

West Tisbury Finance Committee Meeting
Zoom meeting
January 7, 2021, 5 pm

In Attendance: Greg Orcutt, Doug Ruskin, Clark Rattet, Doug Finn, John Christensen

Also present: Skipper Manter, Bruce Stone, Janice Haynes

Greg called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

Minutes:

- Minutes of December 14, 2020. No questions or corrections offered.

John made the motion to approve the Minutes of December 14, 2020. Clark seconded. Roll call vote; All in favor.

- **Reserve Fund Transfer:**

Bruce said the training and travel budgets have been cut, Covid has allowed people to actually do more training as they are all on Zoom now. He has made a request for \$250 for training for school spending which he has wanted to take for a long time. He mentioned that someone from the Fin Com might be interested in attending too and there was money in the budget.

Doug R. made a motion to approve the Reserve Fund Transfer for \$250. Clark seconded. Roll call vote; All in favor

New Business:

- **Budget Review:**

Greg recapped how it had been done last year and then proceeded to read the budget lines. Included in these minutes are only the lines where discussion came up and questions were asked.

Selectmen's Budget: Question on the personnel line increase; Doug R. shared that it was due to the fact that Skipper was up for election and if he did not win, they would have to pay a \$3,900 stipend to the new Selectman. Skipper does not get paid now as he is an employee of the town. There was a question about the \$13,000 increase in the expenses line. Bruce said that part of it was town car leases and Greg said the other part was advertising as the MV Times is charging more. Clark asked about the line for dues? Greg asked Janice to ask Jen about that one. They did not need anyone to come in to explain.

Doug F. asked about the Reserve Fund since Bruce was there, he wanted to know how much had historically been used? Bruce said that it differed, and that this year they had increased it to encourage other departments to reduce their budgets. He wanted to recommend an even \$50,000 which would be about 3% of total budget.

Assessors Budget: Doug R. questioned the legal line and wants to call them in to discuss. There was much discussion and Bruce reminded everyone of the Graham case 10 or 12 years ago and the hundreds of thousand dollars it cost in legal fees. They will be called in.

Treasurer/ Tax Collector Budget: It was asked why they are asking for more money for collections. Bruce explained that for Personal Property taxes it is hard to enforce payment as they can the other taxes so collection service is the only way. They did not need anyone to come in to explain

Data Processing: Clark asked about discrepancy in amounts. Bruce explained that there were errors in the narrative. He also explained some of the titles that were misleading and about breaking out different costs into separate lines. They did not need anyone to come in to explain, but may have more questions for Bruce in the future.

Conservation Commission: A question was asked about the decrease in revenue. After discussion it was decided to have Janice contact Maria to get the question answered rather than call her in to a meeting.

Planning Board: There were similar questions as to the revenue decrease. Janice will ask Jane for an explanation.

Affordable Housing Committee: There were questions about their legal line also. As they did not submit a narrative with the budget, Janice will contact Rhonda and ask for a narrative rather than ask her to attend a meeting.

Fire Department: It was asked what the dramatic increase was about. Bruce explained that it was the Fire Chief salary, Manny is retiring and they know they will have to pay the new chief more. The amount is a 'place holder' amount as they do not know what it will be yet, and the Selectmen will be deciding. Doug had questions about the free cash which happens every year in the personnel line. They wanted to have Manny come in but it was suggested by Skipper that it would be a good conversation to have with the new fire chief a year from now but maybe they shouldn't call Manny on his last budget. Doug R. said he was fine with not call them in at this time but requested that they put the Fire Dept. budget on a future agenda

Tri Town Ambulance: –they haven't yet submitted a budget but they want to call them in.

Building Department: There is the same issue with their income. Doug R. says the fees are too low and thinks the permit fees should go up. There were also questions on the inspection fees. They will be invited in to answer questions.

Emergency Management: They questioned the line for the Regional Assistant and Skipper said that the Selectmen had requested they remove it from the budget and make it a warrant article. They did not need anyone to come in to explain anything else.

Schools: they would like them to come in, both the MVRHS, UIRSD and Superintendents office, all on the same night.

Highway Department: They would like to call them in as there will be major changes to the department with the addition of the Cemetery position.

Board of Health: The major increase was due to the hiring of the Assistant Health agent. This is another department where the permit fees are considered low. It was noted that they were intending to revisit the topic of increasing fees in FY22 so they did not need anyone to come in to explain anything else.

Council on Aging: Personnel line has gone up quite a bit. Bruce explained that there had been lots of changes in steps due to the reclassification. They did not need anyone to come in to explain anything else

Library: There were questions on the budget and also about the drive up services. Greg and Clark requested they come in.

Parks and Recreation: Bruce explained that there were typos on the beach line and that it was hard to track as the beach season spanned two fiscal years. They did not need anyone to come in to explain anything else.

To recap the actions requested: Janice will request info from Jen (Selectmen), Rhonda (AHC), Jane (Planning) and Maria (Con Com)

Calling in: Assessors

Tri Town

Building Dept.

Schools

Highway Dept.

Library

- **Annual Report:**

Greg asked if anyone else would be interested in writing it as he has done it for the past 6 years. Doug Finn volunteered to help.

Old Business: There was none.

Committee Reports: It was decided to defer the committee reports this month as the budget review ran long

Correspondence: There was none.

Other Business / Topics not anticipated: There was none

Scheduling: Budget review meetings will begin Tuesday January 26th and Thursday January 28th. Then the following week on Tuesday February 2nd and Thursday February 4th. Tuesday

February 11th will be a backup date if needed. All meetings will be at 5 pm. Janice will contact the people that the board indicated they would like to meet with and set up the schedule.

The next regular meeting will be Thursday February 25th.

*With no further items to discuss, Doug F. made the motion to adjourn. John. seconded.
Roll call vote – all in favor*

Meeting adjourned at 7:06 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Haynes
Administrative Assistant

Approved 2/11/21