

Approved 12/29/10
TOWN OF WEST TISBURY
SELECTMENS MEETING
Wednesday, December 8, 2010, 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Present: Selectmen Richard Knabel, Cindy Mitchell, Skipper Manter, Jennifer Rand.

Guests: Dan Rossi, Manny & Sharon Estrella, Tony Codray, Brian Cioffi, John Powers, Beth Toomey, Bob Mone, Richard Cohen, Michael Colaneri, Kristina West, Tara Whiting, Garrison Viera, Hadden Blair, Jane Rossi, David Rossi, B. Stone, E. Mendenhall, B&B Day, S. Silk

Tax Rate Hearing Postponement: *C. Mitchell motioned to postpone the hearing on the tax rate until 4:40. S. Manter seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.*

Police Chief Swearing-in: Town Clerk Tara Whiting swore in Dan Rossi as the new Chief for the Town of West Tisbury.

Minutes: *S. Manter motioned to approve the minutes of 11/3/10. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was SM & RK in favor CM abstained.*

C. Mitchell motioned to approve the minutes of 11/13/10 & 11/17/10. S. Manter seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.

Commercial Shellfish Season: *S. Manter motioned to open the commercial shellfish season under the past years regulations retroactively from 11/15/10 to close on 12/29/10. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.*

Island Health Care Support: Cindy said she was the director and was asking for a letter of support for a grant she was writing that would allow for access to federal funds as a Community Health Care Center. Currently they are classified as a rural health clinic, and can not gain access to these grant funds.

S. Manter motioned to sign the letter of support for the Island Health Care grant. R. Knabel seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was SM & RK in favor, CM abstained.

Tax Rate Hearing: Kristina West outlined the options for the Board which includes a level tax rate, a shift to the commercial class, a shift to non-resident property owners or some combination of shifts. (see attachment "Shifting Tax Burden..."). She said the tax rate this year, if level would be \$4.73, compared to \$4.46 last year. The Assessors said they had decided this year not to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen, but wanted to discuss the residential tax shift (see second attachment). Richard Cohen said at first he didn't support the residential shift because he thought it wasn't fair. Now he said he is neither opposed or in favor of it. Bob Mone said he knew it had pros and cons but thought it was worth investigating. The shift the Assessors talked about included a

commercial shift that would equalize the rate, otherwise Commercial would pay less than some classes.

Skipper said he thought a commercial shift would simply be passed on to the customer, so there would not be a real savings to residents. He also said there were many seasonal home owners here who have owned their homes for years, and not rich and are people we consider neighbors. They contribute to the town and would be penalized for not living here full time. Cindy said she thought the discussion was thought provoking but she was reluctant to make a change without knowing how people in town felt. The Board discussed various ways to solicit input.

S. Manter motioned to close the public hearing. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.

S. Manter motioned to have a single tax rate of \$4.73. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.

Budgets: The Board discussed the budgets, Cindy noted the BOS stipends had been omitted, Jen will change that. Jen explained she had raised the legal line after a couple years of spending closer to \$40k. She also made adjustments to insurance based on recommendations from the insurance company and last year's expenses. Richard asked that Jen look into whether the Energy Committee had made any progress converting the streetlights to LED.

C. Mitchell motioned to approve the budgets as presented with a correction to the BOS stipends and leaving open the possibility of an adjustment to the legal line. S. Manter seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.

Conservation Resignation: Judy Crawford sent a letter of resignation indicating her many other commitments. Richard said he would draft a thank you letter.

S. Manter motioned to accept Judy Crawford's resignation effective 12/31/10 with regrets. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was unanimous in favor.

Executive Session: Richard said the Board needed to go into executive session to discuss land acquisition. Skipper asked if it was necessary and if the Board could at least mention the property under discussion. Richard said it was necessary and no, the property could not be discussed.

S. Manter motioned to go into executive session to discuss land acquisition and not to return to open session. C. Mitchell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted, CM & RK voted yes, SM voted no.