

MARTHA'S VINEYARD REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, February 4, 2019, 5:00PM

Martha's Vineyard Regional High School

Library Conference Room

Present: Chair – Kris O’Brien, Roxanne Ackerman*, Megan Anderson, Amy Houghton, Kimberly Kirk, Robert Lionette, Skipper Manter, Janet Packer, Kathryn Shertzer by phone,
Student representatives (non-voting): Emily Gazzaniga, Tyla Packish

Others: About 120 people including:
Staff: Principal – Sarah Dingley, Vice Principals – Jeremy Light, Dhakir Warren, CTE Director – Barbarajean Chauvin, Finance Manager – Mark Friedman, Special Ed Co-Directors – Hope MacLeod, Nancy Dugan, Facilities Director – Mike Taus, Athletic Director – Mark McCarthy, Lisa Knight, Coaches - Ronaldo Andrade, Rocco Benebuono, Donald Brown, Samantha Burns, Kurstin Moore, Joe Schroeder, Ryan Ruley, Ryan White, Brock Callen, Jessica Estrella, Maria Thibodeau,

Supt.'s Of: Superintendent - Matt D’Andrea, Asst. Supt. – Richie Smith, Business Affairs - Amy Tierney,

Students: Madia Benebuono, David Bonneau, Peter Burke, Mackenzie Condon, Colin Henke, Nina Moore, Stella Napier, Klara Reimann, Charlotte Packer, Nathaniel Packer, Aden Ross, Ava Vigneault,

Parents: Adam Bresnick, Ann Bresnick, Karen Burke, Ernie Chaves, Kate DeVane, Annemarie Donahue, Fred Fournier, James Geary, Sam Hall, Kelly Hess, Matthew Hobart, Andrew Kilke, Mollee Lewis, Samantha Look, Constance Messmer, Kimberly Morris-Wadleigh, John Packer, Chris Reimann, Kristen Reimann, Erin Slossberg, David Smith,

MVPS: Betsy Carnie, Odin Carnie, Runar Carnie, Jennifer Fournier,
MVRHS Bldg. Com. – Molly Glasgow,

Towns: OB Planning – Ewell Hopkins, Tis. ConCom – Lilian Robinson,

Track Project: Huntress Associates: Christian Huntress, Diane Huntress, Daedalus Projects – Joe Sullivan,

Field Fund: Mollie Doyle, Rebekah Thomson, Clark Myers,

Youth Sports: Cathlin Baker, Richard Bennett, Shannon Carbon, Russ Currin, Mariah Donahue, Terry Donohue, Kristin Gibson, Donald Herman, Jared Meader, Matt Malowski, Joe Mikos, Louis Paciello, Moira Silva, Christian Schmidt, David Wallis,

Public: Thomas Bena, Cynthia Doyle, Frank Dunkl, Skyla Harthcock, Jed Katch, Hailey Medder, Peter Palches, Meghan Sonia, Rez Williams, Megan Zeilinger, Jami McNeely – Abutter, Brendan O’Neill - VCS

Press: MV Times – Brian Dowd, Lucas Thors, MVTV – Lynn Fraker, Vineyard Gazette – Holly Pretsky, Mark Lovewell

Secretary: Marni Lipke *Late arrivals or early departures (see * in text)

Call to Order

- The meeting of the Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School Committee (MVRHSC) was called to order at 5:02PM.

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- Chair Kris O'Brien welcomed everyone and requested a moment of silence for MVRHS and Oak Bluffs School (OBS) graduate Will Farrissey, with condolences to the family.
- Tonight's attendance was a testament to the Island community and the passions generated by issues. In order to move forward from this meeting as a community Chair O'Brien outlined meeting procedures. The MVRHSC was mandated to follow Open Meeting Law and Chair O'Brien quoted Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 30A, § 20 JG:

“No person shall address a meeting of a public body without permission of the chair, and all persons shall, at the request of the chair, be silent. No person shall disrupt the proceedings of a meeting of a public body. If, after clear warning from the chair, a person continues to disrupt the proceedings, the chair may order the person to withdraw from the meeting...”

* Ms. Roxanne Ackerman entered the meeting at 5:06PM.

In accordance with Martha's Vineyard Public School (MVPS) policy, “the School Committee will not hear any personal complaints of school personnel nor against any matter of the community.” As a working meeting, the MVRHSC would start by addressing a number of regular business agenda items.

- Ms. O'Brien announced for the record that Ms. Kathryn Shertzer was joining the meeting by phone and consequently roll call votes were required.

