



Town of Nantucket

Finance Committee

January 27th, 2024 – Minutes

REMOTE PARTICIPATION VIA ZOOM

Staff:	Brian Turbitt; Finance Director, Susan Carmel; Assistant Finance Director, Mariya Basheva; Assistant Town Accountant, Michael Alvarez; Chief Technology Officer, Leslie Snell; Director of Planning, Kristie Ferrantella; Housing Director, Libby Gibson; Town Manager, Rick Sears; Assistant Town Manager, Gregg Tivnan; Assistant Town Manager, Andrew Patnode; DPW Director, Nancy Holmes; Town Clerk, Shantaw Bloise; Director of Culture and Tourism, Roberto Santamaria; Health Director, Jeff Carlson; Natural Resources Director, Jody Kasper; Chief of Police, Michael Cranson, Fire Chief, Chris Lowe, Solid Waster Manager
Attending Members:	Denice Kronau, Chair, Stephen Maury, Peter Schaeffer, Rob Giacchetti, Jill Vieth, Christopher Glowacki, Joseph Wright, Jeremy Bloomer
Absent Members:	Joanna Roche

Meeting Introduction and Attendance Confirmation

- Denice Kronau confirms the meeting date as Saturday, January 27, 2024, and outlines the agenda, including the script for remotely conducted meetings.
- Denice Kronau calls for approval of the agenda.
- Motion to Approve the Agenda, made by Peter, seconded by Stephen. **Roll call vote: Peter Aye, Joe Aye, Chris Aye, Rob Aye, Stephen Aye, Jill Aye, Denice Aye. Passes Unanimously.**
- Denice Kronau opens the floor for public comment, which is closed shortly after.

Review and Discussion of Fiscal Year 2025 Budgets

- Brian Turbitt introduces the review and discussion of the fiscal year 2025 general fund, enterprise funds, and special revenue funds operating budgets.
- Brian Turbitt explains the typical process of presenting budgets, including goals and initiatives, and the involvement of various departments.

Town Administration Budget Overview

- Libby Gibson provides an overview of the town administration budget, highlighting the importance of the annual operating budget and the challenges faced due to staffing modifications.
- Libby Gibson outlines the staffing structure of town administration, including the town manager, assistant town managers, operations administrator, executive assistant, public records access officer, and special projects manager.
- Libby Gibson discusses the town's goals, including employee housing, capital projects, and the transition from the current waste services agreement.
- Libby Gibson details the initiatives related to these goals, including reorganizing housing and real estate functions, hiring a project manager, and addressing solid waste activities.

Town Administration - Current Year Accomplishments and Future Plans

- Libby Gibson reviews the town's current year accomplishments, including the successful filling of department head positions and the completion of collective bargaining.
- Libby Gibson discusses the challenges of managing multiple projects and the need for a central municipal complex.
- Libby Gibson highlights the importance of civil behavior and the impact of incivility on hiring.
- Libby Gibson addresses the expense increase requests for a paralegal and a town committee coordinator, and the potential impact on the Select Board strategic plan.

Town Administration - Project Management Software and Capital Requests

- Gregg Tivnan discusses the need for a central database for project management and the potential cost of implementing a project management software.
- Libby Gibson outlines the town's capital requests, including the town-wide document management system, coastal resiliency planning, and employee housing.
- Libby Gibson emphasizes the importance of flexibility in capital requests to address changing needs and priorities.
- Rick Sears provides additional context on the employee housing project on Tacoma Way and the need for quick decision-making.

Town Administration - Questions from the Committee

- Rob Giacchetti inquires about the recurring cost of the project management software, and Gregg Tivnan explains the initial investment and ongoing subscription costs.

- Peter Schaeffer asks about the number of open positions in town, and Amanda Perry confirms there are roughly 60 positions in various stages of recruitment.
- Jill Vieth questions the town's approach to remote work and the impact on employee housing, and Libby Gibson explains the town's efforts to accommodate remote workers.
- Jill Vieth raises concerns about the town's housing initiatives and the need for clear communication with the public.

Housing Department Goals and Initiatives

- Kristie Ferrantella introduces herself as the new housing director and outlines the goals for the fiscal year 2025, including developing properties acquired by the Affordable Housing Trust.
- Kristie Ferrantella discusses the Safe Harbor project and the need to create 31 or 62 units to secure funding.
- Kristie Ferrantella highlights the importance of the local option real estate transfer fee and the ongoing efforts to pass it.
- Tucker Holland provides historical context on the 31 Fairgrounds Road project and the challenges faced due to the pandemic and rising construction costs.

Finance Department Goals and Initiatives

- Brian Turbitt outlines the goals for the finance department, including providing reliable financial statements and enhancing the capital program software.
- Brian Turbitt discusses the successful completion of the five-year revaluation and the implementation of a procurement platform.
- Brian Turbitt highlights the importance of maintaining a balanced budget in an uncertain revenue and cost environment.
- Brian Turbitt emphasizes the need for accurate data to inform management decisions and the ongoing efforts to improve financial transparency.

