

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2007

Those Present: Al DeVito - chair, Sharon Estrella, Skip Manter and Brian Athearn.

Guests: Bruce Stone, Town Accountant; mark London, Jeff Wooden and Jim Powell, MV Commission; Joyce Bowker, Up-Island Council on Aging; Leslie Clapp, All-Island Councils on Aging; Eric Whitman and Julie Keefe, Board of Appeals.

This meeting was taped for airing on MVTV

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m.

During tonight's meeting the proposed FY '08 budgets of the Martha's Vineyard Commission, the Councils on Aging and the Board of Appeals were reviewed with the FinCom. Department/Committee heads were informed that votes taken were preliminary due to the considerable increase in the total budget. Some line items may need further review for possible cuts.

Line item #177:

Line item #177, MV Commission. Mark London opened by stating the overall increase for the FY08 budget is 2.4%. He mentioned that budgetary expenses for the Island Plan are for three years only and that he had broken them out to show the Commission budget with and without the Island Plan. He explained that the Commission budget rests mostly on salaries, and though the staff size has remained the same, COLA, bonuses and benefits add 4-5% to the budget. The salary adjustments are reached with a formula based on the position, the person in the position, COLA and merit. He further explained that the Island Plan adds \$120k above the regular budget. The Commission receives that money by assessing 1/3 to the towns and raising the remaining 2/3 from grants and fundraising.

Al asked if the Commission has a strategic plan. Mr. London responded that there is no strategic plan at present. He spent his first 6 months assessing the status of the Commission and implemented a phase-in of salary increases over three years to bring salaries up to a normal level.

When asked what percentage of employee insurance is paid by the Commission Mr. London answered that the Commission pays 90%, the employee 10%. Skip informed Mr. London that a new mandated funding schedule is about to be implemented and suggested a 75%/25% coverage be considered.

Al asked if there are any building projects being planned. Mr. London responded that he is looking to refinance the Commission building in order to do repairs, i.e. gutters, the chimney, etc. At present, there is \$35k in the building fund.

After a brief explanation of legal bills a motion was made and seconded to preliminarily approve line item #177. The motion passed 3-0-1.

Line item #541:

Line item #541, Up-Island Council on Aging. Joyce Bowker presented her budget explaining that she relies heavily on the "Friends" to help maintain the building, grounds and programming. The client breakdown by town is West Tisbury 55%, Chilmark 34% and Aquinnah 11%.

22% of West Tisbury residents are seniors. Joyce applies for grants to help with utilities and works hard to keep her budget down. She has 30 volunteers. Joyce consults with Ernie on a yearly basis to review the state of the building to make sure it is properly maintained. The "Friends " have done a lot to keep the building maintained. The FinCom members expressed great support for Joyce's efforts and encouraged her to add to her budget in the future. Joyce would like to have the parking lot better maintained. The members informed her she could call on Richie Olsen to come whenever necessary. A motion was made and seconded to preliminarily approve line item 541. The motion passed 3-0-1.

Line item #540:

Line item #540, All-Island Council on Aging. Leslie Clapp informed the members that the West Tisbury portion of the budget was \$22k. She noted that the newsletter expense for last year was an error (should have been \$6k) and therefore, the increase was not as drastic as it appeared. She then went on to explain that most of the increases resulted from a shift from coverage of the Supportive Day Program from the Edgartown Council to the All-Island Council. This meant Leslie needed to add more hours to her schedule to pick up that work. Al asked if she could make that increase by adding half the hours in FY08 and the other half in FY09. Leslie needs to make the increase in total for FY08. A motion was made and seconded to preliminarily approve line item 540. The motion passed 2-0-2.

Line item #176:

Line item #176, Board of Appeals. Julie Keefe informed the members that she had reduced the budget by \$1,00 for legal and \$500 for legal ads which she feels leaves ample money in their budget. With slow speed with which legal situations move, and with none on the horizon, she is confident the Board will not need to make a transfer request. She explained that project review fees usually cover all the expenses of 40-B, cell tower, etc. requests. A motion was made and seconded to preliminarily approve line item 176. The motion passed 3-1.

There will be a FinCom meeting on Thursday, March 15 at 4pm to review the police article. Jen needs the budget report and the warrant report by March 21.

Skip attended the UIRSD meeting where the student-based formula was adopted. During that meeting the school committee discussed a letter received from the WT FinCom which they felt had inaccuracies. The committee will write to Al.

There being no other business, a motion for adjournment was made and seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nancy Rogers, Administrative Clerk