

**Town of Oak Bluffs
Finance and Advisory Committee
Tuesday, July 15, 2010, 4:00 PM
Oak Bluffs Library**

Present: Chair – Bill McGrath, Bob Blythe,
Cathy Goudy, Mike Perry, Mac Starks,

Others: Maura McGrority
Town Staff Administrator – Michael Dutton
Selectmen Kathy Burton,
Recorder - Marni Lipke

Absent: Steve Auerbach, Frank Case, Mimi Davisson,
Hans Von Steiger

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

The meeting was called to order 4:03

Adjust Agenda as Needed

OLD BUSINESS

• Approve Past Minutes June 17, 2010

The minutes were in summer backlog.

• Set FinCom goals for coming fiscal year. What Time Commitments Are FinCom Members Willing To Make?

The members listed a number of potential goals.

1. Learn about Charter School funding and how it interacts with regular school funding.
2. Continue to improve outreach during budget season; in particular aiming to mail the Warrant with FinCom comments to voters.
3. Increase innovative attitude and new solutions to budgetary constraints.
4. Learn about the Dukes County budget including alternative funding for the Pest Management Program and the Vineyard Health Care Access Program.
5. Declare a back taxes amnesty to increase revenue.
6. Better utilize the property that currently houses the Information Booth.
7. Carry out a more comprehensive study of the Ambulance Fund.
8. Continue to explore increasing revenues.
9. Hire a consultant to assess the Police Dept. re: what was really needed.
10. A goal on the Fire Dept. was already being taken care of by the Personnel Committee with a classification/compensation study.
11. Continue to work to resolve trash financial problems.

• Town Administrator Michael Dutton outlined the process for tax arrears including: tax payment plans, default and foreclosure, and town owned foreclosed land put out to auction. In general without advertising amnesty the Town worked with residents. The Town was carrying a \$3,000,000 gap but the bulk of this fell to two complex cases:

- the Southern Woodlands where the Town was in the unfortunate position of owing taxes to itself, and
- the East Chop park properties where an amicus brief had been filed.

Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee
July 15, 2010

2

- Wastewater Operator Joe Alosso was asking to increase his hours, however this would mean he had two full time jobs (one with Oak Bluffs and one with Edgartown). At this point the matter was the purview of the Wastewater Commission and then the Personnel Board.

Later in the meeting the discussion on goals continued.

12. Increase transparency in how the Town operated including posted agendas, minutes, projects, municipal employee hours, etc.

13. Reduce financial surprises; legal settlements, purchases of emergency equipment without proper discussion, etc.

14. A separate budget for capital expenses with long term planning, possibly a town vehicle fleet with centralized maintenance, etc.

- There was a discussion on minimizing building maintenance costs.

15. Examine/assess one or two departments in depth to insure/increase efficiency – specifically the Highway Dept. Possibly a knowledgeable citizen could be ‘hired’ for a tax reduction to observe and advise. There was a debate on whether/how such an examination would be counter-productive in regards to departmental relations/morale and un-informed amateur consultants.

16. Insure the Town was doing everything possible to be efficient.

- After some debate it became clear that there were three departments of interest: Finances, Ambulance Reserve Fund and Highway; of these three the Ambulance Fund was the most critical.

- The FinCom expressed concern over conflict of interest issues with Ambulance Chief John Rose who was salaried but assigned the overtime schedule including to himself.

• Implementation of FY2011 Budget: What changes have already been made? What changes are imminent? What issues are impeding implementation? (INFO SHARE – Dutton)

- There were two pending lay offs

- the Health Dept. was expending the small amount in their budget and the position would end the third week of August.

- the Police Dept. reduction was scheduled for early September.

- Harbor was showing a good revenue stream.

- The trash sticker price would be raised to \$5 at the next Board of Selectmen’s meeting. A senior discount was difficult to implement. Solid Waste was likely to be a difficult knot. The FinCom discussed contracting out the service, which was also being discussed with Tisbury.

- In addition Islandwide Solid Waste District negotiations were proceedings. However there would be an initial raise in costs despite the eventual benefits – which would include better recycling.

- There was a brief review of the recent enforcement of the Harbor trash dumpsters as well as about the Vineyarder who collected a bag of litter from the beach and mailed it back to the summer visitor that dumped it.

- The Police Consolidation Committee (OB/Tisbury) met and shared information in regards to regionalization.

- Another committee was examining the possibility of other regional possibilities including: Shellfish Dept., Animal Control, tax collection/assessment, accounting, Health, etc.

- Parking plans were aimed at generating revenue starting in April 2011.

- A Special Town Meeting was likely to be scheduled this fall.

**Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee
July 15, 2010**

3

• FY2010 Closeout (INFO SHARE – Dutton)

The Department was currently understaffed and inexperienced and so was struggling with closing Fiscal Year 2010 (FY10).

• Preliminary schedule for FY2012 budget cycle (INFO SHARE / BRAINSTORM – Dutton)

The FY12 timeline was revised slightly with preliminary revenue projections in August, budget guidelines going out in September and the first draft of the budget at the end of October. It was hoped the FinCom and Selectmen would meet regularly starting in September (see below: Actions). Regionalization issues would make this Budget more of a political process.

- Annual Town Meeting was set for April 12, 2011.

• BILL MCGRATH MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 5:56PM; CATHY GOUDY SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

• Meeting Schedule/Next Meeting

4:00PM Thursdays, September 2nd and 16th,
4:00PM Thursdays, October 7th, and 21st,

Action List:

- Michael Dutton – email budget schedule draft to the FinCom.
- Michael Dutton – schedule FinCom/Selectmen meeting in September.

Ongoing Action List from previous meetings.

- Chair – post agendas in advance.
- All – please inform the Chair if you are unable to attend a meeting.
- Chair and Vice Chairs
 - Remind Selectmen to of FinCom recommendations re: refuse, parking, PILOT, etc.
 - keep up timely communications with FinCom members and Town Government.
 - Inform the Selectmen in writing of all significant FinCom decisions.
- 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.

Future Agendas:

- Capital Program Com. Report (quarterly)
- Capital Program Com. Roles and Responsibilities
- New Website Report
- Ambulance Fund Report.
- Finance Dept. Reorganization

Documents on file:

- Agenda 7/15/10

• These Minutes approved as written by the Oak Bluffs FinCom 11/4/10.