Human Resources Department Goals and Initiatives

- Amanda Perry introduces herself as the HR director and outlines the goals for the fiscal year 2025, including maintaining compliance with state and federal requirements and recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce.
- Amanda Perry discusses the implementation of training and development opportunities for employees and the use of technology to improve efficiencies.

- Amanda Perry highlights the importance of succession planning and the completion of contract negotiations.
- HR department is requesting funding for a module to automate form processes and track professional development initiatives.

Information Technology and GIS Department Goals and Initiatives

- Michael Alvarez introduces himself as the new Chief Technology Officer and outlines the goals for the fiscal year 2025, including providing reliable IT services and improving cybersecurity.
- Michael Alvarez discusses the implementation of the SysAid Help Desk application and the expansion of cloud-to-cloud backup for Microsoft Office 365.
- Michael Alvarez highlights the ongoing efforts to improve network infrastructure and engage town departments in cybersecurity initiatives.
- IT & GIS is requesting funding for expanding software licensing, hardware support, and technology services.

Natural Resources Department Goals and Initiatives

- Jeff Carlson outlines the goals for the Natural Resources Department, including transitioning to data-driven and science-based plans and improving communication with the public.
- Jeff Carlson discusses the importance of collecting habitat-related metrics and connecting people to the story of natural resources.
- Jeff Carlson emphasizes the need for accurate and timely data to inform management decisions and the ongoing efforts to improve data collection and analysis.
- Jeff Carlson discusses the goal of achieving the best value for money by aligning various regulations and community initiatives.
- Emphasis on improving communication of scientific information to the public for better environmental stewardship.
- Introduction of the Climate Action Plan, integrated with the statewide hazard mitigation plan.

Natural Resources Department Internal Shifts and Budget Proposals

- Jeff Carlson mentions internal shifts, including Vince Murphy's role change and new hires.
- Proposal for an education specialist with health for better water quality collaboration.

- Discussion on hiring a full-time person versus bringing in someone for material development on a one-off basis.
- Introduction of the baseline environmental data program for water quality assessments and stormwater monitoring.

Natural Resources Department Environmental Justice and Permitting Challenges

- Jeff Carlson explains the concept of environmental justice and the state's requirements for community engagement.
- Example of permitting challenges for Miacomet Pond dredging, including language barriers and application forms in multiple languages.
- Suggestion to develop an environmental justice policy to meet state grant and permit requirements.
- Denise Kronau inquires about reaching out to local organizations for support, and Jeff Carlson confirms plans to enhance collaborations.
- Christopher Glowacki asks about the status of the dredging project, and Jeff Carlson explains the permitting process and the need for permits before proceeding.

Planning and Land Use Department Overview

- Leslie Snell provides an overview of the PLUS department, its structure, and goals.
- Discussion on improving coordination and professional development for staff.
- Initiatives include improving efficiency with the Historic District Commission and filling the Deputy Director of Planning position.
- Accomplishments include maintaining timely and efficient inspection and permitting services, updating the long-range transportation plan, and receiving grants for various projects.

Town Clerk's Office Goals and Accomplishments

- Nancy Holmes outlines the goals related to the upcoming presidential election year, including training and preparing for primaries.
- Discussion on the new voter registry system and the need for additional poll pads and a ballot box.
- Accomplishments include purchasing and utilizing poll pad devices, studying for the Massachusetts municipal clerk's exam, and attending state and regional training conferences.

- Nancy Holmes requests additional funding for postage and staffing for early voting periods.

Culture and Tourism Department Goals

- Shantaw Bloise discusses the goals of supporting underfunded cultural organizations, updating the Culture and Tourism web page, and increasing social media presence.
- Plans for off-season activities within the Nantucket Cultural District, including events like Act Local Fest and Chowder Fest.
- Support for the town sustainability initiative and expanding summer children's beach programs.
- Accomplishments include creating a robust social media calendar, partnering with local nonprofits, and receiving grant funds for cultural heritage initiatives.

Health and Human Services Department Overview

- Roberto Santamaria discusses the department's goals, including expanding the public health nursing program and addressing short-term rental regulations.
- Discussion on the impact of climate change on the ecosystem and the introduction of new diseases.
- Mention of staff turnover and the updated contracts and the need of funding for the needle disposal program and weights and measures program.

Police Department Goals and Initiatives

- Jody Kasper outlines the goals of implementing changes due to the police reform act and overseeing construction projects.
- Discussion on the pursuit of impact accreditation by the Massachusetts police Accreditation Commission.
- Initiatives include the Harbor Master building project, town pier rehabilitation project, and the Loran barracks project.
- Jody Kasper mentions the need for a public safety outbuilding to store and maintain equipment and vehicles.

Fire Department Goals and Initiatives

- Michael Cranson discusses the goals of increasing the number of advanced life support certified firefighters and improving resource capabilities.
- Initiatives include offering opportunities for firefighters to attend paramedic and EMT certification programs and increasing minimum staffing levels on each shift.

