

West Tisbury Finance Committee Meeting
Howes House
June 12, 2018

Attendance

Committee: Gary Montrowl – Chair, Chuck Hodgkinson, Doug Ruskin

Guests: Bruce Stone – Town Accountant, Skip Manter – Selectman, Jane Dreeben

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:33pm. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings

Doug moved to approve the minutes from May 17, 2018 as amended. Chuck seconded the motion which passed 3-0.

Old Business

Reserve Fund Transfer Request - TriTown Ambulance

Chuck reported he spoke to Chief Retmier about the process and the fact the Committee was not made aware of the budget change. Gary concurred this budget should have been amended on town meeting floor in April 2017.

Chuck moved to approve the transfer \$2,654.18 from the Reserve Fund to TriTown Ambulance (#231-5600). Doug seconded the motion which passed 3-0.

Agenda for FY19

As a result of discussion at the prior Fin Com meeting, the Chair listed the following as agenda topics for 2019:

1. Context for zoning bylaws
2. Budget not highlighted sufficiently at town meeting
3. Fin Com financial team participation
4. Written statement for budget sections the Fin Com would like to highlight

Chuck suggested highlighting issues for each budget section including general government, public safety, education, etc. Doug said he would be in favor of one document in which the warrant and the budget would be stapled together, citing a lack of discussion on the budget versus the detailed discussion of warrant articles. Doug suggested the context for zoning bylaws be handled by the planning board.

New Business

Reserve Fund Transfer Request – Veterans Benefits

Chuck moved to approve the transfer \$943.32 from the Reserve Fund to Veteran's Benefits (#543-5700). Doug seconded the motion which passed 3-0.

All Island Finance Committee Meeting 6/28/18

The Chair reminded the Committee West Tisbury is hosting the All Island Finance Committee meeting on Thursday, June 28 which will be held at the West Tisbury Public Safety building and begin at 5:30pm. The

Chair noted the importance of the Regional Emergency Communications Center which is the single agenda item.

Fin Com Participation on Finance Team

The Chair referenced the 2003 DOR West Tisbury Financial Management Review recommendations, citing the Budget Process recommendation on page 8:

We recommend that the policy makers of the town jointly issue a cover letter at the beginning of the annual budget process. At a pre-budget meeting prior to December 1st, the policymakers (i.e., selectmen, finance committee and personnel board) should review the prior year's actual figures and year-to-date revenue and expenditure budget information and discuss the preliminary revenue and expenditure figures for the ensuing year. The source of much of this information should be a financial forecast prepared and presented by the executive secretary and financial team (See next recommendation). Based on this information, the policy makers should jointly issue a cover letter indicating the fiscal issues affecting the community and all guidelines department heads should consider when making requests. Sending this letter in December shortly before the submission deadline defeats this purpose. This letter should accompany budget request forms, providing a framework for departments to put together their requests.

There was a discussion amongst the Fin Com members, town accountant, Bruce Stone, and selectman, Skip Manter, regarding the budget process.

The Chair noted since he has been involved, the Fin Com has written a letter to department heads and committee chairs at the beginning of the budget process, but this has not been done jointly with the selectmen and personnel board. The Chair said the Fin Com has not been involved in a meeting where the financial forecast is presented, but thinks it would make the Fin Com more effective in the budget process. Bruce explained he forwards information to the Fin Com at the same time he forwards it to the selectmen.

The Chair said he views the financial management team as the group that performs the financial work in town hall and is an advisory group to the selectmen and the Finance Committee. The Chair added he sees the benefit of a meeting with the financial team, Fin Com and selectmen, but he does not see the Fin Com's role in the day to day activities of the financial team.

Chuck pointed out this issue came up as a result of the 2019 budget override being one \$400,000 item and not individual warrant articles. Chuck reminded the Committee the selectmen reported the single item was the recommendation of the financial team. Chuck added that by not being part of that loop, the Fin Com was not involved in that process.

The Chair agreed to meet with Bruce Stone, town accountant, and Jennifer Rand, town administrator, to formalize the Fin Com's involvement with the finance team.

New Finance Committee Member to Fill Vacant Position

Jane Dreeben was in attendance and expressed an initial interest in the vacant Finance Committee position. It was determined the Fin Com must schedule a meeting with the selectmen to appoint a new Committee member and the term will last until the next annual election.

Correspondence/Scheduling

Margo submitted an invoice for eight hours worked.

Chuck moved to pay Margo for the eight hours submitted. Doug seconded the motion which passed 3-0.

The next Fin Com meeting will be Tuesday, July 10 at 5:30pm and will be held at the Howes House.

Adjournment

Chuck moved to adjourn. Doug seconded the motion which passed 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 5:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Margo Urbany-Joyce

Approved 7/10/18, 3-0-1