

Aquinnah Finance Committee Meeting

March 8th, 2022 – Minutes

Meeting was held via videoconference

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

Also present: Town Accountant Emily Day, Town Administrator Jeff Madison, Select Board member Julianne Vanderhoop, Select Board member Tom Murphy, Morgan Hodgson, Peter Temple, Doug Ruskin, Laura Silber, Town Clerk Gabbi Camilleri, Tri Town Chief Retmier, Fire Chief Bolin,

Allen called the meeting to order at 9:06am

- *Coalition to Create a MV Housing Bank (CCMVHB)*: Peter Temple, Doug Ruskin, Laura Silber and Morgan Hodgson presented the proposed CCMVHB inclusive of the warrant article, regional and legislative process, composition of housing bank, environmental requirements, powers and activities, fee and expenses (2% fee on sales of property interest paid by the buyer with a minimum of \$1 million of sale price not subject to housing bank fee), property taxes (properties not tax exempt) and withdrawal and opt in options. Committee discussed potential financial impact to the town and whether the housing bank is an issue for the Fin Comm to take a position on. Fin Comm did not take a position.

- *Tri Town*: Chief Retmier presented the Tri Town FY 23 budget: main increase to budget is an overall 12% increase to salaries (two main increases: increase in payroll due to paramedic position from 30hr/week to 40hr/week and increase of EMT off season pay to comparable levels with other island services). Committee discussed the next steps for the new Tri Town building. Aquinnah will see the first assessment for the building in FY 24 which will be one-third of Tri Town Ambulance headquarters cost. Shared cost estimate is still being finalized.

- *Fire Department*: Chief Bolin presented the FY 23 budget and discussed the current fire crew: currently have 12 active members (6 live in Aquinnah); due to pandemic all but one member has first responder certification as well CPR certification (Mass minimum standard for fire responders); fire department is still in compliance; 3 members are Firefighter 1-2 certified; Chief would like 4 new members, but it is difficult to get commitment/dedication; FY 23 budget includes \$2,000 increase to firefighter payroll for basic certified training hourly wage (less than 2% increase to budget); FY 23 budget is \$120,000; no warrant articles for FY 23 but there will be one or two requests for FY 24/FY 25 (replacement of expired equipment). Only open issue is the Chief contract which has not been reviewed by Select Board.

- *Town Clerk*: 2023 is an election year and the FY 23 budget includes an additional \$3,000 for election expenses; budget also includes a request for Town Clerk laptop (\$1,200).

- *Property Manager*: no changes in budget; the FY 22 increase in hours was sufficient for the position (includes scheduling events at ACC, Lighthouse, and Town Hall). Committee discussed current event costs, potential on raising the price and involvement in renting the spaces.

- Committee discussed the remaining department budgets to be reviewed. Committee discussed and requested that Sibel prepare a draft budget reflecting a 2.5% COLA. Emily will coordinate with Sibel.

Adjourn 10:40am

Respectfully submitted, Sophia Welch