

Minutes
West Tisbury Finance Committee Meeting
February 2, 2010
Public Safety Building

Present: Sharon Estrella - chair, Brian Athearn, Al DeVito and Greg Orcutt.

Guests: Bruce Stone, Town Accountant; Dianne Powers and Skipper Manter, BoS; Jennifer Rand, Executive Secretary; John Christensen, Emergency Management; Kathy Logue, Town Treasurer; Peggy Stone, Parks and Recreation; Chief Beth Toomey and Dan Rossi, Police Dept.; Dr. James Weiss and Amy Tierney, Superintendent's Office; Steve Nixon and Mark Friedman, MVRHS; Susan Mercier, All-Island School Committee chair; Susan Stevens, Chilmark School principal; Susan Parker, Marshall Segall and Roxanne Ackerman, UIRSD School Committee.

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

Emergency Management #291

The Emergency Notification System would provide the means to inform residents of emergency situations that they need to be aware of, i.e. a fire, contaminated water, a school emergency, etc. All phone numbers would be automatically enrolled and updated by Verizon on a regular basis. The budget includes a stipend for a director (\$5,000) and assistant director (\$1,000), as well as expenses (\$1,165). A company such as CodeRed would be hired to run the system at an island-wide cost of app. \$12,520. This cost would be divided by the number of towns participating. At this point, Oak Bluffs and Chilmark are definitely participating, and Tisbury and Aquinnah seem likely to be involved.

Brian, with a second by Greg, moved to preliminarily approve the Emergency Management budget. The motion passed 3-1.

Treasurer #145

This budget reflects a step increase and a slight decrease in other expenses. Anticipated revenue is based on the fall in interest rates. Also, money that had been held in reserve for the Town Hall renovation, having been used for same, is now not available as an investment.

Greg, with a second by Brian, moved to preliminarily approve the Treasurer's budget. The motion passed 4-0.

Data Processing #155

Kathy, along with Bruce Stone, has done Data Processing on a volunteer basis. A stipend of \$3500 is being requested so that it can be a paid position. This would relieve Kathy and Bruce of the need to interrupt their own work to deal with data processing/computer-related issues. Budgeted expenses reflect increases in licensing fees, maintenance agreements, software, hardware, etc. An effort is being made to get all departments not located in the Town Hall to collaborate to eliminate redundancy. (i.e. Town Hall and Library use each other's server for off-site backup. WT and Chilmark swap email backup.)

Brian, with a second by Greg, moved to preliminarily approve the Data Processing budget. The motion passed 4-0.

Tax Title Foreclosure #158

No change

Al, with a second by Greg, moved to preliminarily approve the Tax Title Foreclosure budget. The motion passed 4-0.

Debt Service #710,751,752

Next year will be the first to encompass a full year of paying the loan principal and interest.

Brian, with a second by Al, moved to preliminarily approve the Debt Service budget. The motion passed 4-0.

Employee Benefits #911-916

The official health rates are based on the current employee census. This represents an 8.2% increase.

Greg, with a second by Al, moved to preliminarily approve the Employee Benefits budget. The motion passed 4-0.

Parks & Recreation #620

No discussion. Al moved, with a second by Brian, to preliminarily approve the Parks & Recreation budget. The motion passed 4-0.

Tennis #630

The fence was fixed under budget. The contractor had an existing fence and gave the town a discount. The tennis shed is used for selling stickers, eliminating one seller. Phone and electric are new items for the tennis shed.

Greg, with a second by Al, moved to preliminarily approve the Tennis budget. The motion passed 4-0.

Beaches #632

Line #5780, Other Unclassified Items, will be used to replace buoys, fences, posts and signs at Lambert's Cove.

Greg moved, with a second by Brian, to preliminarily approve the Beaches budget. The motion passed 4-0.

Swim Instruction #635

Sharon asked that a fee for instruction be considered.

Brian, with a second by Greg, moved to preliminarily approve the Swim Instruction budget. The motion passed 4-0.

Winter Recreation #640

All instructor fees have been lowered. There is a large increase in rental and lease expenses.

Al moved, with a second by Greg, to preliminarily approve the Winter Recreation budget. The motion passed 4-0.

Town Grounds #650

Projected increase in revenue reflects an increase in the use of the ball fields and an increase of weddings at Lambert's Cove Beach. As each ball field has only one bleacher, two new bleachers will be purchased, one for each field, to provide seating for both the home and visiting team fans.

Al moved, with a second by Brian, to preliminarily approve the Town Grounds budget. The motion passed 4-0.

There will be a warrant for \$80,000 to replace the basketball court on the Town Hall grounds.

Police #210

Increase in line #5240, repairs & maintenance, is for computer maintenance contracts.

Chief Toomey was asked about the possibility of a new police station. She said that she believes a feasibility study is in the beginning stages and that she hoped she would serve on the committee.

Greg moved, with a second by Brian, to preliminarily approve the Police budget. The motion passed 4-0.

MVRHS #313

Steve Nixon made the following statements regarding the MVRHS budgeting process, acknowledging the economic hard times and the request of the FinCom.

- Goal to bring in 0% budget
- Worked towards goal while maintaining quality of education
- Feel it was accomplished
- As the school cut costs, the state continued to cut revenue
- Result = 3.82% increase.
- Had revenue of last year remained the same, budget would be below 0%
- Operating budget down 0.12% for first time in ten years

Mr. Nixon further explained that he has worked around the entire school to make cuts so that it is as equitable as possible. Cuts have resulted in the loss of one aide.

Dr. Weiss commented that contract negotiations are ongoing. The budget has only step increases, no COLA. He hopes that will remain the case after negotiations are finalized. Dr. Weiss noted that the Superintendent's budget is only 10% of the whole budget, and that all administrators' salaries have been frozen.

Greg moved, with a second by Brian, to preliminarily approve the MVRHS budget. The motion passed 4-0.

UIRSD #311

This budget will be finalized on February 16. Sharon asked why E&D was used for FY10, but is not budgeted for FY11. Amy responded that shortfalls this year might mean there is no E&D available for next year.

Greg moved, with a second by Brian, to preliminarily approve the UIRSD budget. The motion passed 2-1-1.

Assessors #141

Personal Services has a step increase. Professional and Technical services increase is for the binding of ten years of commitment books.

Brian moved, with a second by Al, to preliminarily approve the Assessors budget. The motion passed 4-0.

Other Business

The BoS requested the FinCom revisit their decision regarding the stipend increase for the highway superintendent. The BoS has recommended the \$10,000 increase be spread over two years, \$5,000 each year. The FinCom members preferred their decision to have the increase take place in total in one year.

Al moved to place an article in the warrant to increase the reserve fund by \$10,000. The motion was seconded by Brian and passed 3-1.

Minutes

Minutes of the January 26, 2010 meetings were unanimously approved.

Future meetings

Thursday, February 11, 4:30 at the Town Hall

Thursday, February 18, 4:30 at the Howes House.

There being no other business, a motion for adjournment was made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:37pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Rogers, Administrative Clerk