

TOWN OF EDGARTOWN  
**FY25 Joint Meetings of Financial Advisory Committee and the Selectboard**  
Wednesday, January 17, 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), William Chapman – Water Department/Superintendent, Connor Downing – Health Agent, Don Hatch – Martha’s Vineyard Refuse District (MVRD) Manager, Juliet Mulinare – Beautification Committee Member, Glenn Searle – Parks Commission Member, Jessica McGroarty – Parks/Cemetery Administrator, Richard A. Kelly – Parks Commission Member, Jane Varkonda – Conservation Agent, Kara Shemeth – Conservation Assistant, Reade Kontje Milne – Building/Zoning Inspector, James Robinson – Human Resources Director

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).*

***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.

**WATER DEPARTMENT:**

William Chapman said as is standard practice, the proposed Operating Budget and articles were reviewed and approved by the Board of Water Commissioners. The overall budget increase was 2.21% as salary and wages went down due to staffing changes. Mr. Chapman presented five Warrant Articles; there were no questions.

TA Hagerty explained how debt and revenue was calculated for the Water Department and how that offset the Warrant Articles.

**BOARD OF HEALTH / REFUSE DISTRICT:**

Connor Downing said the salaries and wages went down due to staffing changes; he asked for an increase in training fees. AC Baynes welcomed Mr. Downing and wished him the best of luck.

Don Hatch said this was the busiest winter he had experienced; he said tonnage and revenue was up. He explained steps the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) could take [in the future] for per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other items that would impact waste and removal of [hazardous] materials from the Island. Mr. Hatch explained how the Refuse District functioned and the makeup of the Board of Directors.

**BEAUTIFICATION / CHRISTMAS COMMITTEE:**

Juliet Mulinare said the overall Beautification budget increased by 7.79% (or \$3000.00) due to price increases across the board. She explained the one Warrant Article, a request for Cannonball Park. Julia Tarka asked how grants would impact the project? Ms. Mulinare said a \$25,000.00 grant would enable the project to happen without phases, otherwise the project would be completed in phases. Other discussion included adding parking spaces and other improvement ideas for the area.

Ms. Mulinare said the overall Christmas budget increased by 12.22% (or \$6000.00) due to the need to hire a new electrician; this was bumped up in anticipation of a new contractor. Glenn Searle reviewed the two Warrant Articles; there were no questions.

**DREDGE:**

Ms. Mulinare said the Operating Budget was level funded; she reviewed the two Warrant Articles. Members discussed where the Town stored sand for nourishment - Ms. Mulinare said she was open to suggestions for potential sand storage locations.

#### **CEMETERY / PARKS DEPARTMENT:**

Jessica McGroarty said there was an increase in the Cemeteries budget - the Utilities/Electric line went up 88% (or \$132.40). There were no Warrant Articles.

Ms. McGroarty said the Parks Department salaries budget was over 2.5% due to the recommendations by the Personnel Board to increase seasonal wages by 10%; this was in anticipation of that approval. The proposed increase for expenses was driven by the cost of fuel, 2.5% (or \$2670.00). Ms. McGroarty reviewed the four Warrant Articles; Chair Donna Lowell-Bettencourt recommended having design plans for the Recreation Area at Town Meeting.

Ms. McGroarty said they had a better grasp on how to budget for Norton Point this year; she indicated one of the biggest expenses was with the Audubon contract.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

- ❖ Reimbursement for the work that needed to be completed at South Beach.
  - TA Hagerty said discussions were underway [for funding] to open the beach in time for the season.
- ❖ The use of the Revolving Fund.
  - The County gets 20% of all revenue.
- ❖ The needed positions to successfully run Norton Point.
- ❖ Expense to hire The Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management, an outside group to review how to run an efficient Parks/Recreation/Beach Department, to establish best practices for organizational structure.

#### **CONSERVATION COMMITTEE:**

Jane Varkonda said the budget reflected increased hours for Kara Shemeth; Ms. Varkonda indicated she would like to retire within the next two years and felt Ms. Shemeth was working toward stepping into that role, when the time came.

Ms. Varkonda reviewed the three Warrant Articles. TA Hagerty questioned the annual lease for the Mini-Park owned by the Hall Family and the pros/cons to continue - the rate had continued to increase and the Town did all the maintenance, etc; Margaret E. Serpa provided the background details on how this all came to be.

AC Baynes suggested a more in depth discussion should happen at the end of this series of meetings/the budget process, to determine next steps. Ms. Shemeth would forward to TA Hagerty her spreadsheet of the rental history. She said since 2015, the Town has been a 'tenant at will'.

#### **BUILDING INSPECTOR:**

Reade Kontje Milne said the Operating Budget was the same as last year; the salary lines reflected step increases. There were no Warrant Articles.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES / PERSONNEL BOARD:**

James Robinson said the budget had decreased due to a reduction in salaries. TA Hagerty reviewed the Warrant Articles; John O'Hara suggested being more broad with the policy language so that it wouldn't be rejected at Town Meeting; TA Hagerty would share the language with Members for their review.

- ★ The next meeting was scheduled on Thursday, January 18, 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 5:16 PM.*

*DISCUSSION ENSUED THEREON, UPON A MOTION DULY MADE BY DONNA LOWELL-BETTENCOURT AND SECONDED BY JOHN O'HARA, THE FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:16 PM.*

Respectfully submitted;

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James Hagerty, Town Administrator

*Teresa Kruszewski, Recorder*