

**Town of Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 4, 2023, 5:00pm
OB Town Hall Meeting Room/Zoom Conference**

Present: Chair – Sherry Countryman, Maura McGroarty, Mimi Davisson, Mike Taus, Bob Malecki, Richard Weiss*, Sean DeBettencourt* (zoom), Ryan Ruley (zoom), Reuben Fitzgerald* (zoom)

Absent:

Others: Deborah Potter, Carrie Blair, Tom Hallahan

Recorder: Juliet Mulinare

5:05pm Ms. Countryman called the Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee meeting to order.

Announcements

Ms. Countryman welcomed the two newly-elected members of the Committee: Bob Malecki and Ryan Ruley. Mr. Malecki and Mr. Ruley explained why they were interested in joining the Committee and the Committee members introduced themselves. Also present to observe was Mr. Tom Hallahan, one of two newly-elected members of the Selectboard.

Ms. Countryman confirmed that both new Committee members have been sworn in. She also reminded all Committee members to complete the Conflict of Interest training as well as the Open Meeting Law training.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the minutes was postponed.

Election of Chair

Ms. Countryman stated that Committee officers must be elected once a year, following the town election. *Motion placed on the floor by Mr. Taus to nominate Ms. Countryman for Chairman. Ms. McGroarty seconds the motion.*

Discussion: The Committee recognized the good work Ms. Countryman did during her previous year as Chair of the Committee. Ms. Countryman stated she would be willing to serve for another year.

No further discussion, roll call vote:

McGroarty – Aye, Davisson – Aye, Taus – Aye, Malecki – Aye, Fitzgerald – Aye, Ruley – Aye, Countryman – Abstain.

Motion carries (6-0-1). Weiss and DeBettencourt not present at time of vote.

The Committee decided to wait until all members were present to nominate and elect a Vice Chair.

Appointment of Members to Capital Programs Committee and Personnel Committee

Ms. Countryman stated that the Finance Committee must appoint one member to the Capital Programs Committee and two members to the Personnel Committee.

Ms. McGroarty volunteered to serve on the Personnel Committee.

Motion placed on the floor by Mr. Taus to appoint Ms. McGroarty to the Personnel Committee. Ms. Countryman seconds the motion, no further discussion, roll call vote:

McGroarty – Abstain, Davisson – Aye, Countryman – Aye, Taus – Aye, Malecki – Aye, Fitzgerald – Aye, Ruley – Aye.

Motion carries (6-0-1). Weiss and DeBettencourt not present at time of vote.

Ms. Countryman volunteered to serve as the second appointee to the Personnel Committee.
Motion placed on the floor by Mr. Taus to appoint Ms. Countryman to the Personnel Committee. Ms. McGroarty seconds the motion, no further discussion, roll call vote:
McGroarty – Aye, Davisson – Aye, Taus – Aye, Malecki – Aye, Fitzgerald – Aye, Ruley – Aye, Countryman – Abstain.
Motion carries **(6-0-1)**. *Weiss and DeBettencourt not present at time of vote.*

*Mr. Weiss arrives to the meeting.

Mr. Weiss stated he is willing to serve on the Capital Programs Committee.
Motion placed on the floor by Mr. Taus to appoint Mr. Weiss to the Capital Programs Committee. Ms. McGroarty seconds the motion, no further discussion, roll call vote:
McGroarty – Aye, Davisson – Aye, Weiss – Aye, Countryman – Aye, Taus – Aye, Malecki – Aye, Fitzgerald – Aye, Ruley – Abstain.
Motion carries **(7-0-1)**. *DeBettencourt not present at time of vote.*

Approval of COY Transfers and Discussion of Draft 2022 Audit

Ms. Potter explained that all four requested COY transfers are related to redistribution of salary funds and no transfer exceeds the original appropriation. She then read through and provided brief explanations for each of the transfers.

- FY23 Budget Transfers under MGL 44:33B

#1 – Police Department:

Transfer \$425,000 from Patrol Officer Salaries and Lieutenant Salary to Patrol Sergeants and Additional Salary Expense.

Motion placed on the floor by Ms. Davisson to approve the Police Department transfer. Mr. Taus seconds the motion, no further discussion, roll call vote:

McGroarty – Aye, Davisson – Aye, Weiss – Aye, Countryman – Aye, Taus – Aye, Malecki – Aye, Fitzgerald – Aye, Ruley – Aye.

Motion passes unanimously **(8-0-0)**. *DeBettencourt not present at time of vote.*

#2 – Shellfish Department:

Transfer \$10,000 from Shellfish Laborer to Shellfish Director and Constable Salary.

Motion placed on the floor by Ms. Davisson to approve the Shellfish Department transfer. Mr. Taus seconds the motion, no further discussion, roll call vote:

McGroarty – Aye, Davisson – Aye, Weiss – Aye, Countryman – Aye, Taus – Aye, Malecki – Aye, Fitzgerald – Aye, Ruley – Aye.

Motion passes unanimously **(8-0-0)**. *DeBettencourt not present at time of vote.*

#3 – Board of Health:

Transfer \$13,500 from Health Agent Salary to Administrative Salaries and Clerical Salary.

Motion placed on the floor by Ms. Davisson to approve the Board of Health transfer. Mr. Taus seconds the motion, no further discussion, roll call vote:

McGroarty – Aye, Davisson – Aye, Weiss – Aye, Countryman – Aye, Taus – Aye, Malecki – Aye, Fitzgerald – Aye, Ruley – Aye.

