

# MINUTES – West Tisbury Finance Committee

March 11, 2021

~Approved April 16, 2021~

A regular meeting of the West Tisbury Finance Committee was scheduled for March 11, 2021 at 5 PM.

The meeting was held exclusively through remote conferencing, in accordance with Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020. Public notices included the means by which individuals could attend and participate.

*Present: Greg Orcutt, Doug Ruskin, Clark Rattet, John Christensen. Absent: Doug Finn*

*Also Present: Bruce Stone (Town Accountant); Jennifer Rand (Town Administrator); Skipper Manter (Member of Selectboard); Janice Haynes (Clerk)*

The meeting was called to order at about 5 PM.

## I - Reserve Fund Transfer – Affordable Housing Committee

A request was considered for a reserve fund transfer in the amount of \$1,750.00, said funds to be directed to the Affordable Housing Committee. It was MOVED by Ruskin, SECONDED by Rattet.

*To approve.*

VOTE: Orcutt: YES; Ruskin: YES; Rattet: YES; Christensen: YES. (4, 0, 0)

## II - New Business

### ***Review of the 2022 Warrant Article for the Island Autism Center***

Ms. Katherine “Kate” DeVane, executive director for the Island Autism Center was introduced, and made a presentation on the mission, purpose, clients and activities of the IAC, in support of the proposed warrant article which would appropriate one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) from the Community Preservation Undesignated Reserve Fund for pre-development funding for housing twelve to eighteen adult autistic Island residents, as West Tisbury’s share of the total regional project budget of \$600,000.00, to the Island Autism Center and Neighborhood Housing project. Ms. DeVane noted that the residential capacity would count as affordable housing units for the Town of West Tisbury.

Some questions:

- Ruskin: The proposed “Hub House” will use the existing structure? DeVane: No – the existing structure is not worth saving; a new structure will be built.
- Ruskin: Re/ Finances – does the IAC anticipate coming back to the town for additional monies? DeVane: Possible, with a CPC request at some point in the future in support of

the construction costs. The programming piece is fully funded at this point. Grants are also being sought.

Ms. DeVane was thanked for her time. No further action taken.

### ***Review of the 2022 Warrant Articles for the County of Dukes County***

Ms. Martina Thornton, County Manager was present, and introduced Elizabeth “Beth” Folcarelli and Cindy Trish (Healthy Aging MV), Leslie Platt (Center for Living), Karen Tewhey (Homelessness Prevention).

Mr. Ruskin expressed no issues related to the programming, but asked whether the County was exacting a 5% management or administration fee that would be paid through these warrant articles? Ms. Thornton spoke about recent events that related to the 5% fee, how the fee was determined, and the process by which the administrative fee might be assessed in the future. Current requests do not include any administrative fee. Mr. Ruskin: In the future, the admin fee would be part of each program’s budget? Ms. Thornton: Uncertain at this time.

Ms. Thornton made a presentation relative to Articles 16 through 21 of the draft warrant, as follows:

- (\$14,336), to support the CORE program
- (\$1,313), to support the First Stop Information and Referral Service
- (\$15,000), to support Healthy Aging MV
- (\$7,829), to support the Homelessness Prevention Program
- (\$6,450) to fund the Dukes County Stabilization Fund
- (\$73,011), to support the Martha’s Vineyard Center for Living

Also, Ms. Thornton spoke about: changes in staffing insurance costs; grant funding through the CARES act; the Health Care Access staffing levels and budget; funding for the County stabilization fund; and future changes to funding requests.

Mr. Ruskin: What is the current balance of the Stabilization Fund? Ms. Thornton: \$0 – it has never been funded. Mr. Stone: Has the County taken action this year that might be reimbursed through the Covid Funding, which would in turn reduce the fiscal impact to the Towns? Ms. Thornton: the County has been reimbursed about \$14,000 for COVID-related reimbursements. Mr. Stone: The state expectation is that they will be passing to each qualifying county an allocation of Covid-relief funds.