Minutes

(Agenda Item #I)

A. School Committee Minutes: 1/2/19, 1/7/19, 1/23/19

- *MS. AMY HOUGHTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE:*
 - *JANUARY 2, 2019,*
 - *JANUARY 7 2019 AND*
 - *JANUARY 23, 2019 MINUTES;*

MR. ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 9 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. JANET PACKER—AYE, MS. MEGAN ANDERSON—AYE, MS. KIMBERLY KIRK—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE, MR. SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, MS. ACKERMAN—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE.

Student Report

(Agenda Item #II)

A. Emily Gazzaniga, Junior Class President, and Tyla Packish, Junior Class Vice-President

Junior Class President Ms. Emily Gazzaniga, introduced herself to the meeting.

- Junior Parent Night dealt mostly with post secondary education issues.
- The MVRHS decided on gender-neutral graduation gown colors of white with purple stoles.
- Mid-terms went well and students were now in the third quarter.
- The Protect the Environment Club was leading monthly climate change discussions at Mocha Motts and Rosewater Café until May.
- 23 MVRHS students participated in the All Cape Music Festival.
- An amazing assembly one man show called *Dirt* with John Morello told of the struggles of being a high school student.

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- The Boys Hockey team qualified for the playoff for the first time in four years. Boys and Girls Varsity Basketball teams also won games this weekend.
- The National Honor Society ran two incredibly successful fundraising drives.

Student/Department Spotlight

(Agenda Item #III)

A. Work Study Mentorship

Seniors Colin Henke and Senior Max Smith spoke of their work/study mentorships.

- Mr. Smith worked as an operations assistant at the Martha's Vineyard Airport helping with parking planes, serving passengers and, during the current off-season, learning about fueling, snow plowing, firefighting, etc., working side-by-side with an airport mechanic on airplanes and airport operations. Since he volunteered as an Oak Bluffs firefighter he could compare the two different fire fighting trainings.
- Mr. Henke was a teaching intern working with middle school social studies and resource room students on projects and homework assignments, including opportunities to student teach. He planned to major in secondary education and hone his skills. This semester he was working with Connect to End Violence learning counseling, and working on a curriculum about how to discuss sexual assault and similar topics with over child to youth to young adult age span.
- Chair O'Brien thanked and the public applauded the students, and Career Technical Director Barbarajean Chauvin.

Public Comment

(See below: #VII C.)

(Agenda Item #IV)

Principal's Report

(Agenda Item #V)

A. Athletic Out of State/School Field Trip Requests

(See documents on file.)

- *MR. LIONETTE MOVED TO APPROVE AN OUT-OF-STATE OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIP FOR THE MODEL UNITED NATIONS CLUB TO NEW YORK CITY MARCH 6-9, 2019; MS. PACKER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 9 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. PACKER—AYE, MS. ANDERSON—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE, MR. MANTER—AYE, MS. ACKERMAN—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE.*

B. Softball Junior High and Co-op Waiver

(See Minutes: 7/9/18 p.2-3 #C, 11/5/18 p.3 #B, 1/7/19 p.2 #V B.)

In keeping with MVRHS Athletic Waiver policy, Athletic Director Mark McCarthy was requesting a Varsity Girls Softball mid-level waiver to benefit from MVPS seventh/eighth grade interest. In 2018 the sport was canceled mid-season from lack of interest. Middle schools dropped their softball teams some years ago, but were showing new interest. A safe tackle program was in the conceptual stage. He expected to reach out to middle school Principals pending MVRHSC approval (as per the Waiver Policy). The application was due before the March meeting. Mr. Lionette criticized the delay in consulting Principals.

The following issues were reviewed:

- past team enrolment and current MVRHS student interest by grade;
- other recruitment attempts, including the Charter School;
- status of other waiver requests and results;

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- number of softball team on and off-island games;
- other merged junior high/high school student inclusion;
- review of Policy and parental consent (see below: Tasks).
- The matter was tabled until the March meeting.

Financial Report

(Agenda Item #VI)

A. Expenditure Report

B. Revenue Report

Technological difficulties prevented the usual financial reports. Substitute expenses and Corrective Maintenance were being closely monitored.

A. Athletic Out of State/School Field Trip Requests (See documents on file.)

C. Grants/Donations (See documents on file.)

• *MR. LIONETTE MOVED TO ACCEPT WITH GRATITUDE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:*

- \$3,040.50 AND \$3,259.50 GRANTS FROM THE SOUND FOUNDATION TO CONTINUE MARTHA'S VINEYARD PUBLIC SCHOOL YOGA PROGRAMS,
- \$500 FROM EXXON MOBIL GLOBAL COMPANIES, LLC FOR SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY/ART/MATH (STEAM) PROGRAMS;

MS. PACKER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 9 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. PACKER—AYE, MS. ANDERSON—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE, MR. MANTER—AYE, MS. ACKERMAN—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE.

