

Dukes County Advisory Board on Expenditures (CAB)
Meeting Minutes
November 7, 2023
1:00 PM

Remote participation only via zoom

County Advisory Board Members Present: Arthur Smadbeck – Edgartown (40.51%), Skipper Manter – West Tisbury (12.04%), Emma Green-Beach (15.86%)*

Other County Officials Present: Martina Thornton – County Manager, Sarah Kuh – Director of the Health Care Access Program; Christine Todd, Peter Wharton, Tristan Israel, Doug Ruskin - County Commissioners, Judy Soules – County Treasurer, Paddy Moore, Cindy Trish – Healthy Aging MV, Bob Johnston – Future Works, Norm Werthwein – DC Finance Committee, Paulo DeOliveira – Register of Deed, Leslie Clapp – Director of the MV Center for Living.

Arthur Smadbeck called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

Minutes – Skipper/Bill moved to approve minutes for meeting held on 10-3-2023. So voted. Skipper – yes, Bill – abstains, Art – yes.

*Emma joins the meeting.

FY2025 Regional Program funding requests

CORE – Counseling, Outreach and Referrals for Elders

Request is level funded at \$101,741. Under revenue \$34,914 is to be coming from other funding sources, which will be needed to balance the budget as presented. It is understood that Community Services will cover this from other revenue sources other than the town requests.

Skipper/Bill moved to send the CORE request to the towns as presented. So voted. West Tisbury – yes, Oak Bluffs – yes, Chilmark – yes, Edgartown – yes. All in favor.

Healthy Aging MV – The request is level funded at \$119,761. There were no questions.

Skipper/Bill move to send the Health Aging MV request to the towns as presented. So voted. West Tisbury – yes, Oak Bluffs – yes, Chilmark – yes, Edgartown – yes. All in favor.

SUD Coalition – There is a slight increase due to updated % in administrative fee for the MV Community Services – overall request is about 1% higher - \$49,111 (\$521 over FY24). There will be approx. \$18K return to the towns from the FY2023 funding since the position was not filled until way into the fiscal year and not all the funds were expended.

Skipper/ Bill moved to send the SUD Coalition request to the towns as presented. So voted. West Tisbury – yes, Oak Bluffs – yes, Chilmark – yes, Edgartown – yes. All in favor.

Harbor Homes MV – Request of \$51,702 is approx. \$10K more over FY2024 mainly due to additional payroll expenses for the position (50c per hour increase) and also \$1,425 stipend for the 24/7 hotline coverage.

Skipper/Bill moved to send the Harbor Homes MV request to the towns as presented. So voted. West Tisbury – yes, Oak Bluffs – yes, Chilmark – yes, Edgartown – yes. All in favor.

DC Public Benefits Access – Request of \$51,628 is approx. \$5K due to inclusion of 5hrs per week of supervisory role for the program that was previously on reflected in the budget.

Skipper/Emma move to send the Public Benefits Access request to the towns as presented. So voted. West Tisbury – yes, Oak Bluffs – yes, Chilmark – yes, Edgartown – yes. All in favor.

Health Care Access – The request of \$558,864 is approx. \$107K higher over prior year due to several factors. The County trying to get ready for a retirement of the current Director who was providing about 20hrs of client services and 20 hours of management and oversight to split these two functions and create a position of Director of Health and Human Services to oversee this department, the Public Benefits Access department and also couple other health and human services related departments and programs county runs. This is based on the recommendation of the current Director. There is much higher demand for open enrollment period and in September they were already booked all the way through December with no appointment available. To meet the demand the proposal is to add 20 additional hours per week of client services, combining it with the 20 hours of client service hours of the retiring director for a full-time 40 hours per week position. This would be a new hire. We need to budget for the most expensive health insurance plan which is approx. \$30K in case that is what the person will choose. One employee who previously did not require health insurance also informed us that starting next year they will be choosing to take health insurance so that adds another \$30K to the budget. There is also an additional 10 hours for the Administrative Assistant added to bring the position to full 40 hour per week position to fully cover the front desk during office hours. Right now, doors have to be locked at 2:30pm as the reception is not covered and otherwise the walk-ins would be disruption the work of the other employees. Skipper asked if some of these changes can be phased in over next couple of years Martina responded that yes, but that will then not address the needs of the community and program that we are seeing right now. Sarah estimated that this proposed staffing should cover the demand for the next 5 years. It depends on the population growth which will determine the demand for services going forward.

