

**West Tisbury Finance Committee Meeting  
At the Howes House  
November 12, 2019**

**In Attendance:** Greg Orcutt, Doug Ruskin, Gary Montrowl, Clark Rattet and Jane Dreeben

**Also present:** Janice Haynes, Bruce Stone and Skipper Manter

Greg Orcutt called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

- **Minutes:** Motion to approve the Minutes of October 8th. Was seconded.  
**The motion passed unanimously 5-0.**

**Old Business:**

**1. Review bills-payable procedures:**

Greg explained that tho it was discussed at the last meeting, no formal decision had been made and voted on. He would like to say that invoices under \$500.00 the Chair may approve and only bills larger need to come before the whole committee. Bruce explained how the bills are paid and it was noted that there are rarely bills larger than \$500. for the Fin Com.

Doug moved to approve as stated by Greg. Clark seconded. **Passed 5-0**

**Committee Reports:**

- **UIRSD**

Greg reported that they are in the process of coming up with the new budget and it is going well so far. They were discussing Capital Expenditures vs. Operating Budget

- **MVRHS School Committee(s)**

Clark said that they were also discussing Capital Expenditures vs. Operating Budget. Doug pointed out that the committee has been working very hard to sort out the situation they have inherited. Mediation is off the table at this point because 2 towns have said outright No.

- **CPC:**

Gary reported that of the 15 original applications, 2 had been deemed ineligible (the Library bike rack and the LCB parking lot study) as they should be budget items for the departments. The funds available are short about \$45,000 of the requests, so they will have to figure out what they can do as partial coverage to fund as many as possible. Deliberation will start tomorrow (Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>) and continue into December and he will keep the committee apprised. Doug stated that he feels that the MV Museum application should be disregarded as they have raised a huge amount of money, they are an independent private non-profit, such restoration should be part of their

operating budget and the CPC funds should be used elsewhere. He requested that Gary let the CPC and the Museum know his opinion.

Skipper pointed out that the Howes House renovations would be coming up. Doug noted that the town should be applying to the CPC next year.

- **Housing Bank:**

Jane said that they had had their first meeting and there would be ongoing discussions of the Mission Statement and how to approach and work with the other towns. Their goal is to have something to present at spring Town Meeting.

- **Other meetings:**

Clark mentioned that he had attended a MV Refuse District meeting and that they were discussing ways to cut costs.

Greg spoke about the Personnel Boards Compensation and Classification study and gave the committee copies of the report.

**More Old Business:**

- **All Island Fin Com:** Greg again observed that the MVRHS funding issue may bring the whole thing down and he is concerned. Doug mentioned that he had heard from someone in Oak Bluffs who was also very frustrated. There was more discussion about how to get the MVRHS issue dealt with, ways around Edgartown and Chilmark and how to keep the AIFC going.

**New Business:**

- 1. Beginning of the Budget Prep Process**

Bruce spoke about how it should go and his initial thoughts about the new budget. He showed his estimate and explained how he got his numbers. He also spoke about the new rooms tax money and how that would affect the budget.

- 2. Department Revenue Match**

Doug re-opened the subject and passed out copies of past budgets and expenses for the 3 departments in question. He pointed out the current gaps, which between the 3 departments add up to approximately \$150,000. He stated again that he would like to press the Selectman, Parks & Rec Committee and Board of Health to work on the issue. Gary disagreed with pressing and says he is not willing to deliver an ultimatum. Greg agreed that he was also upset that some fees have not been increased in many years, but trying to get a 100% match is not feasible. Jane suggested that the departments look at increasing fees that have not been raised in say, 5 years and then work in a plan for regular incremental increases to keep things closer. Doug would like the Fin Com to agree to take a position and they can even decide exactly what it is at another

meeting. Gary, Greg and Doug all say that they already know that the Selectmen will not support raising fees; they have been trying for 3 years. Doug pointed out that the Fin Com members are the representatives of the voters and perhaps they should bring it to them. It was mentioned that the committee could not recommend a department's budget on the warrant. Then it would be on record at Town Meeting, or they could explain their position in a newspaper Op Ed piece that gets published just before. It was ultimately decided that Doug would draft 3 separate letters to the 3 departments for committee review and approval. He asked that Jane email him with her thoughts as he liked what she had said earlier and he would compose the letters.

3. Tri-Town Ambulance funding:

Greg asked if the committee had a position? Clark said he feels as long as we (the town) 'owns' something he would support the funding. Doug said TTA should really be its own entity/corporation and they should be the ones that own the building, but setting that up was complex and costly. It is believed that as proposed now, Chilmark would be the owners with the other 2 towns leasing from them, but everyone was unsure of exactly the current proposal. Janice said that there were documents at the town hall that explained the funding proposal that had been presented at one of the Selectman meetings. She would locate them and send them on to the committee so that they can better understand the proposal and come up with their position. Doug pointed out that he felt that the TTA and town of Chilmark were being reasonable, unlike the MVRHS issue. They will continue the topic till next meeting.

**Correspondence:** None.

Next meeting will be December 10th

With no further items to discuss, Greg made the motion to adjourn. Gary Seconded.

**Approved unanimously 5 -0**

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Haynes  
Administrative Assistant  
11/13/19

Approved 12-10-19