Mr. Manter: Four of the six towns appropriated stabilization funds in FY2021, correct? Ms. Thornton: The request was for FY2021, but was not funded. The request has been repeated for FY2022. Mr. Manter: Is the appropriation for both FY21 and FY22? Ms. Thornton: Yes. Mr. Manter: Do those two towns have the FY21 appropriations on their warrants for this Spring? Ms. Thornton: Yes. Mr. Manter: We appropriate money with the contingency that all towns appropriate for the same purpose. I’m surprised that the Town’s Financial Advisory Board hasn’t taken this up; we will be.

Ms. Tewhey spoke about the history and operations of the Homelessness Prevention program.

There were no further questions. Ms. Thornton et als were thanked for their time. (~5:40 PM)

### ***Review of the 2022 Warrant Article for ACE MV***

Mr. Richard Smith (MVRSD) and Ms. Holly Bellebuono (Executive Director, ACE MV) made a presentation regarding the history of services of ACE MV to and through the Island's schools. Mr. Ruskin: No issues with the services provided; will this financial request be made of the Towns "forever"? Ms. Bellebuono: I believe that ACE MV will likely continue to ask the towns for support on some level for the foreseeable future. Mr. Orcutt: How competitive are the course fees, compared to other similar organizations? Ms. Bellebuono: We try to keep tuitions as low as possible; pre-covid: About 30% of our revenue was from tuition; we've reduced prices over the past year to try to keep classes available, but anticipate raising our prices back to pre-Covid levels over the next three- to six- months. Mr. Rattet: in technical training area: expense is \$32,000, versus \$4,000-\$5,000 the year before – what happened? Ms. Bellebuono: The class schedules, plus the instructor fees, forced changes to the funding line item. Ms. Bellebuono spoke about the offshore wind training program; less in the 'Trades' (HVAC, Refrigeration, Hotworks, etc.) Ms. Bellebuono was thanked for her time.

### ***Review of the 2022 Warrant Article for the Dukes County Sherriff's Department***

Mr. Peter Graczykowski, (Dukes County Sheriff's Office) provided a brief overview of the request, the transfer from analog to digital, and that the process should be done by the end of this year.

Mr. Ruskin: How much of this request is for maintenance, and how much is for capital equipment? Mr. Graczykowski reviewed the history of trying to secure a site for the communications build-out, and the related costs, locations and technology.

Mr. Ruskin asked several questions about the manner by which the article could be disposed of, and whether the expenses should by right be covered by the state. After some discussion, Mr. Ruskin stated his opinion that the town's 'arm was being twisted', and had no real choice in the matter.

Mr. Graczykowski was thanked for his time. No further action taken.

### ***Any remaining business regarding 2022 Warrant Articles***

Ms. Haynes noted that the Schools were expected at the next meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup>, but that no confirmation had been received as yet. Mr. Ruskin noted that he had requested a copy of the five-year plan.

There was some discussion related to how the articles would be disposed of, and a schedule relative to the approval of warrant articles, and the overall budget.

### **III – Old Business**

Mr. Orcutt noted that Mr. Finn had requested a discussion related to Proposition 2-1/2. Given that Mr. Finn was not present, Mr. Orcutt suggested postponement to the next meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **IV - Committee Reports**

Mr Orcutt tabled committee reports to the next regular meeting.

### **V - Correspondence and Scheduling**

Mr. Orcutt noted a presentation to be held on the 21<sup>st</sup>, presented by the Mass Municipal Association, and encouraged members to attend.

The next regular meeting was scheduled for March 18, 2021, at 6 PM.

### **V - Any Topic Not Anticipated by the Chair**

No other business was presented.

### **VI – Adjourn**

It was MOVED by Christensen SECONDED by Rattet

*To Adjourn.*

VOTED: Unanimous by declaration of the chair.

Meeting adjourned at about 6:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Finn  
Clerk Pro Temp