

Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee
7:00PM, Wednesday, June 4, 2025
Emergency Services Facility

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Present: Chair – Nancy Gilfoy, Louise Clough, Ruth Konigsberg,
Alex Meleney, Rachel Orr, Louis Pashman, Allan Rogers,

Others: Recorder Marni Lipke,

* TFC members late arrivals, early departures or absences.

Call Meeting to Order

- The Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom or TFC) was called to order at 7:02PM.

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

Election of Officers

- The FinCom commended and thanked Chair Nancy Gilfoy. It was also noted that her continuation would facilitate new Town Administrator Joe LaCivita's first year. Nancy Gilfoy asked members to consider succession planning.
- The FinCom looked to Rachel Orr as a possible future Chair however she worked full time.
- ALEX MELENEY NOMINATED NANCY GILFOY AS CHAIR; LOUISE CLOUGH, RUTH KONIGSBERG AND RACHEL ORR SECONDED; NANCY GILFOY ACCEPTED THE NOMINATION;
- ALEX MELENEY NOMINATED LOUISE CLOUGH AND RACHEL ORR AS VICE CHAIRS; RUTH KONIGSBERG SECONDED; LOUISE CLOUGH AND RACHEL ORR ACCEPTED THE NOMINATION;
- NOMINATIONS WERE CLOSED;
- NOMINATIONS PASSED UNANIMOUSLY; 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

Reserve Fund Request – Tisbury Select Board (TSB)

(See documents on file, & 4/10/24 Minutes p.2, & 5/14/25 Notes p.1.)

- Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) and FY26 Reserve Fund increases were turning out to be necessary financial measures. The balance after this meeting's votes would be \$26,973.
- Replacement of work stations and a unified network were the first step in cyber-security, closely followed by staff training and security software.
- RACHEL ORR MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE TRANSFER OF \$100,000 FROM THE RESERVE FUND TO COVER CYBER-SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS; LOUISE CLOUGH SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY; 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

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Reserve Fund Request – Finance Director

(See documents on file, & 5/14/25 Notes p.2.)

- *ALLAN ROGERS MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE TRANSFER OF \$16,860 FROM THE RESERVE FUND TO COVER A FRAUDULENT BANK TRANSFER DUE TO A CYBER-SECURITY BREACH; RACHEL ORR SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Authorize Year-End Interdepartmental Transfers

(See documents on file, & below: Actions, & 5/1/19 Minutes p.2 #4.)

- The 2016 amendment to the Law eliminated transfer amount restrictions.
- *RACHEL ORR MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN ACCOUNTANT AND TREASURER/FINANCE DIRECTOR TO MAKE FISCAL YEAR 2025 INTERDEPARTMENTAL AND LINE ITEM TRANSFERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAW, CHAPTER 44 SECTION 33 B; ALLAN ROGERS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) Building Project Discussion

(See documents on file, & 5/14/25 Minutes p.2-3.)

- Tisbury Select Board (TSB) Chair John Cahill, Mr. LaCivita, Chair Nancy Gilfoy, Rick Homans, MVRHS Building Committee Tisbury representatives Sally Rizzo, Becca ElDeiry and Michael Watts, met and discussed the Town's financial status and concerns. The TSB had a robust discussion challenging the FinCom's information so no letter was sent to the Building Committee or Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA).
 - Becca ElDeiry voluntarily resigned so that Nancy Gilfoy could be appointed as a Tisbury representative to the Building Committee.
 - There was some confusion over June 2025 representation on the MVRHS School Committee (MVRHSSC) and Building Committee as former MVRHSSC and Building Committee representative (and Tisbury School Committee (TSC) member) Michael Watts lost re-election, but was voted to continue temporarily. Yesterday's TSC meeting was canceled at the last minute.
- At its June 3rd meeting, the Building Com. voted Renovation/Addition as the preferred option to be sent to the MVSB, with 2 nay votes—Nancy Gilfoy voting solely in Tisbury's interest, and Skipper Manter—who almost always voted nay.
 - The Committee was concerned that a straight renovation did not address MVSB application (or Statement of Interest—SOI) parameters and so might be ineligible for funding.