Motion passes unanimously **(8-0-0)**. *DeBettencourt not present at time of vote.*

#4 – Parks Department:

Transfer \$10,000 from Director of Recreation to Other Salaries.

Motion placed on the floor by Ms. Davisson to approve the Parks Department transfer. Mr. Taus seconds the motion, no further discussion, roll call vote:

McGroarty – Aye, Davisson – Aye, Weiss – Aye, Countryman – Aye, Taus – Aye, Malecki – Aye, Fitzgerald – Aye, Ruley – Aye.

Motion passes unanimously (8-0-0). DeBettencourt not present at time of vote.

Discussion Regarding Post-Budget Process Recommendations to Selectboard

Ms. Countryman drafted a memorandum to the Oak Bluffs Selectboard that includes three Post-Budget Recommendations for consideration. The Committee discussed the three recommendations. Ms. McGroarty stated that the social service entities should present their budget requests much earlier, and they should also be prepared to show a history of their financials. Mr. Weiss said the town's "inefficiencies" should be reviewed, as well as possible revenue streams. Ms. Potter stated that the Selectboard is utilizing the town's Master Plan as well as a Strategic Plan to look at all of these issues in conjunction with one another. Ms. Potter also stated that the Fireworks are included in the Master Plan as part of the character of the Town and the Committee may want to reconsider their recommendation to phase those into a privately funded event. The Committee discussed that these are simply recommendations and the Selectboard can choose to ignore them.

*Mr. DeBettencourt arrives to the meeting via zoom.

Motion placed on the floor by Mr. Weiss to send the memorandum, in its current form, to the Selectboard for review. Mr. Taus seconds the motion, no further discussion, roll call vote:

McGroarty – Aye, Davisson – Aye, Weiss – Aye, Countryman – Aye, Taus – Aye, Malecki – Abstain, Fitzgerald – Aye, Ruley – Abstain, DeBettencourt - Abstain.

Motion carries (5-0-3).

Discussion of FinCom Bylaws and Role of Finance Committee from the Finance Committee Handbook

Ms. Countryman distributed a copy of the town's bylaws pertaining to the Finance Committee. She read through the four sections: Organization, Duties, Powers and Administration.

The Committee discussed that the bylaws are 20 years old and some laws have been updated, but they still serve as a good guide and it's important for Committee members to know their roles and responsibilities.

*Mr. DeBettencourt arrives to the meeting.

The Committee discussed the Town's IT security and it was suggested that the IT Director come and speak with the Committee. Ms. Potter and Mr. Ruley cautioned against a public discussion regarding the town's security measures.

*Mr. Fitzgerald departs the meeting.

Begin Discussion of Goals for Year

Ms. Countryman shared a list of goals she has for the upcoming year, which include improving public relations, bringing the embarkation fee legislation to fruition, generating additional revenue for the town and streamlining programming within departments. The Committee discussed how to better convey the time they spend reviewing the budget to town voters and how to improve communication between town boards. Other members of the Committee shared goals as well: Ms. Davisson wants to streamline the

budget process so the Committee is not meeting for four hours at a time, week after week. Ms. Davisson also suggested that the Committee expand its role to advise on other matters, not just financial ones. Mr. Weiss wants to look at revenue potential for the Harbor, as well as installing parking meters directed towards non-residents. Mr. Taus would like to work on supporting seniors who wish to age-in-place and suggested a property tax freeze to lessen the cost of living burdens on them. The Committee discussed how to increase revenue from tourism and also discussed the limited housing stock, which is being further reduced with the increase of short term rentals. Mr. Ruley would like to take a close look at the Southern Tier project and how that will affect enrollment at the School. Ms. Countryman also want to resurrect the All Island Finance Committee meetings. Ms. Countryman will create a list of the goals that were discussed to bring to the next meeting.

Election of Vice Chair

Motion placed on the floor by Mr. DeBettencourt to nominate Mr. Ruley for Vice Chair. Mr. Taus seconds the motion.

Discussion: Ms. Countryman stated that she doesn't agree with this as there is a lot for new members to learn. Mr. Taus disagreed and said with his prior experience as a member of the Selectboard, he is already well versed in town finances. Mr. Weiss stated that he would be interested in continuing in his role as Vice Chair.

After further discussion, Mr. DeBettencourt withdrew his motion for nomination, which was seconded by Mr. Taus. The Committee decided to vote on the two nominees, Mr. Ruley and Mr. Weiss.

McGroarty – Abstain, Davisson – RULEY, Weiss – WEISS, Countryman – WEISS, DeBettencourt – RULEY, Taus – RULEY, Malecki – Abstain, Ruley – RULEY.

Mr. Ruley is elected as Vice Chair (4-2-2).

Review of TA/ATA Report

None.

Committee Updates

None.

Town Administrator/Accountant Comments

Ms. Potter stated that they are trying to get the auditors to come for an in-person exit briefing for FY22 on May 23rd. The town has a clear management letter for the third year in a row.

Member Comments

None.

Public Comments

None.

Adjournment

At 7:32pm a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Taus and seconded by Mr. DeBettencourt. No further discussion, roll call vote:

McGroarty – Aye, Davisson – Aye, Weiss – Abstain, Countryman – Aye, DeBettencourt – Aye, Taus – Aye, Malecki – Aye, Ruley – Aye.
Motion carries **(7-0-1)**.

Respectfully Submitted
Juliet Mulinare, Recorder

Minutes Approved: 5/18/23