

Aquinnah Board of Selectmen
Minutes of Meeting 4/4/2017
Aquinnah Town Hall

Members present: Chairman Julianne Vanderhoop, Jim Newman, Gary Haley

Also present: Town Administrator Adam Wilson, Fire Chief Simon Bollin, Jay MacLeod, Michael Stutz*, Cape Light Compact Director Maggie Downey, Cape Light Compact Rep/Town Moderator Mike Hebert, DPW Director Jay Smalley, Town Clerk Carolyn Feltz, Beach Mgr Julianne VanBelle, Personnel Committee Member Alex Taylor, Superintendent Matthew D'Andria, School Budget Director Amy Tierney, High School Finance Director Mark Schroeder, Town Accountant Emily Day, FinCom Chairman Allen Rugg, FC Members Mark Foster & Tom Murphy, Assessor Member Elise Lebovit, Barbara Bassett, Margie Spitz, ACO Angela Waldron

The meeting began at 5:30 pm.

1st on the agenda under Old Business was a review of the minutes from the 3/28 meeting.

Jim made a motion to accept the minutes from March 28th, Juli seconded.

The Board voted 2 – 0 – 1(Gary) in favor. The motion passed.

-Next on the agenda was a meeting with Maggie Downey who presented a power point presentation detailing the Cape Light Compact Joint Powers Agreement. There was discussion about the benefits Aquinnah would have agreeing to the joint powers.

Jim made a motion that the Town of Aquinnah would vote, pursuant to General Laws chapter 40, section 4A ½ as follows:

That the Town of Aquinnah would join the Cape Light Jint Powers Entity (JPE);

To authorize Julianne Vanderhoop to execute the Joint Powers Agreement of the Cape Light Compact JPE subject to final review by Town Counsel;

To appoint Mike Hebert as the Town's Representative to attend Governing Board Meetings of the Cape Light Compact JPE; and to take any other action necessary or relative thereto. Gary seconded.

The Board voted 3 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

-Next on the agenda was further review of the Personnel Committee's recommended classification & compensation study. There was discussion about using other towns' pay scales as part of the study done by the Collins Center. Juli said there was a cross analysis with the other towns on the island but Aquinnah varies from being so small. There was discussion about how the classification system will affect the budget and can all the positions be closer together in scale and salary. Jay M said the PC had the chance to review a different analysis but chose not to. Alex T. said the C & C study from the Collins Center was looked at from many angles, including bringing the cost proposals down since they were very high. She said the PC did a huge amount of work towards reducing the C & C proposal proportionately to a new pay scale system that fits best for Aquinnah.

Angie said that the PC took in all info and decided to take the best route. Alex explained how the grades and scales were created using the other towns data to be more comprehensive in the final report. She said the numbers actually went down and the overall raises for everyone in the study will only rise about 3%; about average for the budget each year.

Jim made a motion to approve the new classification & compensation scale as recommended by the Personnel Committee. Gary seconded.

The Board voted 3 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

-Next on the agenda was a meeting with Carolyn Feltz and Julianne VanBelle to finalize summer plans for the parking and beach lots. Carolyn gave a report on prior year openings and closings for the big parking lot. She said they don't want to keep the beach and big parking lot open until 5. Juli said down the road there should be a

consideration of making the lot automated. There was discussion about having personnel available to make sure people park correctly and to not lose space in the lot.

The Board, by consensus, agreed to keep the lots manned only until 4.

-Carolyn then showed a rate sheet allowing for \$15 back after 1 hour and \$10 back after 2 with no refund after that. Julianne said there is discretion in charging for regulars who come at different times to make the lots user friendly.

-In discussing Philbin Beach, the board asked whether or not having a walk on pass instead of allowing anyone to walk or bike on to the beach. Julianne said walk-ons in the summer to Philbin are substantial and there is no way to verify as to whether or not the beach goers are from Aquinnah.

The Board, by consensus, said they'll take under advisement the walk-on pass idea.

