

Finance Committee Meeting
Minutes of Meeting 2-4-19
Aquinnah Town Hall Selectmen's Meeting Room

Members present: Chairman Allen Rugg, Mark Foster, Tom Murphy

Also present: Town Treasurer Sibel Suman, Selectmen Gary Haley, Assistant Assessor Angela Cywinski, Selectmen Julie Vanderhoop, Town Accountant Emily Day and Board Administration Assistant Sophia Welch, Theresa Manning, MV Youth Task Force, Jamie Sue Vanderhoop, MV Youth Task Force, Mike Joyce, MV Youth Task Force

- The meeting began at 9:30am

- First on the agenda was a review of minutes. Tom made a motion to approve the 1-18-19 minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Mark. The Committee voted 3-0, the motion passed.

- Next the Committee met with Theresa Manning, Jamie Sue Vanderhoop, and Mike Joyce from the MV Youth Task Force to discuss their warrant article request. Theresa informed the Committee that this is the first time they have requested a warrant article. Theresa, Mike and Jamie Sue gave a brief history of the MV Youth Task Force outlining its goals and objectives: MV Youth Task Force started in 2004 and has been securely funded since 2008 predominantly by two grants totaling \$225,000/year (Federal SAMHSA grant and State BSAS grant). In September 2018 the SAMHSA grant ended leaving only \$125,000 in funding for the remainder of the year. The focus of the Task Force is youth substance abuse prevention for youth between 7th grade and 12th grade. The Task Force does not provide direct services but focuses on environmental strategies (evidence-based procedure) which looks at the environment and ways to strengthen the safety net for the youth. The Task Force also supports programs and resources within the schools and community partners such as the Police.

There was a lengthy discussion concerning the findings of the Task Force over the past 14 years and the programs and resources that they have supported.

Because the Task Force is without the federal grant, the budget which was \$225,000 is now reduced to \$100,000/year. Recently, the Task Force has gained 501(c)(3), but the County still acts as a fiscal agent for the State grant. Once the 501(c)(3) verification comes through, the Task Force will embark on fundraising. In the meantime, they are asking all of the towns to consider supplementing the remaining \$100,000 for the year. Theresa was confident that the Task Force would be able to continue with a total budget of \$200,000. In addition, they will continue to look for other funding opportunities. The request for Aquinnah is \$2,840 (based on the 50/50 formula). The Committee thanked Theresa, Mike and Jamie Sue for their presentation and fully supported the request and their efforts. Theresa informed the Committee that the County has decided that they want to do substance abuse prevention, which the Task Force fully supports on the broader level. However, the Task Force is learning that the County is looking to do youth substance abuse prevention and making a case for it with other towns. Theresa only asked that the Committee be aware of this when the County presents their budget and if questions arise, she asked that the Committee reach out to them to be part of the discussion.

- Next, the Committee discussed the FY20 budget. Emily informed the Committee that the Up-Island School District has increased their budget request by \$232,000 (total budget request is \$1,600,000). As for the town's budget, the first draft is only reflecting step increases (to be readjusted to reflect next year as a leap year) and slight increases in health insurance and retirement benefits. Sibel confirmed health insurance and retirement benefits rates are not increasing. Emily will adjust the budget to reflect no change. As of now, the town will be looking at a

\$246,000 override, mostly due to the increase of the school's budget. Emily has not received the High School budget. There was brief discussion on the increase of Aquinnah's Up Island School assessment (48 kids this year), where Chilmark has a decrease in their assessment (68 kids this year). The Committee requested that the School Committees be on the next Fin Comm meeting agenda. The Committee discussed the proposed COLA adjustments. Emily noted that as of now, there have been no requests from employees to increase hours. Town employees have not received a COLA in 2 years. Emily and Sibel will do a more comprehensive study on the COLA by looking at other town's and what they have done in the past 2-3 years to make sure Aquinnah is still comparable. Sibel presented proposed estimates of how the budget would be affected with only step increases and step increase with a 2.5% COLA (to be adjusted to reflect the leap year). With only a step increase, the budget would increase by \$41,758. With a step increase and 2.5% COLA, the budget would increase by \$70,072 (COLA increase would be \$28,314). It was noted that within the Police contract, if the Town initiates a COLA, they are entitled to it as well. The Committee requested Emily and Sibel do the comprehensive study with varying COLA amounts and present at the next meeting.

The Committee reviewed a draft of the FY20 budget (all subject to the discussion on COLA and submission of department budgets).

General Town Expense: Possibly to remain as presented. Emily will review with Jeffrey.

Moderator: To stay the same as presented.

Selectmen: Possibly remain the same. The Committee requested that Sibel compare other town Selectmen compensation to Aquinnah.

Administrator: Emily pointed out that this budget now includes the Board Admin. To be revisited with Jeffrey.

Finance (reserve funds): To remain the same as presented.

Audit: To remain the same as presented.

Accountant: To remain the same as presented.

Board of Assessors: To remain the same as presented.

