

**Town of Oak Bluffs
Finance and Advisory Committee
Thursday, November 19, 2009, 3:30 PM
Oak Bluffs Library Conference Room**

Present: Acting Chair Thad Harshbarger, Doug Best,
Frank Case, Bill McGrath, Michael Perry*,
Mac Starks,

Others: Recorder - Marni Lipke
Town Administrator - Michael Dutton,
Wastewater Operator – Joe Alosso
Tax Collector – Cheryl Sashin,

Absent: Mimi Davisson, Hans Von Stieger

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

The meeting was called to order at 3:35PM.

2. Announce: We Will Be Inviting The Selectmen To Meet With Us The First Thursday In December At 3:00 In The Library Large Meeting Room

3. Replacing Linda Marinelli [Thad]

Linda Marinelli has resigned and IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE OAK BLUFFS FINANCE COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE STEVE AUERBACH TO THE VACANCY.

• BILL MCGRATH MOVED TO ASK TOWN MODERATOR DAVID RICHARDSON TO ADVERTISE THE VACANCY; DOUG BEST SECONDED MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

4. Preliminary Report On High School Budget. [Thad]

The MV Regional High School (MVRHS) had cut their Fiscal Year 2011 (FY11) Budget by \$400,000 but had lost about \$1,000,000 in Mass. State aid – leaving about a 4% assessment rise. Both Tisbury and West Tisbury Finance Committees had indicated further cuts were needed.

• The next MVRHSC / Budget Subcommittee meeting would be at 5:30PM Monday, November 23, 2009.

5. Review Budget for FY 2011 [Michael]

Check Recent Email For Projected 2011 Budget

A new draft of FY11 projections showed loss of local revenues with some up and some down. There was general agreement to ask Town Treasurer to be aggressively conservative across the board in his revenue projections.

• Other expenses / revenues issues were briefly reviewed as they now stood including: Health Insurance rises were projected at 15%, see above MVRHS, contract negotiations, and the Quinn Bill sunset.

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**Michael Will Discuss Ways The Town Is Managing And Planning
Related Issues Include**

Stipends – This was a long standing FinCom issue and should be addressed.

Staff Reduction - Additional staff reductions were not likely or recommended. Grants and other funding sources were being explored.

Health Care Expenses - Double digit rises were forcing the Town to consider shifting more of the cost to employees.

Schools – The possible rise in the MVRHS budget (see also above: #4) would significantly effect the OB School budget.

Solid Waste Collection – (See 7/9/09 Notes p. 2.) Issues were briefly reviewed:

- raise the sticker price,
- roll capital costs into tax base (a new truck was currently on the Capital Plan) – a similar question in the past was approved as an override.
- hire private companies where individuals had to pay.

Town Reorganization – had been completed and no FY11 savings could be expected.

Regionalization – Substantial savings could come from Towns working together in a number of departments:

- Police - the process would take more than a year,
- Ambulances which would gain efficiency and reduce capital costs, as well as reducing both administrative costs/staff and on-call medical staff. However it was noted that Oak Bluffs was in a hard position on this issue as the Ambulance fund was a substantial revenue source.
- Fire,
- Schools – people might change their attitudes if the issue were presented as current costs versus amount of savings,
- Shellfish Constables.

Additional Revenue Sources – A Community Development Committee study showed Town fees had not been raised in decades and should be revised – although this was not expected to produce significant income.

Increased Licensing Fees Oak Bluffs had low Taxi fees as well as giving away town property by not charging for taxi waiting stands.

Meals and Lodgings Tax (See below #6 and 9/17/09 Minutes p. 4.)

- The sale of Town property was turning out to be more complex than expected. Not only was the internal process arduous, but tax takings from the early part of the 1900's were not done with great formality and detail, so that titles had to be researched and cleared at Land Court and were often challenged.

Set Out a Time Table

- The discussion came full circle to the need for more informed FY11 estimates which would be presented as they became available.
- The situation might best be presented as the continuing push to perform Town services better and more effectively. thus saving money. Town residents and employees should be solicited for positive advice and suggestions on how to do it (see below: Actions).
- Town vehicle use policy was fairly effective in changing employee's habits

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**6. Consider Public Hearings On
Meals and Lodgings Tax
Solid Waste Collection**

- It was the recommendation of the FinCom that the Town hold public hearings on both these proposed changes as they would significantly affect resident life style.
- There was a brief discussion on the previous water crisis (see 10/1/09 Minutes p. 1-2) and authorization to spend town funds.
- The FinCom thanked Town Administrator Michael Dutton for his presentation.
- No OB FinCom representative attended the All Island Finance Association meeting.

7. Review Minutes Of Prior Meetings [All]

July 9, August 13, October 15

- **BILL MCGRATH MOVED TO APPROVE THE JULY 9, 2009 NOTES: MAC STARK SECONDED: MOTION PASSED: 4AYES, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSTENTIONS – FRANK CASE, DOUG BEST due to absence.**
- **BILL MCGRATH MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 13, 2009 MINUTES AS AMENDED FOR SPELLING: DOUG BEST SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**
- **BILL MCGRATH MOVED TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 15, 2009 MINUTES AS AMENDED: DOUG BEST SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

• The next FinCom Meetings were scheduled for 3:30PM Thursdays, December 3rd and 17th at the Oak Bluffs Library.

• **DOUG BEST MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 5:12PM; THAD HARSHBARGERSECONDED; MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUSLY.**

Action List:

- All – please inform the Chair if you are unable to attend a meeting.
- Thad Harshbarger – contact Dave Richardson re: ad for vacancy / FinCom nomination.
- Paul Manzi – report FY11 numbers to FinCom as they become more set.
- Michael Dutton – set up town and employee web forum for positive suggestions.
 - acknowledge each suggestion.
- Thad Harshbarger – inform Selectmen of recommendation to hold 2 public hearings.
- MVRHS Budget Meetings
 - 11/23/09 5:30 Budget Subcommittee / MVRHSC Meeting
 - 11/30 Budget Hearing 7PM (PAC) - All
 - 12/7 MVRHSC Meeting / Budget Certification
- Marni Lipke – Batch and send PDF minutes to Travis.

continued >

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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.

December 3rd Agenda:

- Approve 11/19/09 Minutes

Future Agendas:

- February – Town restructuring update.
- Capital Program Com. Report (quarterly)
- Capital Program Com. Roles and Responsibilities
- New Website Report
- Ambulance Fund Report.
- Board of Health – solid waste issues
- Finance Dept. Reorganization

Documents on file:

- Agenda 11/19/09
- OB FY2011 Draft Estimated Revenue For Fiscal 2011 (5 p.) 11/19/09
- MVRHSD Proposed Budget for FY'11 Version #4 (9 p.) 11/16/09
- MVRHS Item Reductions from FY10 to FY11 Budgets

• These Minutes approved as written by the Oak Bluffs FinCom 12/17/09.