

TOWN OF EDGARTOWN
FY24 Joint Meetings of Financial Advisory Committee and the Selectboard
Wednesday, February 15, 2023 – 3:30 PM
ZOOM MEETING

IN ATTENDANCE:

FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FINCOM)

Donna Lowell-Bettencourt – Chair, Leslie Baynes – Vice-Chair (VC), Robert Coad, Nedine Cunningham, Kelly McCracken, Paul Pertile, Julia Tarka

SELECTBOARD (SB)

Margaret E. Serpa – Chair, Arthur Smadbeck

OTHERS:

James Hagerty – Town Administrator (TA), Alexander J. Schaeffer – Fire Chief (FC)

Chair Donna Lowell-Bettencourt called the FINCOM meeting to order at 3:31 PM.

Chair Margaret E. Serpa called the SB meeting to order at 3:31 PM.

(Recorder's Note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity).

Documents on file as referred to during the meeting: FY24 TA Recomm Operating Budget DRAFT 15 Feb 23.pdf
FY24 Edgartown Budget Articles TA Recommend 15 Feb 2023
FY24 Non Financial Articles.pdf

VOTE ON FY24 OPERATING BUDGET:

Chair Lowell-Bettencourt welcomed everyone and said the task for this meeting was to make recommendations as follows: 1.) to recommend 2.) not to recommend 3.) neither/nor if there was no dollar value.

TA James Hagerty screen shared the *FY24 TA Recomm Operating Budget DRAFT 15 Feb 23.pdf* and reviewed each line explaining any updates, recommendations and/or estimates; Total Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 were \$42,532,489.74, a 5.42% increase in the overall budget; the 5% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) was not included.

TA Hagerty said he made one adjustment to the FinCom budget section: Minute Taking was now done as a 1099 position - \$4000 was shifted from the salary line to the expense line.

Members discussed in detail lines 46 and 47 (Fire Department):

- ❖ VC Leslie Baynes recommended holding this for another year so there was more time to review the numbers as they were huge; this increase was more than any other department. He said he would like to see more give and take and to hold off on the additional staffing request for another year.
- ❖ A comparison of costs for a full-time Fire Department versus a volunteer department was asked for, to demonstrate to the Town how the Department was saving money by using volunteers.
- ❖ There seemed to be confusion of how the new and existing roles would be defined if the Assistant Chief position was added including the changes of job functions; more time was needed for understanding.
- ❖ The most effective way to support the FC and Department, and how to retain and attract people.

FC Alexander J. Schaeffer defended his request and said this was the reality of the Department; he said it was his job to advocate for what was needed to succeed and didn't know where the happy medium would be. He said there was a decline in shift work that supplemented the full-time staff; if this wasn't approved he said the solution would be overtime; FC Schaeffer said other departments didn't depend on individuals to step into night time positions.

Chair Lowell-Bettencourt agreed with FC Schaeffer's suggestion of setting up a committee to review the needs and responsibilities of the Fire Department. To explore options and gain support would make the approval process better/easier for the following year.

TA Hagerty recommended the full amount of what the Chief was asking; Julia Tarka said she would go with this recommendation; she supported the full ask.

LESLIE BAYNES MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE BUDGET OF \$589,161.58 WITHOUT THE ASSISTANT. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY KELLY MCCRACKEN. THE COMMITTEE VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 4 AYES, 3 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MR. BAYNES—AYE, MR. COAD—AYE, MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE & MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE. MS. CUNNINGHAM—NAY, MR. PERTILE—NAY & MS. TARKA—NAY.

Members had a lengthy discussion over Line 100, the Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC). They expressed concern over the large increase and the assessed amount for the Town (and how that assessed amount was calculated); how to change the process and give feedback to the MVC; the steps involved if the Town chose to leave the MVC; the FinCom vote and what that meant. Chair Lowell-Bettencourt said she would add the MVC as a discussion point for a future agenda item.

LESLIE BAYNES MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE OPERATING BUDGETS LINES 1 - 132 ABSENT OF LINE 46, AND THE CHANGE IN LINE 109 WITH THE ADDITION OF \$500, AND THE ADDITION OF UP TO \$50,000 FOR COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS IN THE EVENT THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS OVERTIME ACCOUNTS NEEDED TO BE ADDED. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY PAUL PERTILE. THE COMMITTEE VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSTENTIONS.

MR. BAYNES—AYE,

MR. COAD—AYE,

MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE,

MR. PERTILE—AYE,

MS. TARKA—AYE,

MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, ABSTAINING FROM THE SCHOOL BUDGET LINES,

AND MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE, ABSTAINING FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT SALARY LINE AND TOWN ADMINISTRATOR SALARY LINE.

VOTE ON FY24 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLES:

TA Hagerty screen-shared the *FY24 Edgartown Budget Articles TA Recommend 15 Feb 2023* which included all of the Warrant Articles with notations and recommendations (as to where the money would come, e.g. free cash).

The articles, as presented:

Requested: \$12,558,658 Free Cash: \$6,798,094 Water Surplus: \$230,00 Levy: \$926,562

Members had a lengthy discussion over the proposed new Fire Station building and that a plan/drawing had not been finalized. Chair Lowell-Bettencourt said it was essential to have a rendering available at Town Meeting; she was voting to recommend based on the confidence that TA Hagerty, Paul Pertile and FC Schaeffer would work together and have a plan ready; FC Schaeffer said the drawing would be available beforehand for public input.

NEDINE CUNNINGHAM MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE WARRANT ARTICLES AS PRESENTED BY TA JAMES HAGERTY AT THIS MEETING. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY LESLIE BAYNES. THE COMMITTEE VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

MR. BAYNES—AYE, MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE, MR. COAD—AYE, MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, MR. PERTILE—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE.

TA Hagerty screen-shared the *FY24 Non Financial Articles.pdf* and summarized each.

LESLIE BAYNES MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE FOUR ARTICLES AS DISCUSSED AT THIS MEETING. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY PAUL PERTILE. THE COMMITTEE VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION:

6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MR. BAYNES—AYE, MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE, MR. COAD—AYE, MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, MR. PERTILE—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE.

LESLIE BAYNES MOVED TO NEITHER/NOR THE REMAINING ARTICLES. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY JULIA TARKA. THE COMMITTEE VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MR. BAYNES—AYE, MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE, MR. COAD—AYE, MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, MR. PERTILE—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE.

- ★ The next FINCOM meeting was scheduled on Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 4:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Lowell-Bettencourt thanked TA Hagerty for the way everything was prepared, organized and handled throughout the process; she expressed her appreciation for all of the efforts put forth to make that happen; Chair Serpa echoed those thanks.

DISCUSSION ENSUED THEREON, UPON A MOTION DULY MADE BY ARTHUR SMADBECK AND SECONDED BY MARGARET E. SERPA, THE SELECTBOARD MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:06 PM.

DISCUSSION ENSUED THEREON, UPON A MOTION DULY MADE BY LESLIE BAYNES AND SECONDED BY JULIA TARKA, THE FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted;

James Hagerty, Town Administrator

Teresa Kruszewski, Recorder