

TOWN OF EDGARTOWN  
**FY25 Joint Meetings of Financial Advisory Committee and the Selectboard**

Wednesday, January 31, 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, Kelly McCracken, John O’Hara, Paul Pertile, Julia Tarka

**SELECTBOARD (SB)**

Arthur Smadbeck – Chair, Margaret E. Serpa

**OTHERS:**

James Hagerty – Town Administrator (TA), Dr. Shelley Einbinder – Principal, Edgartown School

*MARTHA’S VINEYARD REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (MVRHS):*

Principal – Sara Dingley, Finance Director – Suzanne Cioffi

*SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE:*

Superintendent – Richard M. Smith, Ed.D., Asst. Superintendent of Operations, Facilities & School Projects – John Stevens, School Business Administrator – Mark Friedman, Director of Student Support Services – Hope MacLeod, Executive Director/Adult and Community Education (ACE) MV – Alexandra Bullen Coutts

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

Chair Arthur Smadbeck called the SB meeting to order at 4:00 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*

**EDGARTOWN SCHOOL:**

Principal Dr. Shelley Einbinder gave a brief recap as Mark Friedman screen shared the budget that had been approved by the School Committee on January 8, 2024; the overall increase was 7.18 %. She said the increase came from Shared Services and the added staff as follows: a Kindergarten Teacher, a Kindergarten Education Support Professional (ESP), a Food Service Worker and a Custodian.

- Paul Pertile asked if there had been three kindergartens in the past? John Stevens said there had been on and off. Principal Einbinder updated Members on the progress of Phase I of the Outdoor Campus Learning Project; she said there would be Community Forums in the future and the hopes of holding a ribbon cutting ceremony for Phase I in the fall; the requested amount this year was in support of Phase II.

- Julia Tarka asked if the concerns outlined in the email that was circulating would have an impact on the budget, when addressed at the School Committee meeting tomorrow? Superintendent Richard M. Smith said he did not expect any financial considerations as the issues in the email were focused on discipline and communication concerns.

**MVRHS:**

Principal Sara Dingley screen shared her presentation and said the MVRHS Budget For Fiscal Year 2025 was:

- \$22,303,128.51 Assessed Budget (3.28% Increase)
- \$26,568,042.41 Total Operating Expenses (5.85% Increase)

Principal Dingley outlined how the anticipated revenue and grant funding would be spent (once received) on positions that were needed in support of the student population. Principal Dingley said she would share her presentation with Chair Lowell-Bettencourt so that FINCOM Members would be able to review.

**DISCUSSION:**

- ❖ Mr. Pertile asked for an enrollment breakdown over the last few years 2023/2024 and the anticipated numbers for 2025.
  - Principal Dingley said the numbers were up from 2021/22 but believed they have flattened out from last year to this year.
- ❖ Kelly McCracken asked how many staff members funded by grants were now part of the regular budget?

- Principal Dingley said partial positions were being requested to roll into the operating budget.
- ❖ Ms. McCracken asked for the number and breakdown of Administrators, and how those positions changed over the years.
  - Chair Lowell-Bettencourt asked Principal Dingley to provide a listing of administrative positions (not names) and how they have changed over the last few years.
- ❖ TA James Hagerty and Mr. Friedman discussed the timing of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) feasibility process.
  - Mr. Friedman said he believed the conversations for building proposals and financing would be sometime after FY26.
- ❖ TA Hagerty asked about buses and the tentative placeholder for a Warrant Article.
  - Mr. Friedman reviewed the updated guidance from the Department of Revenue, and that towns would not be involved in the approval process; that item could be removed.
  - Mr. Friedman said they were looking at Federal Funding for any new electric buses.
- ❖ TA Hagerty asked when the budget would be certified.
  - Mr. Friedman explained he was working with Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary (DESE); Mr. Friedman said he didn't have a firm timeline at this point, but that DESE understood the urgency.
- ❖ Ms. McCracken asked for clarification of line 221, Bus Administrator.
  - Suzanne Cioffi explained that line items had been adjusted to be more in line/appropriate.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE (Adult Education):**

Superintendent Smith screen shared the budget summary. He said the overall Shared Programs budget increase was \$1,183,368.00; he acknowledged the increase was incredibly large. He explained the increases were due to the following:

- Contractual obligations
- Personnel increases for Project Headway Classrooms and Bridge/Compass ESPs
- Program expenses and supplies
- Hiring into a Human Resources position

Julia Tarka asked if Project Headway turned children away, or if there was a wait list?

Hope MacLeod explained what was mandated to provide and the limitations as set by the State; she said there had been an increase in numbers both on Island and across the country (based on her research).

She said they were thinking creatively this year to provide services. Superintendent Smith indicated they were looking for additional sites as well.

Ms. Tarka said right now it sounded like they were able to serve the whole population they needed to serve, and additional teachers would help to continue to be able to do that.

Alexandra Bullen Coutts introduced herself and said this was her first year; she said the budget request for ACE MV was the same, there wasn't a change.

**OTHER:**

TA Hagerty reviewed what he would prepare for the meeting tomorrow and outlined the topics of review.

Chair Lowell-Bettencourt thanked TA Hagerty and his staff for pulling together all the information for the Mini-Park/Hall property so quickly - she indicated that it would be revisited in the future. She thanked everyone for attending all of the meetings during this budget process; she felt they were in great shape for the meeting tomorrow.

- ★ The next meeting was scheduled on Thursday, February 1, 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 JULIA TARKA AND SECONDED BY PAUL PERTILE, THE FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:00 PM.*

Respectfully submitted;

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James Hagerty, Town Administrator

*Teresa Kruszewski, Recorder*