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- The excellent Tappé Architects' estimates carried 2 large contingencies to account for inflation and possible tariff impacts.
- \$33,000,000 was saved by pulling out all landscaping except site work. The fields were declared in good shape, the track and tennis courts would be eligible for reimbursement after being used as construction staging areas.
- The meeting was attended by 5 of the 6 Town Administrators. Nancy Gilfoy spoke about Tisbury's concerns and Mr. LaCivita asked excellent questions for a fresh perspective.
- The commercial construction market had bottomed, for good Project timing.
 - Since the MVRHSD would be the borrower, the debt would not show on Tisbury books. Debt payment would be apportioned by previously agreed formula (30% real estate value/70% enrollment). However, Tisbury's fewer properties and low median income would disproportionately impact its taxpayers. Payments on a \$250,000,000 bond at 4.5% allocated equally Islandwide, would impact tax bills 43¢ per \$1,000 value, while Tisbury's current impact would be 80¢ per \$1,000.
 - The FinCom discussed its role and status to:
 - educate (concerns were reported across the Island and from all Town Halls);
 - consider other tax issues: residential exemption, tax rate, etc.
 - consider renegotiating, while proceeding with MSBA process—breaking ground in 2027/28;
 - advocacy with State legislative representatives.

Appointments (See below: Actions.)

Capital Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC)

- Abbe Burt resigned as the at-large member (see 2/28/24 Minutes p. 6).
- In conversation with Nancy Gilfoy and CPAC Chair Alex Meleney, Mr. LaCivita stressed capital planning as part of his job description along with authority over department compliance. He suggested CPAC be disbanded as redundant, in favor of a FinCom sub-group or subcommittee working directly with him.
 - Alex Meleney confirmed the CPAC's frustration over lack of attendance and non-compliance. The FinCom remembered gaps in Finance Director Jon Snyder's capital planning reports also due to lack of department cooperation.
 - lack of planning generated comments at Annual Town Meeting (ATM).
 - There was a brief discussion on a Department of Public Works (DPW) policy shift from budgeted maintenance costs to warrant article funding.
- *ALLAN ROGERS MOVED TO APPOINT ALEX MELENEY AS FINANCE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CAPITAL PLANNING AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE OR FINCOM CAPITAL PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE OR WHATEVER*

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FORM IT BECOMES; LOUISE CLOUGH AND RACHEL ORR SECONDED;
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

Sewer Advisory Committee

- Current representative Louise Pashman reported this was only a flow monitoring body, without the need for FinCom involvement. Others emphasized it was an important Town growth factor affecting commercial properties and development. Additionally, the Sewer Enterprise Budget was struggling to be self-sustaining (see Minutes: 3/13/24 p.4, & 2/5/25 p.1-2).
- The appointment could be a non-FinCom member and John Best had volunteered. He was an experienced former Sewer Advisory member with long historical and institutional knowledge.
- **RACHEL ORR MOVED TO APPOINT JOHN BEST AS FINANCE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE SEWER ADVISORY COMMITTEE; ALEX MELENEY SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

Embarkation Committee

- **ALEX MELENEY MOVED TO APPOINT ALLAN ROGERS TO CONTINUE AS FINANCE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE EMBARKATION COMMITTEE; RACHEL ORR SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

Water Resources Committee

- Ruth Konigsberg was interested in this Committee but it conflicted with her new work hours. (The FinCom congratulated her on being hired as the new Chilmark Library Director) Rachel Orr was interested in all Town topics and inter-relations and attended presentations.
- **ALEX MELENEY MOVED TO APPOINT NANCY GILFOY TO CONTINUE AS FINANCE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE; RACHEL ORR AND ALLAN ROGERS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

Approve Minutes 4/16/25, 5/14/25

- **ALLAN ROGERS MOVED TO:**
 - **APPROVE THE APRIL 16, 2025 MINUTES, AND**
 - **ACKNOWLEDGE THE MAY 14, 2025 NOTES;**
- **RACHEL ORR SECONDED: MOTION PASSED 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, ABSTENTIONS AS ABSENT.**

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Committee Reports

Seasonal Communities (See below: Actions & Minutes: 3/26/25 p.6 & 4/16/25 p.1-2.) In discussions to clarify and implement the law the Seasonal Communities Advisory Council seemed to be removing or conditioning some of its more useful tools (Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) regulation, substandard lot septic requirements, municipal employee housing, tiny house waivers, etc.). The FinCom emphasized earlier concerns about an unfinished Law, and requested a report from and discussion with Representative Laura Silbur before final Advisory Council actions.

Tisbury School Committee (TSC) meeting was canceled (see above p.2).

Planning Board – Ruth Konigsberg volunteered to partner with Rachel Orr as Planning Board liaison.

Water Resources (see below: Meetings/Events) The Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP) was a 20 yr. adaptive plan to reduce nitrogen loading in Tashmoo and Lagoon Ponds, to be reviewed and updated every 5 years. The Board of Health (BOH) already required Innovative/Alternate (IA) system in all new construction and/or property transfers.

