

Town of Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 13, 2023, 5:00pm
OB Town Hall Meeting Room/Zoom Conference

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

Absent:

Others: Deborah Potter, Carrie Blair

Recorder: Juliet Mulinare

At **5:04pm** Ms. Countryman called the Oak Bluffs Finance and Advisory Committee meeting to order.

Announcements

The next meeting will be on July 20th. It will be a joint meeting with the Tisbury Fincom.

Approval of Minutes

The Committee reviewed the draft minutes from the June 15, 2023 meeting.

Ms. Davisson made a motion to approve the 6/15/23 draft minutes. Ms. McGroarty seconds the motion, discussion:

Ms. Davisson requested a few minor modifications to the draft minutes.

No further discussion, roll call vote:

Fitzgerald – Aye, Malecki – Aye, Davisson – Aye, Countryman – Aye, McGroarty – Aye, Weiss – Abstain.

Motion carries **(5-0-1)**. *Ruley, DeBettencourt, Taus not present at time of vote.

COY Approvals

Ms. Potter stated that all four requests have already been approved by the Selectboard.

- FY23 Budget Transfers under MGL 44:33B

#1 – Assessor Salary:

Transfer a total of \$9,400 from Director of Recreation and \$7,000 from Registrar Salaries to Assessing Admin Salaries (\$4,400) and Assistant Assessor Salary (\$12,000).

Motion placed on the floor by Ms. Davisson to approve the transfer request. Ms. McGroarty seconds the motion, discussion:

Ms. McGroarty stated that the FinCom should be made aware before salary adjustments are made. Ms. Potter responded that this was not a salary adjustment, it's compensation for the Assistant Assessor's additional work during the period when the Assessor's position was vacant.

No further discussion, roll call vote:

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

Motion passes unanimously **(6-0-0)**. *Ruley, DeBettencourt, Taus not present at time of vote.

#2 – Police Department

Transfer a total of \$11,500 from Additional Salary Expense to Animal Control Officer Salary (\$1,500), Admin Salaries (\$1,500), Executive Assistant (\$1,500) and Police Chief's Salary (\$7,000).

Motion placed on the floor by Ms. Davisson to approve the transfer request. Mr. Weiss seconds the motion, discussion:

Ms. Potter explained that these are de minimis adjustments for payroll. The Committee discussed the various definitions of a stipend. Ms. Potter stated that this stipend is a payment that's made after tasks are completed at the end of the year. Other reasons for this transfer relate to an employee opting out of healthcare, which has been accounted for in the FY24 budget.

No further discussion, roll call vote:

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

Motion passes unanimously **(6-0-0)**. *Ruley, DeBettencourt, Taus not present at time of vote.

#3 – Highway Department

Transfer a total of \$65,000 from Fire Department Salaries and \$26,000 from PD Summer, Temp & Special to Highway Admin Salaries (\$6,500), Highway other wages (\$18,000), Highway H/OT (\$18,000) and Public Building Maintenance (\$48,500).

Ms. Potter stated that the Fire Chief changed the way fire fighter stipends are paid. Fire fighters are paid based on the number of trainings they attend so the maximum amount must be budgeted, hence the surplus. She also stated that the Highway Department was hit hard this year with building maintenance.

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

Fitzgerald – Aye, Malecki – Aye, Davisson – Aye, Countryman – Aye, McGroarty – Abstain, Weiss – Aye.

Motion carries **(5-0-1)**. *Ruley, DeBettencourt, Taus not present at time of vote.

#4 – FinComm Reserve

Transfer a total of \$50,000 from FinComm Reserve to OPEB.

*Mr. Ruley joins the meeting.

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

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

Motion carries **(6-0-1)**. *DeBettencourt, Taus not present at time of vote.

*Ms. Blair departs the meeting.

Parking, Community Impact Fee, PILOT Discussion Update

Mr. Weiss stated that he had spoken with members of the community and most are not in favor of paid parking. Ms. Countryman responded that the FinCom's job is to make financial recommendations to the Selectboard; it's the Selectboard's job to decide whether or not to implement them. Mr. Weiss disagreed. Mr. Malecki said he did not have an update since the information he presented at the last meeting; he also noted that there were mixed reactions in the comments on the newspaper article about the paid parking discussion.

Ms. Countryman said that the Community Impact Fee is on the agenda for the joint meeting with the Tisbury FinCom.

Ms. McGroarty stated she got updated FY23 property values; they are close to the FY22 values but have increased significantly since 2019. Ms. Countryman said that PILOTs will also be on the joint FinCom meeting agenda.

PR/Outreach Presentation

Ms. Davisson presented her list of ten ideas for public outreach.

1. Office hours at Post Office Square to informally chat with the public
2. Placing posters around town that share relevant information. Posters would be changed to reflect current issues.
3. Kiosks at big island events
4. Scheduled listening forums
5. Online surveys to distribute to residents
6. Social media outreach
7. Meet with the papers, submit op-eds and letters to the editor
8. Meet with the Oak Bluffs Association
9. A pre-Annual Town Meeting forum for voters
10. Provide an explanation for all split and dissenting votes for Annual Town Meeting articles.

*Mr. DeBettencourt joins the meeting.

Ms. Davisson read through her list again so Mr. DeBettencourt could join the conversation. The Committee then discussed which idea they thought would be the most productive. Mr. Weiss suggested a regular weekly column in the paper but the Committee questioned who would write it. Ms. Countryman said she liked the online survey idea. Ms. McGroarty agreed about the surveys but stated that a lot of the other ideas have already been tried and have failed.

*Ms. McGroarty departs the meeting.

Mr. Weiss said he likes the poster idea. Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Malecki, Mr. DeBettencourt and Mr. Ruley all said they were in favor of creating a survey.

*Mr. Taus joins the meeting.

Review of TA/ATA Report and Finances to Date

None.

Committee Updates

None.

Town Administrator/Accountant Comments

Ms. Potter stated that the Selectboard will have a public forum for the seasonal residents on August 1st.

Member Comments

Mr. Weiss stated that the gift shop next to the Flying Horses did a good job with their renovation and asked if there were any plans for the theater. Ms. Potter responded that it would require a by-law change and enforcement, which would cost the town more than the penalties they can impose.

Public Comments

None.

Adjournment

At 6:08pm a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Taus and seconded by Mr. Weiss. No further discussion, roll call vote:

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

Motion passes unanimously (6-0-0).

Meeting Documents on File:

1. 20230713 COY Transfers for FinComm
2. TA/ATA Report 2023.06.27

Respectfully Submitted

Juliet Mulinare, Recorder

Minutes Approved: 9/7/2023