

Aquinnah Joint Finance Committee and Select Board Meeting

February 18th, 2022 - Minutes

Meeting was held via videoconference

Members Present: Allen Rugg, Howard Goldstein, Jim Newman (alternate member)

Not present: Mark Foster

Also present: Town Administrator Jeff Madison & Town Accountant Emily Day

- Allen called the Fin Comm meeting to order at 9:32am

- Update on audit recommendations: the finding in most recent audit involves reconciliation of the receipt/cash accounts between the treasure's books and bank statements. There is a solution in progress which is to engage an individual to be the assistant treasurer for a limited amount of time (about 6 months) with the plan to then hire a new treasurer, most likely at the end of the year when current treasurer leaves. Plan is subject to the auditors' approval of the arrangement. Auditors will also need to approve the potential assistant as they also work as the accountant assistant. Jeff will keep the committee updated on the progress. Committee discussed the implications of the town not having a completed audit and the findings as outlined by the auditor.

- Correspondence: Coalition to Create a MV Housing Bank representative has requested to meet with the committee. Allen felt that the matter is important and has political effects but does not impact the finances of the town. Regardless, the committee agreed to meet with the CCMVHB representative on March 8th. Threshold issue will be whether this is an issue for Fin Comm to address.

- Bill Lake is requesting to meet with the committee to discuss a potential proposal to generate revenue for the town. Proposal is the acquisition by the town of the solar panels at the landfill. Panels are being offered to the town on favorable terms. Committee invited Bill to present during the week of their March 7th meetings.

- Emily presented the FY'23 draft budget including reginal assessments. Proposed town employee salary schedule is based on a change to the rate table. Total increase to salary line item is approx. \$62,000 (5% increase and not COLA). Police salaries are not included as they have their own contracts and pay scale. Salary increase is due to the fact that personnel classifications have not been updated, and instead of a COLA this year, Jeff opted to update existing salary structure across the board. Table had not been updated in about 6 years. Select Board has not yet been advised of the proposal. Committee requested that this matter remain on the list of open issues.

As of now, overall budget increase from last year is 0.63% and likely to change as new data is added to the budget. Big items yet to come will be fixed costs (4.73% increase due to health insurance and have not received retirement assessment), debt may remain the same, police department (have yet to receive budget).

Possible additions to list: Consideration of restoring and raising OPEB contribution to \$50,000 given that last year it was reduced to avoid an override.

Tri Town budget is reflecting a 2.9% decrease. Committee expected a greater savings in assessment. Committee discussed funding of new Tri Town building and impact to FY'23 budget. Construction of the

building will begin on Feb. 23rd and Chilmark expects that there will be an assessment for the building sent out to each of the Tri Town entities for their respective FY'23 budgets.

Emily expects to receive internal department budgets within the coming weeks.

Jeff noted the following potential regional and town related warrant articles: Up Island School District infrastructure costs, Up Island Council on Aging Howes House renovation/addition request, design costs associated with renovations of the town hall campus and cliffs restrooms (estimated at \$150,000 to complete the schematic design and bidding documents).

Emily encouraged everyone to review the budget and attachments in the ClearGov online system.

Emily will print the summary sheet for the committee.

- Select Board meeting adjourned at 10:26am.

Respectfully submitted,

Sophia Welch