- The FinCom discussed the cost of IA systems, especially for those not qualifying for loans and/or grants. Solutions included:

- Cape & Islands Watershed Loan Program from dedicated 2.5% extra lodging/short-term rental tax,
- Cape Cod Commission loan program,
- tax rebates for betterment,
- 50% owner/50% Town payment.

The Tisbury Select Board (TSB) was discussing hiring the same consulting firm that helped with the Town Administrator search, to find a new Finance Director (see 1/8/25 Minutes p.4).

Embarkation – The Legislation (see 10/13/22 Minutes) was mired in the Joint Committee on Revenue.

Future Meetings (See below: Actions, & Meeting/Events.)

- The FinCom was interested in Mr. LaCivita's budget cycle protocol.
- Increasing revenues was another priority: enforcing Park & Ride payment, considering parking meters and updating fees. Assignments were:
 - Ambulance – Louis Pashman,
 - Animal Control – Ruth Konigsberg,
 - Board of Health – Ruth Konigsberg,
 - Building and other inspectors – Russ Hartenstine,

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- DPW (Parks & Rec, & LDO) – Allan Rogers,
- Fire – Russ Hartenstine,
- Harbor/Shellfish – Alex Meleney (new Harbormaster Michael Gately),
- Planning Board – Rachel Orr,
- Police – Louise Clough,
- Town Clerk – Nancy Gilfoy,
- TSB (food/liquor licenses) – Rachel Orr,
- ZBA/ConCom – Nancy Gilfoy.

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair – None

Adjournment

• *ALEX MELENEY MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:51PM; ALLAN ROGERS AND RACHEL ORR SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Appendix A: Meetings/Events

- Final CWMP presentation – 6:00PM, Tuesday, June 17, 2025 – ESF
- **TFC – 6:30PM, Wednesday, July 9, 2025 – In-person TBD**

Appendix B: Actions

Nancy – request report detailing end-of-year transfers from Jon Snyder.

Nancy – ask John Best to report to the FinCom on Sewer Advisory issues.

Nancy – ask the TSB to review and change sewer rates.

Nancy – ask Laura Silbur to attend a meeting to report & get feedback on Seasonal Community Advisory Council actions.

Rachel/Ruth – contact Amy Upton & Casey Hayward re: Planning Bd. meeting/agenda notification.

Alex – keep Nancy informed of CPAC agendas/meetings.

~~Ruth – set up Google.doc or spreadsheet for rate information.~~

~~All – collect 3-5 yrs of rate information & send to Ruth or enter in Google.doc.~~

All – consider FinCom Chair succession planning.

All – consider Capital Planning Subcommittee participation

All – Please remember not to hit “Reply All”.

Future Agendas – Minutes: 6/4/25,

Budget Season Notes

- Request data on how much each Department turned back in FY25.
- Request projects for grant funding.
- Request capital projects.
- Attach budget/narrative modules to agendas.

continued

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Appendix B: Actions (cont.)

- Request/demand foundational information, tax levy, free cash estimate, etc.
- Include fee revenues (offsetting expenses) in budget interviews;
- Request/demand foundational information, levy, free cash estimates, etc.
- Include fee revenues (offsetting expenses) in budget interviews;
- Ask departments to project 5 years of needs i.e. like a capital plan but on other factors—staffing, program changes, etc.

\$200,000 FY25 Reserve Fund spending tally – Balance: \$26,973.16

- 12/11/24 – Accounting - \$40,000 – Ongoing Consultants

- 3/12/25 – FinCom - \$5,000 – Purchase Services Overage

- 3/19/25 – Harbor - \$11,166.74 – Town-owned Mooring Maintenance

- 5/14/25 – TSB - \$100,000 – Cyber-security

- 5/14/25 – Finance – 16,860 – Fraudulent bank transfer

Appendix C: Documents on File

- Agenda 6/4/25
- Boston Globe editorial: Facing budget shortfalls, Mass. Towns need to get creative (5 p.) 5/18/25
- Gilfoxy email re: Inventory of fees 6/7/25
- (See 5/14/25 documents on file)
- Tisbury's Cost-Share for the MV Regional High School MSBA Project (3 p.)
- Request for Transfer from the Reserve Fund – Finance Director (2 p.) 5/2/25
- Request for Transfer from the Reserve Fund – Select Board 5/2/25
- Snyder memo re: Request for blanket authorization of interdepartmental year-end transfers 4/24/25

Nancy Gilfoxy – Chair

Date

Minutes approved 8/20/25