

## **Minutes, West Tisbury TFAD Meeting, July 5, 2022**

### **APPROVED July 20, 2022**

Present: Omar Johnson, Terry Kriedman, Loren Ghiglione, Brad Cortez (via Zoom), Susanna Sturgis (via Zoom).

The meeting came to order a little after 5 p.m. at the West Tisbury library.

The June minutes were approved unanimously.

### **Update on board/committee survey**

Committee members praised Loren for his amazing work on this. Our discussion focused on what our next steps should be.

The last question on the survey asked for specific suggestions about people who would make a good board or committee member. It generated a few names, as well as general suggestions about what was needed (“younger people” came up several times) and how to get townsfolk interested. How do we proceed with the recommendations? Possibilities:

- Give the names to the selectboard, and/or
- Give the names to the board or committee if one was mentioned
- Contact the individuals, let them know they’ve been recommended, ask about interest

We can ask Cindy about this when she comes to our August meeting.

The other question asked for general ways to recruit new blood to town boards and committees, with a focus on promoting diversity along racial, ethnic, and generational lines. We agreed that we’re interested in recruiting more members for the Task Force as well as for other boards/committees. Some suggestions:

- Outreach to MVRHS administrators, teachers, and/or student groups
- “Go to people where they are,” for instance, church and civic groups, our own circles of acquaintance
- A public program along the lines of “What Makes West Tisbury Tick?”
- Newspapers and social media
- Include list of openings in, e.g., tax bills
- Identify influencers in different areas of town and work through them
- More effective use of town website (board/committee openings are hard to find and often out of date) Another question for Cindy
- Flyers on bulletin boards [*SJS note: I added this because WT has several public bulletin boards and plenty of us get our info about events, help wanted, etc., that way.*]

Omar noted that a “multi-faceted approach” was called for, using several of the above suggestions and more. He also said it would be good if we informed ourselves and the community about what the various boards and committees do -- “What Makes West Tisbury Tick?” would help with this. Having it in the fall (before Thanksgiving) or very early in the new year, when nominations open for town elections, would be ideal.

Loren volunteered to do the following:

- Make a list of issues we want to bring up with Cindy Mitchell [*SJS note: See items highlighted above, plus the personnel questions we had in the first place!*]
- Compile a list of people recommended in the survey and the boards or committees they might be interested in (if mentioned)
- Draft a press release about what we're doing, encouraging townspeople to get involved. Susanna can help with this.

We agreed that it would be good to meet again before our next regularly scheduled meeting (Tuesday, Aug. 2), where Cindy M. will be our guest. After some discussion we settled on **Wednesday, July 20, at 5 p.m. via Zoom.** [*SJS note: This was confirmed via email with members who weren't present at the time. Agenda and Zoom link for this meeting will be due at town hall on Monday the 18th.*]

### **Report on Pride activities and OB flag policy developments**

Susanna reported that the MV NAACP and the Oak Bluffs Association did some effective organizing around Pride Month and Juneteenth, both of which came off very well. Young women took the lead for both organizations: Jennelle Gadowski for the NAACP and Sofie Green for the OBA. Susanna spoke at the raising of the Pride flag on June 1 and was grand marshal (!!)

at the Pride parade. She is also on the OB flag policy committee as a member of the NAACP.

**About flags in West Tisbury:** Omar spoke with Jen Rand, town administrator, about flying flags. They believe that if they fly any flag, they have to be open to flying flags we don't agree with, so maybe West Tisbury shouldn't allow any other flags? Susanna explained the distinction between government speech and the First Amendment requirements: municipalities aren't subject to the First Amendment. Boston City Hall, whose policy was the subject of a recent Supreme Court decision, got into trouble because they routinely allowed third-party flags until they turned down a request from a Christian group. The Court ruled that the city was treating the flag pole as a public forum, which made it subject to the First Amendment.

Susanna wondered if West Tisbury might be vulnerable because it doesn't have a flag policy. She thinks the OB flag policy committee is moving toward establishing some criteria about what flags will fly.

Omar noted that a town employee was flying an anti-Black Lives Matter flag from a town-owned truck. This brings up more issues about flags and maybe personal expression in public places.

The meeting adjourned at about 6 p.m.

Susanna J. Sturgis  
Recorder