

***West Tisbury Finance Committee
Minutes – September 26, 2006***

Present: Al DeVito, Sharon Estrella, Brian Athearn, Richard Knabel

Absent: Skipper Manter

Guests: James Osmundsen (videographer)

Meeting called to order at 4:35 by Chairman DeVito.

In the absence of Bonnie Eldridge, the committee's administrative assistant, Mr. Knabel agreed to take minutes.

Minutes of September 12, 2006 meeting approved 4-0-0, as corrected, on motion of Mr. Knabel, seconded by Mr. Athearn.

The committee considered proposed letters re 2008 school budgets to the Up Island Regional School Committee, the School Superintendent, Regional High School Committee. It was agreed that copies of the letters would be sent to the other two towns in the up-Island district, and all the towns in the high school district. The letters all called for the presentation of level-funded budgets.

Motion to approve letter to Up Island School Committee by Mr. Knabel, seconded by Mr. Athearn passed 4-0-0.

Motion to approve letter to the School Superintendent by Mr. Knabel, seconded by Ms. Estrella passed 4-0-0.

Motion to approve letter to the Regional High School Committee, by Mr. Knabel, seconded by Ms. Estrella passed 4-0-0.

Approval of comments to the DOE, written by Mr. Knabel, on the proposed new regulations requiring use of a "wealth" formula for allocating costs in regional school districts was postponed until October 10 meeting since the deadline for filing is Oct. 24. It was noted that a public meeting is being planned by Rep. Turkington with an official from DOE on this subject may occur before our next meeting.

Chairman announced the following schedule for school budget review by the school committees:

Oct. 4, 7 p.m., high school library conference room; Superintendent's budget.

Oct. 11, 6 p.m., high school library conference room; high school budget.

Oct. 16, 7 p.m., West Tisbury School; Up Island budget.

Oct. 24, 5 p.m., Chilmark School; Up Island budget.

Oct. 26, 8 a.m., high school library conference room' high school budget.

Oct. 30, 5 p.m., West Tisbury School; Up Island budget.

The Chairman and Mr. Knabel have been attending the budget meetings. Concerns were expressed over another 8% enrollment decline in the up-Island district. High school enrollment appears to be stable.

Chairman reported that advertisements for a new administrative assistant have gone unanswered.

The committee discussed the expected special town meeting on Nov. 28 with regard to reviewing warrant articles and holding a public informational meeting for the committee to explain its positions on those articles.

The committee discussed whether it should write a warrant article calling for West Tisbury to withdraw from the Up Island district because of the onerous provisions of the new regional school regulations. It was decided such an action was premature.

Chairman reported that a website has been established for the committee, which cost \$300 to set up.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Richard Knabel