- Discussion on the need for additional firefighters to keep up with the island's growth and seasonal influx.
- Michael Cranson discusses requests for funding additional firefighters, overtime, training, and capital items: new ladder truck and administrative car.

Public Works Department Goals and Accomplishments

- Drew Patnode outlines the goals of maintaining and improving public infrastructure, transitioning the stormwater program, and conducting a systematic review of DPW functions.
- Accomplishments include filling key positions, implementing recommended improvements to parks and recreational facilities, and working on a new DPW facility.
- Discussion on improving collaboration between planning and land use services and supporting the transition of the stormwater program.
- Drew Patnode requests funding for additional staff, central fleet maintenance, and capital items like vehicles and equipment.

Finance Committee Discussion on Land Bank and Debt Exclusions

- Denice Kronau and Libby Gibson discuss the limitations of spending on non-land bank properties.
- Christopher Glowacki inquires about the capital exclusions and their grouping for the ballot.
- Brian Turbitt explains the funding sources for various projects, including debt exclusions and free cash.

Staffing and Benchmarking for DPW

- Christopher Glowacki asks about benchmarking crew sizes against other communities.
- Drew Patnode explains the staffing report and the unique challenges of Nantucket's growth and land area.
- Drew Patnode mentions the use of Burlington, MA, as a comparison for staffing needs.
- Drew Patnode discusses the potential for seasonal staff and the need for additional full-time employees.

DPW - Road Improvements and Pavement Management

- Christopher Glowacki inquires about the sustainability of the \$3 million annual pavement management plan.

- Drew Patnode explains the financial feasibility and the use of new technologies to extend pavement life.
- Drew Patnode discusses the benefits of fog sealing for pavement maintenance.

DPW - Jetties Beach Tennis Courts and Pickleball Courts

- Christopher Glowacki questions the status of Jetties Beach tennis courts.
- Libby Gibson explains the ongoing assessment of concessions and their relevance.
- Libby Gibson mentions the popularity of tennis courts and the potential for revenue generation.
- Drew Patnode discusses the plan to repurpose Jetties tennis courts into four tennis courts and four pickleball courts.

Solid Waste Management and Future Plans

- Chris Lowe outlines the goals for solid waste management, including environmental leadership and sustainability.
- Chris Lowe explains the transition to new solid waste management arrangements starting in 2025.
- Chris Lowe discusses the initiatives, including waste reduction, new methods for collecting food waste, and owning solid waste management facilities.
- Chris Lowe mentions the preparation of an RFP for a competitive bidding process for solid waste management services.

Accomplishments in Solid Waste Management

- Chris Lowe highlights the accomplishments, including the hiring of a Recycling Coordinator and the management of solid waste.
- Chris Lowe provides details on the types and quantities of waste managed, including mixed excavation waste and leaf and yard waste.
- Chris Lowe discusses the development of the RFP and the preparation for the expiration of the waste service agreement.
- Chris Lowe mentions the production of Nantucket Gold compost and the first water-based paint collection.

Solid Waste Professional Services and Capital Requests

- Chris Lowe requests a new position for a TIOLI - attendant and a hook lift truck for better self-sufficiency.

- Chris Lowe discusses the increase in professional services related to the RFP and additional engineering services.
- Chris Lowe outlines the capital requests, including the purchase of the composter and the transfer station.
- Chris Lowe mentions the need to expand the landfill and the purchase of a roll-off or hook lift truck.

Questions and Clarifications on Solid Waste Management

- Peter Schaeffer inquires about the breakdown of professional services costs.
- Drew Patnode clarifies that a significant portion of the budget is for waste options.
- Joseph Wright asks about the financial assurance mechanism for the landfill closure.
- Brian Turbitt explains the standby letter of credit provided to DEP.

Our Island Home Enterprise Fund Goals and Initiatives

- Bob Eisenstein outlines the four goals for Our Island Home: reducing subsidies, improving quality measures, attracting and retaining personnel, and strengthening marketing efforts.
- Bob Eisenstein discusses the significant increase in revenue and the new therapy team contract.
- Bob Eisenstein mentions the stability of CNA staff and the plan to offer CNA certification programs.
- Bob Eisenstein highlights the new van for resident outings and the development plans for the new facility.

Our Island Home Improving Quality and Staffing Strategies

- Bob Eisenstein discusses the contract with a new physician and the nurse practitioner for behavioral and psychiatric care.
- Bob Eisenstein explains the new electronic medical record system, Point Click Care, and its benefits.
- Bob Eisenstein mentions the improvements in business office practices and billing for Medicaid.
- Bob Eisenstein outlines the overlap between initiatives and accomplishments, emphasizing the importance of documentation and reimbursement.

Closing Remarks and Adjournment

- Denice Kronau thanks everyone for participating in this meeting and asks for a motion to adjourn.
- Motion to adjourn made by Peter, seconded by Chris. **Roll call vote: Peter Aye, Joe Aye, Chris Aye, Rob Aye, Stephen Aye, Jill Aye, Denice Aye. Passes Unanimously.**