

**Chilmark Select Board Community Preservation Committee Joint November 28, 2023 5:00 PM**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Chairperson Bill Rossi, James Malkin and Marie Larsen. **Others:** Tim Carroll, Adam Petkus, Diana DeBlase, Pam Bunker, Carolyn Stoeber, Elizabeth Oliver, Adam Sloan, Stephen Lewenberg, Cathy Thompson, Julie Flanders, Jeffrey Maida, Doug Best, Billy Dillon, Steve Kass, Sarah Hughes, Jay Grossman, Allison Simon, Police Chief Slavin, Susan Murphy, News reporters: Thomas Humphreys and Daniel Greenman, and videographer for MVTV Lynn Christoffers.

At 5:00 PM Chairperson Rossi called the meeting to order in the Select Board Meeting room.

**Minutes:**

Draft minutes from Select Board meeting held November 7, 2023 were reviewed. Mr. Malkin moved to approve minutes. Ms. Larsen seconded the motion. **SO VOTED: 3 Ayes**

*With time to wait till posted hearing Chairperson Rossi took items listed later in meeting for discussion now.*

**Chilmark Library:**

Chairperson Rossi said we received memo from Library Trustees notifying us that Andrew Dubno completed the six month initial evaluation period and recommendation to make a permanent employee. Mr. Malkin moved to approve Mr. Dubno as Chilmark Library Assistant Director/Youth Services Librarian. Ms. Larsen seconded the motion. **SO VOTED: 3 Ayes**

**Discussion on Tour Vans/ taxi regulations - review Edgartown Amended regulations:**

Mr. Malkin reported that he spoke with Town legal counsel Goldsmith and reviewed the process if the town wants to move forward to ban tour vans from Menemsha. Traffic study would be the first step of the process as the Mass DOT will need to be part of the process. There was no comments from attendees. Mr. Malkin moved to proceed with the process outlined by legal counsel. Ms. Larsen seconded the motion.

**SO VOTED: 3 Ayes**

**Human Resource Board- memo**

Mr. Carroll said this was in regards to the COLA. *Ms. DeBlase went to get printed copy of memo for Select Board.* November 7, 2023, the Human Resources Board of Chilmark (HRBC) voted to recommend a 3% COLA for Fiscal Year 2025.

The Town's COLA policy formula calculation was 4.12% so the HRBC recognizes that their recommendation is lower than current inflation. The HRBC requests that the Select Board discuss and revisit the policy range guidelines.

Mr. Malkin gave an explanation of the history of the COLA policy. Ms. Larsen recommended using the formula and not limiting to 3%. Chairperson Rossi said he was not prepared to discuss this at this meeting and asked that the HRB join the Select Board to continue this discussion.

Select Board determined the Dec 19 meeting needed to be rescheduled. Select Board decided to make their second December meeting on December 14, (Thursday) at 5:00 PM and invite HRB to that meeting.

**5:15 PM Public Hearing – Tax Classification:**

At 5:15 PM Chairperson Rossi opened the public hearing for comments about tax classification. Pam Bunker presented the information for the Public Hearing along with Chilmark Assessor Liz Oliver.

Ms. Bunker said the purpose of the Classification Hearing is to allow public input and the Select Board the option to shift the tax burden between property classes or keeping the tax burden equal. This doesn't change the total tax levy for the community; it simply determines the share to be borne by each class. The five classes of Real Estate are: Residential, Open Space, Commercial, Industrial, & Personal Property.

- The first recommended vote by the Board of Assessors (BOA) is, not to adopt the Open Space Discount. (The Town of Chilmark does not classify vacant land as "open space" by the DOR standards, because the town has never considered splitting the tax rate.)
- The second recommended vote by the BOA is, not to adopt the Residential Exemption. (Since the non-voting tax payers make up 80% of the total town's levy, it has always been recommended not to adopt the Residential Exemption).
- The third recommended vote by the BOA is, not to adopt the Senior Means Tested Exemption. (The Town of Chilmark already has in place senior exemptions which work well. We have not voted this option at town meeting, therefore, this would not apply at this time).
- The fourth recommended vote by the BOA is, not to adopt the Small Commercial Exemption. (The town has never considered splitting the tax rate, so this small commercial Exemption is not applicable.)
- The fifth and final vote is whether or not to split the tax rate. Board of Assessors would like to recommend that the Board of Selectmen adopt a single tax rate and vote to accept the residential factor of 1.

Ms. Bunker said we received Final approval of our Real Estate and Personal Property values and certified our New Growth from the DOR.

The town's total value for fiscal year 2024 is \$ 5,539,542,000 last year, FY23 was \$4,258,080,040 that is a 30% increase in our town's value.

The new growth collected this year was \$109,943 in tax revenue this represents \$41,803,751 in value. The average assessment for FY24 is \$2,400,000. Last year's average assessment for FY23 was \$1,875,000.