-Next on the agenda was a meeting with schools officials to review the FY '18 budget assessments. Amy, Mark and Matt 1st reviewed the high school budget. There are 13 students this year at the HS, 12 last year. Amy talked about the town apportionment and what very little comes back from the state. She explained how the state does a calculation based on the municipal growth factor. Mark talked about the public meetings that have occurred beginning in September for the school budgets. Tom M asked about the cost per students from the high school = \$24,200. The regional district from the state's perspective is \$24 - \$25K per pupil. Mark said there are other funds from state grants that bring per pupil costs down somewhat for the high school. Per pupil cost is factored over a 3 year period. Jim read the different number of students attending each up island school but the numbers don't account for school choice. Aquinnah's children is 40, not 31. 9 children are school choice. Amy said the formulas are different for the up-island schools. Tom talked about how regional assessments limit the effectiveness of the FinCom in trying to find ways to save money. Matt talked about the '94 regional agreement in place by the 3 towns and how the budgets are made based on the formulas in the agreement. He said the schools are the largest employers on the island. He went through the additional hires needed for the increase in the school populations. Chilmark had no personnel changes and reductions in other budgeted line item expenses. He listed the facility improvements needed for the schools, including second phase work for heating, plumbing, etc. There was a discussion about meeting the OPEB obligation and a student going off island for a residential program and the 12% increase in health insurance. The fixed costs and residential placement drove the budget up this year. Allen asked what are the driving costs to run the schools on the island? Matt said teacher salaries are high to cover the cost of living on MV. Mark talked about ferry travel being a budget buster as well. Allen asked about school success. Matt talked about the education assessment and how the students perform. He talked about the plusses, high graduation rates 80% off to college, Ivy League. He said he thought the schools on the island "do a good job" in educating Vineyard Youth.

Allen said the \$24K per pupil cost on island, what is it off island? Mark said the high school is a "comprehensive school", providing tech education as well which also drives up the cost. Wareham per pupil is \$14 K, Nauset \$16K. He said it's mostly 16 – 20K per student on the mainland. Housing was discussed. Matt said he's seen teachers come and go but it's mostly single and young who get the experience but then find employment elsewhere. The "ability to pay" for the town was discussed. Matt said administrative positions are in line with what is needed. Impact aid was \$18K for Aquinnah last year, all of which goes back to the town. There was discussion about how much the charter schools gets for each student. Tom complimented Matt and his staff for the work they are doing. Mark Foster asked about long term trends and shedding the Chilmark School. Matt said 2,100 students are currently in the school system and that number has remained a constant each year.

-In New Business, the Board took up the request to keep the scallop season going for the month of April. Juli said the shellfish committee requested the extension. Adam read the letter from DMF that said it was okay to extend the season until the end of April. The Board, by consensus, agreed to keep Menemsha Pond open until April 30th.

-Next on the agenda was a review of the draft for the annual town meeting. Adam explained it is only a 1st draft.

-Jim asked that the override be tied in the increase in the school budgets. Barbara asked why target the schools? Jim asked if money can be put into the general stabilization fund. Adam said there was still funds available from free cash for that purpose. In the discussion about the articles for senior tax relief, Elise gave a report about the number

of seniors in town and the help they need to stay in their homes. She thinks 24 people in town would be qualified for the options if they pass at town meeting. She said other towns on the Cape have already passed a lot of these exemptions. She said she thought it all should be one article to ask the town residents if the town should generally participate in the exemptions. There was discussion about the value of homes not being part of the exemption. Elise said she talked to State Rep Dylan Fernandes about making changes. Elise thought there could be a “senior CPC” of 1 % to help offset cost of living.

-There was discussion about the CPC recommendation for funding for the baseball field at the high school.

-Jay M asked about why the elected position (Clerk) and Board (Assessors) are being asked to go from elected to appointed? Juli spoke to the issue that the Assessors needed more oversight in town hall. Jim said there’s no cooperation from the assessing board on how they supervise their employee. There was discussion about oversight. Jay said other assessing boards in other towns are elected.

-Next on the agenda was a review of the procedures involved to appoint another member to the BOA to replace for one year Assessor Darren LePort, who recently resigned. Michael Stutz asked if Ted Camman can come back on board, since he is certified. Juli explained there is a process of advertising for the position in the community 1st and then the 2 boards will have to meet together to vote for a candidate There was discussion about the Board going from elected to appointed. Jim talked about the DOR report done 10 years ago that recommended the BOA be appointed and not elected. Juli read the ad to go in the paper. Elise talked about the week she has to go to assessing school to become certified.

In Other Business, the contract for the Conway School to do a 2nd phase landscaping plan was taken under advisement until the next meeting.

In Other Business, the contract to build a beach boardwalk from the Philbin Beach P-Lot was reviewed.

Gary made a motion to approve the contract to Aquamarine Builders to build a beach boardwalk from the Philbin Parking lot for \$85,000.00. Juli seconded.

The Board voted 3 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

Juli signed the contract.

-In Other Business, the Selectmen reviewed the Buildings & Grounds Stabilization Fund.

Jim made a motion to increase the B & G Fund by 2 ½ % to \$17,830 for FY '18. Gary seconded.

The Board voted 3 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

-Juli asked if there was anything else to come before the board. Hearing none, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn.

The Board voted 3 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

-The meeting ended at 8:25 pm.