

Oh, Aquinnah!

The unthinkable has happened again in the town of Aquinnah where pecuniary problems remain in a hopeless muddle.

Three failed overrides and four budget revisions later the town selectmen and their town accountant are still in a \$25,000 scramble to balance the books; meanwhile, a June 30 deadline looms with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue for the town to present a balanced budget.

The margin is thin and the ice that town fathers are skating on even thinner, as the struggle to stem the red ink continues. Help is clearly needed in this town which is the second smallest in the commonwealth. Loosely constructed meetings to discuss generating revenues are not the solution. A top-to-bottom independent and professional analysis of town finances is urgently needed.

This has been said before, but it cannot be said too much - help is available from the state Department of Revenue, which will perform an audit and evaluate a town's financial position at no charge. West Tisbury did it, Oak Bluffs did it and Aquinnah has the option of doing it.

Selectmen should pick up the telephone and make the call. There is nothing to lose and they owe it to all their town residents, not to mention their capable and increasingly harried town accountant, who has shouldered the burden for too long.