Chairperson Rossi asked if there was any questions or comments about setting our tax rate. With no comments Chairperson Rossi asked about the senior means tested exemption. Ms. Bunker said the town has a senior discount if tax payer is eligible they can get up to a \$1,000.00 deduction on their tax bill. Chairperson Rossi asked that this information be made clear to town seniors who may qualify.

Mr. Malkin moved to not adopt the open space discount Ms. Larsen seconded. **SO VOTED: 3 Ayes**

Mr. Malkin moved to not adopt the residential exemption Ms. Larsen seconded.

**SO VOTED: 3 Ayes**

Mr. Malkin moved to not adopt the Senior Means Tested Exemption Ms. Larsen seconded.

**SO VOTED: 3 Ayes**

Mr. Malkin moved to not adopt the small commercial exemption Ms. Larsen seconded.

**SO VOTED: 3 Ayes**

Mr. Malkin moved to adopt a single tax rate and accept the residential factor of one. Ms. Larsen seconded. **SO VOTED: 3 Ayes**

At 5:25 PM Chairperson Rossi opened Public Hearing – Building Department FEE SCHEDULE increases:

Chilmark Building Commissioner Adam Petkus presented the proposed fee schedule. *Mr. Petkus handed out printed document of fee increase with explanations.*

The fee schedule would implement a fee of \$6.50 per \$1,000.00 of building cost. This would apply to new construction, additions, weathering (roofing, insulation etc.).

Chairperson Rossi said there is a waiver form built into this new fee schedule for Chilmark residents of limited means to go to the Select Board for reduction in cost. Ms. Larsen questioned the fee for shed demolition at \$500 saying it seemed too high. Mr. Petkus said the time it takes to verify the construction materials justifies the cost related.

Mr. Best a contractor and member of the Builders Association. Spoke in support of the fee increases. Mr. Dillon also spoke in support of the fee schedule proposed by Mr. Petkus.

At 5:46 PM with no further public comments Chairperson Rossi closed the public hearing. And brought back to the Select Board for action.

Mr. Malkin moved to approve the new fee schedule presented by the Building Commissioner tonight. Ms. Larsen seconded the motion. **SO VOTED: 3 Ayes**

At 5:48 PM Chairperson Rossi opened the public hearing & Joint Meeting with Community Preservation Committee at 5:45 PM - to get feedback on overall Community Preservation Act needs in town:

Cathy Thompson, Julie Flanders, Steve Kass, Steve Lewenberg, (Bill Rossi Chairperson of Select Board and also member of CPC) and Adam Sloan of the CPC joined the Select Board at the table to hear from the public.

Board administrator Carolyn Stoeber gave some supporting information about fund balances and spending policies. Chairperson Rossi said our policy is to limit out of town requests to 10% of funding annually.

*At 5:45 PM Allison Cameron Parry Housing Committee member of the CPC joined the meeting*

Mr. Kass gave a brief outline of the applications before the committee this year. These applications are presented to the CPC and will then come to the Annual Town Meeting to be voted. Discussion came back to what Chilmark wants to spend on the applications. Housing project is the big ticket in Chilmark's near future.

Mr. Lewenberg said he thought limiting projects to 10% was not appropriate and to review each application would be more appropriate. Chairperson Rossi said the 10 % is not a rule it has been practice. Mr. Kass said if our Peaked Hill Housing project timing is soon then the 10% makes sense. But if not we should look at applications without being bound to 10% limit. Chairperson Rossi thanked CPC members for their comments. Mr. Sloan said lack of Chilmark applications should not disadvantage regional projects. Mr. Malkin said it was made clear at our Annual Town Meeting that town voted for Peaked Hill Pastures Affordable Housing project to move forward. Ms. Cameron Parry said she supports more emphasis on preference for Chilmark workers and volunteers in the regional housing projects that we fund. Ms. Thompson said the Island Housing Trust has 2 projects in applications for CPA funds. Mr. Kass supported the Brick Yard restoration application as an important Chilmark project. There was discussion that the deadline for applications is a target and that if a Chilmark project wanted funding that it was not too late, but should apply immediately. There was discussion about the stonewall projects in Chilmark.

At 6:26 PM with no further comments Chairperson Rossi closed the public hearing. Chairperson Rossi asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Malkin moved to adjourn. Ms. Larsen seconded the motion. **SO VOTED: 3 Ayes**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Diana DeBlase.

**Approved 12/05/2023**

Document list:

- Tax classification public hearing advertisement
- Community Preservation Act public hearing advertisement
- Library notice of permanent appointment of Mr. Dubno as Asst. Director / Youth Services Librarian

- Newspaper advertisements of Chilmark seeking: committee members to serve on Chilmark Community Center Advisory Committee, registered Republican voter to serve as registrar
- 12 documents related to the new fee schedule proposed for Chilmark Building department
- Present Building department fee schedule
- Draft minutes from 11/7/23
- Memo from HRB Administrator- RE: COLA

