

Minutes
West Tisbury Finance Committee Meeting
April 5, 2011
Public Safety Building

Present: Sharon Estrella – chair, Greg Orcutt, Joe Gervais and Katherine Triantafillou.

Guests: Skipper Manter and Cynthia Mitchell, BoS; Jen Rand, Town Administrator; Bruce Stone, Town Accountant; Dr. James Weiss, Superintendent of Schools.

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m.

Annual Town Meeting

Jen explained the procedure for making an amendment to the school budget and why it was necessary to have a specific number. There followed some discussion about an amount to recommend. Bruce outlined various scenarios with their financial impact.

The FinCom explained to Dr. Weiss the reasoning behind this recommendation was due to the high per pupil cost in the UIRSD.

Greg made a motion to make the West Tisbury assessment for the UIRSD for FY2012 \$5,647,019.03. The motion was seconded by Katherine and passed 4-0.

Skipper called to order a meeting of the BoS at 4:55. Cynthia made a motion to support the FinCom amendment at the ATM, seconded by Skipper. The motion passed 2-0. The BoS meeting adjourned at 4:56.

Greg asked Dr. Weiss if this reduction would leave the West Tisbury School with still the highest per pupil cost on the island, to which he responded yes. Dr. Weiss left the meeting at this point.

Minutes

Minutes of the March 29 meeting were approved.

Katherine asked about the schedule going forward. She would like to have a discussion on how to move on. Bruce said the FinCom should have its thoughts formulated by November when budget letters go out to all the departments. Sharon suggested starting at the May meeting.

Katherine asked how things would work at the ATM. It was explained that the moderator would present the budget article and ask if anyone had any lines they questioned. People then would call out the line number they wished to discuss. When it was the FinCom's turn to discuss their held line, they would ask the moderator for time to present the amendment and explain the reasoning behind it. Bruce noted the importance of keeping to the highest per pupil cost and not try to discuss the points of the budget.

Katherine asked if the reduction would have any impact on the taxpayer. Bruce said it would reduce the budget by 1.5%.

Greg said he would like one of the selectmen to bring the discussion back to center and wrap it up. Cynthia said she would do it, referring to data. She acknowledged that some credit goes to the school, but not all of it. Credit primarily goes to parents, and to the community. She will question there being a direct correlation between being in the district and having the highest per pupil cost. Also, why it remains so in light of a 30% decline in enrollment over the past 15 years. Cynthia ended by noting that the discussions with the school personnel have been constructive and non-adversarial.

Future meetings

April 26 at 4:30 at the Public Safety Building.

There being no other business, a motion for adjournment was made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 5:35pm.

Respectfully Submitted, - Nancy Rogers, Administrative Clerk