

TOWN OF EDGARTOWN
FY25 Joint Meetings of Financial Advisory Committee and the Selectboard
Thursday, February 1, 2024 – 4:00 PM
ZOOM MEETING

IN ATTENDANCE:

FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FINCOM)

Donna Lowell-Bettencourt – Chair, Leslie Baynes – Assistant Chair (AC), Nedine Cunningham, Kelly McCracken, John O’Hara, Paul Pertile, Julia Tarka

SELECTBOARD (SB)

Arthur Smadbeck – Chair, Margaret E. Serpa

OTHERS:

James Hagerty – Town Administrator (TA)

AC Leslie Baynes called the FINCOM meeting to order at 4:00 PM.
Chair Arthur Smadbeck called the SB meeting to order at 4:00 PM.
(Recorder’s Note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity).

CITIZEN PETITIONS: None.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING:

TA James Hagerty reviewed the [tentative] articles; he said they were not finalized at this point and did not expect a vote.

REVIEW SUBMISSIONS:

TA Hagerty screen shared the *2024 FY25 Edgartown Operating Budget/FY23 COLA Scenarios* and reviewed each line explaining any updates, recommendations and/or estimates; Total Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2025 without the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), would increase 4.8 %; with the COLA the increase would be 6.3%. He said the final numbers would be available for the February 20, 2024 meeting; he didn’t expect a major change.

Julia Tarka said she continued to think the Martha’s Vineyard Commission (MVC) was given a great deal of money and thought the Town should get more in return; AC Baynes suggested methods on how to work with the MVC more effectively.

*JOHN O’HARA MOVED TO APPROVE THE OPERATING BUDGET AS PRESENTED WITH POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS AS DESCRIBED BY TA JAMES HAGERTY. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DONNA LOWELL-BETTENCOURT. THE COMMITTEE VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION:
7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSTENTIONS.*

MR. BAYNES—AYE,

MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE,

MR. O’HARA—AYE,

MR. PERTILE—AYE,

MS. TARKA—AYE,

MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE,

*ABSTAINING FROM THE SCHOOL BUDGET LINES AND THE CORE PROGRAM
AND MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE,*

ABSTAINING FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

VOTE ON BUDGET/ARTICLES:

TA Hagerty screen shared the Non Financial Appropriation Articles; he said the FINCOM should focus on Highway Chapter 90, Short Term Rental (STR) tax to 6% , Parks Revolving Fund to \$500,000.00 and 25% STR tax to Stabilization. TA Hagerty recommended a separate vote for each.

JULIA TARKA MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE CHAPTER 90 REIMBURSABLE MONEY FROM THE STATE. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DONNA LOWELL-BETTENCOURT. THE COMMITTEE VOTED UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MR. BAYNES—AYE, MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE, MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE, MR. O'HARA—AYE, MR. PERTILE—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE.

PAUL PERTILE MOVED TO RECOMMEND ALLOWING THE PARKS DEPARTMENT TO SPEND UP TO \$500,000.00 IN THEIR REVOLVING FUND FOR FY25. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY JULIA TARKA. THE COMMITTEE VOTED UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MR. BAYNES—AYE, MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE, MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE, MR. O'HARA—AYE, MR. PERTILE—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE.

JOHN O'HARA MOVED TO RECOMMEND EXTENDING THE AMERESCO SOLAR FIELD CONTRACT FROM 20 TO 25 YEARS. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY JULIA TARKA. THE COMMITTEE VOTED UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MR. BAYNES—AYE, MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE, MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE, MR. O'HARA—AYE, MR. PERTILE—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE.

DONNA LOWELL-BETTENCOURT MOVED TO RECOMMEND ALLOWING A REVENUE SOURCE TO GO INTO A STABILIZATION FUND AND TAKING 25% OF THE SHORT TERM RENTAL/HOTEL-MOTEL TAX INTO A STABILIZATION FUND. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY JULIA TARKA. THE COMMITTEE VOTED UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MR. BAYNES—AYE, MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE, MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE, MR. O'HARA—AYE, MR. PERTILE—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE.

A lengthy discussion ensued for the proposed 2% increase for STR tax; how this compared with the Land Bank 2%; when to begin the tax increase; stabilization fund recommendations and language for the article/s. TA Hagerty said he didn't agree with raising the STR tax from 4% to 6%, that there should be a cause and effect when doing this. TA Hagerty said he was still trying to figure out what the statutory language for this % increase should be, and how to write the article.

PAUL PERTILE MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE SHORT TERM RENTAL TAX INCREASE FROM 4% TO 6% AND COMBINING THIS INTO ONE ARTICLE AND THAT IT SHOULD GO INTO EFFECT JANUARY 1, 2025. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DONNA LOWELL-BETTENCOURT.

