meeting
  - Michael Dutton/Kathy Burton – call for the Meals and Lodging Tax articles to be tabled.
- All – choose an MVRHS budget meeting to cover:

10/5	6PM - Mimi Davisson	10/19	8AM
11/2	6PM	11/16	8AM
- 11/30 Budget Hearing 7PM (PAC)
- Travis Larsen – inform employees/citizens re: email changes and website update.
- Michael Dutton – create IT Committee to support Travis.
- Mimi Davisson – send letter with FY11 budget guidelines and calendar to schools.

**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.

**October 15th Agendas:**

- Capital Planning Report
- FY10 First Quarter Financial Report
- Wireless/Website Report
- Preparation for Town Meeting
- Union Negotiations Recommendations

**continued >**

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**Future Agendas:**

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

**Documents on file:**

- Agenda 10/1/09
- Draft OB FY2011 High-Level Budget Calendar 10/1/09
  - OB FY2011 Draft Estimated Revenue for Fiscal 2011
  - OB FY2010 Draft Estimated Revenue for Fiscal 2010
- MVRHS Budget Sub Committee Meeting Schedule October 2009-December 2009)
- Warrant for Special Town Meeting (4 p.)
- Cape Cod Times article excerpts – Falmouth voters approve \$2.3 M in budget cuts 10/1/09
  - Chatham faces \$10 million claim (2 p.) 9/30/09
  - OB Water District letter re: Chain of Events (Boil Water Order): (2 p.) 9/29/09

**• These Minutes approved as amended by the Oak Bluffs FinCom 10/15/09.**