

TOWN OF EDGARTOWN
FY25 Joint Meetings of Financial Advisory Committee and the Selectboard
Tuesday, January 16, 2024 – 4:00 PM
ZOOM MEETING

IN ATTENDANCE:

FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FINCOM)

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

SELECTBOARD (SB)

Arthur Smadbeck – Chair, Margaret E. Serpa

OTHERS:

James Hagerty – Town Administrator (TA), Allan DeBettencourt – Highway Superintendent, Charles J. Blair, Jr. – Harbormaster, William Burke – Wastewater/Facilities Manager

**Members that arrived later or left early*

Chair Donna Lowell-Bettencourt called the FINCOM meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

Chair Arthur Smadbeck called the SB meeting to order at 4:01 PM.

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

Documents on file as referred to during the meeting:

- *FY25 Edgartown Budget Book.pdf*
- *FY25 Recommended Warrant Articles*
- *FY25 Capital Programs Rankings*

TA James Hagerty screen shared the appropriate pages as each agenda item was presented/reviewed.

SELECTBOARD / TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

Chair Lowell-Bettencourt thanked TA Hagerty for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Budget Books. Digital copies had been shared with Members, hard copies were available at Town Hall.

TA James Hagerty reviewed the content in the Book. He indicated there was one new item – a cover letter would be written to justify any department budget with a request over 2.5%.

TA Hagerty described the \$2000.00 incentive [performance based] bonus for every financial officer - this was the first year for this bonus. It was put in place to streamline the processes of setting the tax rate and mailing of tax bills by December 31 to ensure the Town hit the various deadlines set forth by the State.

TA Hagerty reviewed the budget increase requests were as follows:

- Legal: \$50,000.00
- Employee Benefits: Place holder of 5.00% (Blue Cross/Blue Shield)
- Insurance: \$25,000.00 (Place holder of 4.55%)
- All others: No change.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT:

Allan DeBettencourt said he supplied a cover letter explaining the overall Operating Budget increase of 2.5%. He indicated the increase was in the gas and oil line, as there was a deficit upwards of \$8000.00 last year.

TA Hagerty said the Trees budget had one change: line S&W Forest Fire Control-Emergency was added to the Fire Department budget.

Mr. DeBettencourt reviewed his list of Warrant Articles. Margaret Serpa asked about the lack of lighting/the lanterns at Memorial Wharf. Mr. DeBettencourt said the lantern posts (special build) were built with the wrong dimensions; he was working with Charles J. Blair, Jr. / Harbormaster and Juliet Mulinare / Beautification Committee Member, to resolve the issues before the summer season.

John O’Hara asked if there were revenues to offset the equipment costs, to get to a balanced budget. TA Hagerty explained the allocation process - there was one pot of money that gets allocated fairly based on the overall objectives of the Town.

AC Leslie Baynes asked for an update on the dumptruck; Mr. DeBettencourt said this was a two year build due to limited supply of materials/parts; he said he hoped that a truck would arrive within the next year.

TA Hagerty said there was an upcoming meeting to discuss the needed repairs [and associated costs] at South Beach due to storm damage; more information was to come based on the outcome of that meeting.

HARBORMASTER:

Charles J. Blair, Jr said the budget was flat; the only major increase was insurance. The Deputy Harbormaster position remained open; they were updating the job description and continued to advertise the opening. He reviewed his Warrant Articles; there were no questions.

AIRFIELD COMMISSION:

TA Hagerty said the budget was level from the previous year.

WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT:

William Burke said they kept the Operating Budget below 2.5%; he indicated there were still some open positions in the department. He explained the first Warrant Article as follows:

The Town Wastewater Commissioners spoke with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection about nitrogen regulations. The Island was exempted from those nitrogen regulations - the two year moratorium was soon coming to an end. The Commissioners did not want to lose momentum and to therefore move forward with the project of design/development in the Sengekontacket area for three zones. The Commissioners felt this area needed to be sewerred; this would be a good chunk of it, a substantial step. The Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP) would be completed in April 2024; the results would help guide the process.

Chair Smadbeck asked where the new facility would be built to service the Sengekontacket Watershed? Mr. Burke said the existing facility would be used; he explained some specifics and logistics of the process as well as the anticipated costs and offsets for those costs.

TA Hagerty challenged this step and recommended delaying until the results of the CWMP were available; not to do this piecemeal. Mr. Burke indicated this was a long process; shovels would not be in the ground for a few years.

Mr. Burke explained his remaining Warrant Articles; there were no additional questions.

- ★ The next meeting was scheduled on Wednesday, January 17, 2024 at 4:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT:

DISCUSSION ENSUED THEREON, UPON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MARGARET E. SERPA AND SECONDED BY ARTHUR SMADBECK , THE SELECTBOARD MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:00 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 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted;

James Hagerty, Town Administrator

Teresa Kruszewski, Recorder