MR. PERTILE AND MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT ACCEPTED THE FRIENDLY AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION AS FOLLOWS:

PAUL PERTILE MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE SHORT TERM RENTAL TAX INCREASE FROM 4% TO 6% AND THAT IT SHOULD GO INTO EFFECT JANUARY 1, 2025 AND THAT IT WOULD BE WRITTEN AS TWO SEPARATE ARTICLES. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DONNA LOWELL-BETTENCOURT. THE COMMITTEE VOTED UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MR. BAYNES—AYE, MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE, MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE, MR. O'HARA—AYE, MR. PERTILE—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE.

DONNA LOWELL-BETTENCOURT MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE PERSONNEL BOARD ARTICLES AS PRESENTED. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY JOHN O'HARA. THE COMMITTEE VOTED UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MR. BAYNES—AYE,

*MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE, MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE,
MR. O'HARA—AYE, MR. PERTILE—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE.*

TA Hagerty screen shared the *FY25 Edgartown Budget Articles 31 Jan 2024 - TA Recommend* and presented his recommended changes. AC Baynes reviewed the Excel spreadsheet line by line and asked Members to PASS on those that required more discussion. Lines 4, 13, 25, 28, 29, 39 and 44 were passed on. Members asked for clarification and discussed options for the requests, condition of equipment and vehicles, setting priorities and what was a higher value to the Town.

JULIA TARKA MOVED TO INCLUDE \$21,705.00 FOR THE CUTTER IN THE WARRANT ARTICLES BEING REQUESTED FROM FREE CASH. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY NEDINE CUNNINGHAM. THE COMMITTEE VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSTENTIONS. MR. BAYNES—AYE, MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE, MR. O'HARA—AYE, MR. PERTILE—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE. MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—ABSTAINED.

*JULIA TARKA MOVED TO REDUCE THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE REQUEST OF \$160,000.00 TO \$0.00. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY KELLY MCCRAKEN. THE MOTION FAILED: 2 AYES, 4 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE.
MR. BAYNES—NAY, MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—NAY, MS. CUNNINGHAM—NAY & MR. PERTILE—NAY.*

*JULIA TARKA MOVED TO INCLUDE \$85,578.00 FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE 2011 SUV IN THE WARRANT ARTICLES BEING REQUESTED FROM FREE CASH. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY NEDINE CUNNINGHAM. THE MOTION FAILED: 2 AYES, 4 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.
MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE.
MR. BAYNES—NAY, MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—NAY, MS. MCCRACKEN—NAY & MR. PERTILE—NAY.*

*JULIA TARKA MOVED TO CHANGE THE LIBRARY LANDSCAPING REQUEST FROM FREE CASH, FROM \$300,000.00 TO \$200,000.00. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY KELLY MCCRACKEN. THE COMMITTEE VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 4 AYES, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.
MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE, MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE, MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE & MS. TARKA—AYE. MR. BAYNES—NAY & MR. PERTILE—NAY.*

DONNA LOWELL-BETTENCOURT MOVED TO RECOMMEND ALL OF THE WARRANT ARTICLES THAT WERE NOT VOTED ON INDIVIDUALLY. SAID MOTION WAS SECONDED BY JULIA TARKA. THE COMMITTEE VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSTENTIONS.

MR. BAYNES—AYE,

MS. LOWELL-BETTENCOURT—AYE,

MS. MCCRACKEN—AYE,

MR. PERTILE—AYE,

MS. TARKA—AYE AND

MS. CUNNINGHAM—AYE,

ABSTAINING FROM THE CORE PROGRAM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

TA Hagerty asked for the correct semantics when writing the language for the FINCOM recommendations/motions; Members discussed/debated the best way to write the recommendations. Nothing was decided. Review of the article language would be at the next meeting.

★ The next FINCOM meeting was scheduled on February 20, 2024 at 4:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT:

TA Hagerty thanked everyone for the participation in the process - he said this was the best attendance he had seen. Chair Lowell-Bettencourt thanked TA Hagerty for the way everything was prepared, organized and handled throughout; she expressed her appreciation for the addition of the Cover Letters, it made the process that much easier. She thanked Members for their attendance, commitment and dedication for the process. AC Baynes expressed his thanks to all. Chair Smadbeck said working with this FINCOM was a pleasure, everyone was so engaged and helpful with the process. He thanked TA Hagerty for the information that was provided for this process and throughout the year.

DISCUSSION ENSUED THEREON, UPON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MARGARET E. SERPA AND SECONDED BY ARTHUR SMADBECK, THE SELECTBOARD MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:32 PM.

DISCUSSION ENSUED THEREON, UPON A MOTION DULY MADE BY JULIA TARKA AND SECONDED BY DONNA LOWELL-BETTENCOURT, THE FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted;

James Hagerty, Town Administrator

Teresa Kruszewski, Recorder