

Finance Committee Meeting
Minutes of Meeting 2-16-2018

Aquinnah Town Hall Selectmen's Meeting Room

Members present: Chairman Allen Rugg, Tom Murphy

Members not present: Mark Foster

Also present: Board Administration Assistant Sophia Welch, Town Accountant Emily Day, Town Administrator Jeffrey Madison, Selectman Gary Haley, Selectmen Julianne Vanderhoop, Board of Health Assistant Phoenix Becker, Board of Health Chair Jim Glavin, Tri-Town Chief Ben Retmier and Harbormaster Brian Vanderhoop

- The meeting began at 10:00am

- First on the agenda was the review of minutes. Tom made a motion to approve the 12/7/17 and 2/9/18 minutes as presented. Allen seconded. The Committee voted 2-0, the motion passed.

- First on the agenda was a meeting with Board of Health. Emily presented the BOH budget to the Committee pointing out that the draft budget before them was based on two FY'19 budgets from the Refuse District and the Council of Aging and that salary items were the same as prior year pending an agreement on increases. Emily noted that the wages she had received from Sibel were based on what she anticipated as next step increase for Phoenix and Natalie but that Sibel had put fewer hours for Phoenix than what Phoenix had expected. There was discussion on Natalie's hours for FY'19 and the \$600.00 bonus that she receives during the summer season. Jim informed the Committee that the bonus had been established prior to his term on the BOH and that it was came about when Natalie took on extra work in the Summer season instead of the Town hiring a second person. He noted that this bonus has been included in past budgets. There was discussion regarding Natalie's total hours for the year and the calculation of the summer season hours (Saturdays starting June 2nd and ending on October 13th). Jim informed the Committee the Refuse District assessment increase was due to the cost of recycling. There was discussion on the Refuse District budget and whether there was a COLA. The Committee reviewed the proposed salary for Phoenix's position and the budget for the Septic Inspector. It was noted that Sarah Saltonstall is the Septic Inspector and that the \$2,000.00 budget has never been fully expensed. Jim noted that Sarah normally bills the BOH once/year for all the inspection she does and guessed that her bill is usually around \$1,200.00. There was discussion regarding the proposed 8.74% increase of the BOH Assistant salary and the responsibilities of the position. It was noted that the BOH proposed an increase in hours to 19 hours/week. Phoenix voiced her concern with not being able to get her job done within the 18hr/week she already works. The Committee asked for a job description for the BOH Assistant position. Jim will forward the job description that the BOH uses to the Committee. There was further discussion regarding the increase of 19hr/week for the BOH Assistant. Phoenix noted that she has been working an extra hour every week but does not bill for it and she has been traveling off-island to meetings and does not get reimbursed for mileage. Emily informed Jim and Phoenix that there is a travel budget for all Town employees and Phoenix is entitled to be reimbursed. There was a brief discussion regarding Veterans Benefits that is included in the BOH budget. The Committee thanked Jim and Phoenix for attending the meeting.

- Next, the Committee met with Tri-Town Chief Ben Retmier. Chief Retmier presented his updated budget to the Committee. The Committee found that the budget is increasing by 31% and is primarily due to retirement changes and Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB). Chief Retmier informed the Committee that he had conducted a study on the cost of hiring an additional full-time paramedic vs keeping a per diem paramedic and it had come to

light that the Town of Chilmark has been solely paying for Tri-Town retirement. The budget before the Committee incorporated retirement as a line item and now all three towns will pay equally. It was noted that Tri-Town had been in group 1 of retirement and now will be in group 4, which determines retirement age eligibility to be 55 and requires personnel to retire at age 65. In addition, OPEB had never been budgeted for and it has been determined that the best course of action is to include the normal cost of the annual required contribution for OPEB in the FY19 budget. Going forward with future budgets, a percentage increase will be added so that the total cost of OPEB will be funded by FY'23 as well as the retirement contributions that will need to be matched. The Committee found that these additions to the budget total approximately \$165,000.00 and that the total did not recapture past deficiencies. There was further discussion regarding the change in retirement from group 1 to group 4. There was discussion regarding Chief Retmier's study for an additional full-time paramedic. The Committee found that Tri-Town has 30 hours/week that are not being covered by the full-time paramedics and it has been difficult finding per diem paramedics to cover these shifts, thus, full-time paramedics are being paid over-time (over-time kicks in at 40hrs). There was discussion regarding the pay grade for the additional full-time paramedic. There was discussion on how Aquinnah is serviced by Tri-Town. The Committee thanked Chief Retmier and asked for additional documents to help further explain the increases in the budget.

- Next, the Committee met with Brian Vanderhoop, Aquinnah Harbormaster. Brian presented his budget and noted the changes including a step increase, the MV Shellfish Group assessment increase of \$1,000.00 and his request for an additional \$600.00 per diem for his cell phone, on top of the approved \$600.00 in FY'18. Brian informed the Committee that the \$1,200.00 request is based on the amount that other public safety employees receive for cell phone coverage. There was discussion on how other Town Employee's phones are covered and whether a group phone plan is needed for the Town. The Committee discussed the MV Shellfish Group assessment increase and what the Group provides for the Town. Brian informed the Committee that being part of the group is not mandatory, but it is great asset to the Town and that the Town receives its shellfish seed (approx. 3 million seeds) from MV Shellfish Group. There was discussion on non-seasonal permit costs and it was determined that they need to be reviewed again. There was discussion regarding the Town boat repair and maintenance.

- The Committee briefly discussed the need for Town Hall painting/repair and funding.

- Emily presented the Debt budget which showed the debt payment plan. Emily explained that while it has doubled from last year and had been voted to be excluded from the levy limit, it will not affect the over-ride. There was brief discussion regarding the fire truck payment.

- Emily presented the Planning Board Plan Review budget. She noted that she had not received a response on the draft budget from Peter Temple, Chair of the Board. The only change from the prior year is the step increase equivalent for the Administrative Assistant.

- Emily presented the Selectmen budget. She noted that the Selectmen salaries only increase to the next step equivalent. In addition, the Consultant Fee (web master fee) has increased 6% from \$6,000.00 to \$6360.00.

- Emily reminded the Committee that the next Finance Meeting is only with the School. She will not be able to attend the meeting but will have the proposed budget printed for the Committee for that meeting.

- Jeffrey presented the Special Town Meeting warrant to the Committee for review. He noted that the Selectmen had already signed it, legal counsel has reviewed it and that there was no action needed from the Committee. The Committee agreed to review it at the next meeting.

- With no other business to discuss, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn.
The Committee voted 3-0 in favor. The motion passed.

- The meeting ended at 11:41am

Respectfully submitted,
Sophia Welch
Board Administrative Assistant