Skipper/Bill move to send the Health Care Access request to the towns as presented. So voted. West Tisbury – yes, Oak Bluffs – yes, Chilmark – yes, Edgartown – yes. All in favor.

Center for Living - requested increase.

Leslie explained that there is a lot of growth – an average of 20 clients per day – 35-40 clients enrolled. Get calls all the time. Staffing is adequate – payroll increases are due to COLA and merit raises. There are increases in food supplies needs. She added bookkeeping and accounting cost to the operating expenses. Starting a new initiative for in-home respite care which is a sizable grant and needs more attention of the director. The Center also took on transportation to the SDP and the Program Director is now dispatching the transportation. They are also providing a shopping shuttle for elderly people 3 days per week with a driver funded by outside sources. Using the county pay scale to determine the pay rates. The Center determines where positions go on the scale based on level of responsibilities, confidentiality etc. Leslie's salary is increasing about \$15K. The Center for Living board makes the final decisions on the pay rates and the budget as a whole.

Skipper/Emma moves to send the Center for Living request to the towns. So voted. West Tisbury – yes, Oak Bluffs – yes, Chilmark – yes, Edgartown – yes. All in favor.

FY2025 Budget

County Commissioners approved this first version of the FY2025 County budget. Martina went over the make changes in revenues and expenses compared to FY2024. Included is 4.7% COLA based on formula of median of prior year COLA of the towns. To balance the budget the request is right now to ask the towns for supplemental income of \$57K through the warrant article process. This is with the understanding that the budget will be refined at the beginning of next year and hopefully this request can be lowered. Discussion followed.

Bill noted that with the plan to move the County Treasurer position from elected to appointed position the County should plan for succession should the Treasurer decide to leave. Doug commented that the County learned the hard way last year how critical it is to plan for succession when the then County Treasurer left, and the County had for several months very hard time finding replacement and there were not detailed procedures and policies for the interim treasurer to go by.

Skipper noted that the administrative fees in the revenue section seem to be duplicative since the functions that it theoretically should pay for are already paid for by the town assessments. Martina noted that the revenue helps offset the overall costs of the administration to the towns in a budget that is otherwise in deficit.

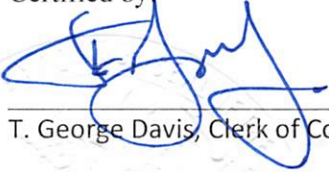
Paddy Moore raised a concern about county providing some services for elders that towns' Councils on Aging are doing or should be doing and asked if this can be reviewed to have a clear understanding what is the town's long-term goals in planning for provision of services for the elder on the island, especially in light of some bigger changes happening with some of the Councils on Aging.

Skipper/Emma moved to send the \$57K request for supplemental income to the towns as presented. So voted. West Tisbury – yes, Oak Bluffs – yes, Chilmark – yes, Edgartown – yes. All in favor.

Skipper/Emma moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:58PM. West Tisbury – yes, Oak Bluffs – yes, Chilmark – yes, Edgartown -yes. Motion carries. The meeting was adjourned at 1:58pm.

Next meeting will be determined the week of December 18th.

Certified by

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. George Davis', is written over a horizontal line.

T. George Davis, Clerk of Courts

Documents presented at the meeting and part of the official record:

FY2024 Health Care Access budget amendment

Proposed legislation to change from elected to appointed County Treasurer