Treasurer: To remain the same as presented.

Tax Collector: To remain the same as presented.

Legal: Unless there are foreseen legal costs, Emily recommended that this budget remain as is.

Data Processing: Emily will be discussing this budget with Jeffrey to make sure it is transparent with the new upgrades and ongoing technical expenses.

Clerk: In FY19 there was an additional \$1,500 in the budget to cover training of a new Clerk. Emily will check to see whether that expense is still needed.

Election: With no State-wide election next year, the budget has decreased.

Insurance: Emily will have Jeffrey consult with the Insurance agent to make sure the proposed budget is accurate.

Town Report: To remain the same as presented.

Building and Grounds: The Committee requested that this budget be revisited with the DPW Director.

Police: The Committee requested that this budget be revisited with the Police Chief.

Fire: The Committee requested that this budget be revisited with the Fire Chief.

Ambulance: Assessment is for \$372,248 (overall request increased by 2.4%). The Committee requested that this budget be revisited with the Chief of Tri-Town.

Emergency Management: If COLA is approved, the budget will change.

Animal Control Officer: Emily was unsure about this budget. Sibel noted that this will most likely increase. Jeffrey is in the process of looking into outsourcing the position. The Committee will need to revisit this budget.

Harbormaster: The Committee requested that this budget be revisited with the Harbormaster.

Travel: To remain the same as presented. Emily noted that the off-island car lease will be absorbed into the existing budget but it will not increase the budget.

Board of Health: The Committee requested that this budget be revisited with the Board of Health. There is a

possible request to increase the BOH Clerk hours.

Affordable Housing: The budget reflected an 18% increase (\$1,500). Emily will look into this budget.

Conservation Commission: To remain the same as presented.

Planning Board: Planning Board Clerk wage has been moved the Administrator budget.

Zoning Board: To remain the same as presented.

MV Commission: Request has not been received yet. The Committee requested that this budget be revisited with the MV Commission, even if there is no increase.

Building Inspector: To remain the same as presented. The Building Inspector bills quarterly based on what is needed. Sibel noted that his bills are very modest.

Library: The budget looks like there was a 3% decrease due to reconstructing the Library Associates positions. The Committee requested that this budget be revisited with the Library Director.

Arts and Cultural: To remain the same as presented.

Recreational Facilities: Emily noted that she had combined the parking lot, restrooms and lighthouse because there tends to be overlap in expenses. No budget requests have been received. The Committee requested that the lighthouse budget be revisited with the Lighthouse Coordinator. They also requested a report on the finances of the season.

Community Program: The Committee requested that this budget be revisited with the County. Allen requested that the Committee possibly take this budget out and keep the requests as warrant articles.

Education: To be revisited with the School Committees.

Debt: Debt has been rolled over. Sibel noted that there will be an increase in the interest. Because the debt is excluded, it will not count as an override. Total debt is approximately \$1,200,000.

Fixed Costs / Employee Benefits: Emily had added a 5% increase. Sibel confirmed that this is no increase this year, so the budget needs to be reduced. Sibel will return to present the final budget.

Allen asked that the website administrator (under the Selectmen budget in consultant fees) be on Emily's agenda to review. He asked that the services provided be reviewed. Emily agreed and confirmed that she will discuss this with Jeffery.

- Next, the Committee reviewed a proposed meeting schedule. The following dates were scheduled (including major deadlines) working back from the Town Meeting date:

Tuesday, May 14th, 2019 - ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

May 3rd, 2019 - WARRANT POSTING

April 19th, 2019 - TOWN REPORT PRINTING

April 16th, 2019 - SELECTMEN FINAL APPROVAL OF WARRANT AND BUDGET

Friday, April 12, 2019 at 9:30am – Final Fin Comm Meeting – agenda open

Friday, April 5, 2019 at 9:30am – Fin Comm - agenda open

March 29th, 2019 - FINAL WARRANT REQUEST DEADLINE

Friday, March 22, 2019 at 9:30am – Fin Comm - agenda open

Friday, March 8, 2019 at 9:30am – Fin Comm - Ambulance, Police and Fire Budget Meeting

February 25th, 2019 - SCHOOL VACATION WEEK

Friday, February 22, 2019 at 9:30am – Fin Comm - School Committee Budget Meeting *Invite BOS

Friday, February 15th, 2019 at 9:30am – Fin Comm - Salary and Employee Benefits Budget,

Review of 1st Draft of Warrant Articles

- Under other business, Angela, Assistant Assessor, discussed a possible warrant article addressing the re-evaluation cost to be completed in 2022. She informed the Committee that other towns are planning for the expense now by breaking out the cost between 2-3 years in warrant articles. The Assessors will be looking at adding a warrant article this year for \$9,000 to begin setting aside the money for the 2022 re-valve (total cost to be \$36,000). Emily agreed that this is a great idea and will discuss it further with Angela.
- 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 11:23am.

Respectfully submitted, Sophia Welch, Board Administrative Assistant