• *MR. LIONETTE MOVED TO ACCEPT WITH GRATITUDE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:*

- \$500 DONATION TO THE MABEL MCCARTHY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP;
- \$1,000 DONATION FROM FALMOUTH VOLUNTEERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR ISLAND CONNECTIONS MENTOR PROGRAM STIPENDS;

MS. PACKER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 9 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. PACKER—AYE, MS. ANDERSON—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE, MR. MANTER—AYE, MS. ACKERMAN—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE.

Superintendent's Report

(Agenda Item #VII)

A. All Island School Committee (AISC) (See below: Meetings/Events.)

B. Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) Budget Update (See below: Meetings/Events.)

The health insurance rate increase would be 0% so the Budget would be reduced by about \$250,000, and all MVPS district budgets would need to be recertified.

C. Athletic Fields and Track – Recommendation and Vote

(See Minutes: 11/15/18 & 1/23/19.)

- (Recorder's Note: This discussion is summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity).

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- Superintendent Matt D'Andrea thanked everyone for their emails, letters, and feedback, which were all noted and considered. MVRHS and MVPS Administration reflected on and studied this difficult, challenging issue, respecting all sides' concern for what was best for the Island children. Factors included: health, safety, best playing surfaces, cost, maintenance, public health, run-off, water quality, and research studies supporting both sides of the artificial turf (turf) debate. It was their recommendation, with confidence in student safety (studies cited), to accept one synthetic field (with environmental/health restrictions proposed by Huntress Associates) in order to support five grass fields. Phase One was a 400 meter track with synthetic turf infield, plus one grass field.
- Mr. McCarthy reviewed his career and credentials, including as a Director/Founder of Connecticut Children's Medical Center Sports Concussion Program and other concussion initiatives. He had been listening to students and all parties. He reviewed previous failed proposals for partnerships with MV@Play and the Field Fund (see Minutes: 4/4/16 p.2-3 V A, 4/27/16, 5/16/16 p.1-5 #IV, 5/11/17, 6/12/17, 8/10/17, 8/16/17 p.1 #II, 8/24/17 p.1-3 #II, 9/21/17.) He decried the lack of progress in four years and the considered the MVRHS had failed its commitment to student athletes. Tight Budgets had minimized field maintenance resulting in at least 10 years of bad deterioration and stopgap measures. It was his opinion that the campus should be inclusive of the community. He agreed with athletic field experts, Huntress Associates recommendation for a turf field, gave examples of turf as safer for student concussions and injury rates, and urged action on this long-overdue project.
- MVRHS Finance Manager Mark Friedman presented cost comparisons and financial matters (see documents on file) based on twenty years (2 life cycles for both grass and turf); calculating: custodial labor, irrigation, seeding, fertilizing, usage, equipment, etc.) Turf cost more to construct but less to maintain. Mr. Huntress had noted that the current five MVRHS grass field could not sustain usage so Mr. Friedman posited the cost of two more grass fields as a theoretical extrapolation. (However some MVRHSC members felt this to be unwarranted as two additional fields had never before been mentioned.) The proposals were based on current usage (1,400 events/yr.), including some youth sports, although another 900/yr. projected events were noted. Other athletic fields on the Island had been considered but were not within MVRHS purview.
- Mr. Chris Huntress introduced himself and reviewed the six-month community process that produced the presentation (see 1/23/19 Minutes). In continuing the issue of usage he explained that the current grass fields could not sustain projected usage and that the single turf field would reduce pressure on the five existing grass fields and included certification to recycle, sustainable in-fill and modifications for student safety.
- Assistant Supt. Richie Smith spoke to the celebration of life and children and the difference in people's beliefs. Without diminishing respect for all and after considerable research, he supported the turf field as providing the best and most durable playing surface, not only for Island children but visiting teams and athletes and would support the remaining five grass fields.

About two hours of MVRHSC and public comment followed. It was emphasized that everyone was involved because they cared about what was best for the children and for Martha's Vineyard. Chair O'Brien asked the public to introduce themselves, restrict comment time to two minutes and to hold applause. There was a brief conversation on microphone protocol.

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- The Field Fund read a letter advocating strongly for grass, protesting the MVRHSC as moving in the wrong direction, and urging caution regarding increased research on the environmental impact of turf, including an inability to ever grow grass again on a turf constructed location. Schools had not yet given quality grass fields a proper chance. Injuries had increased since the installation of the West Tisbury School (WTS) playground artificial surface. The Field Fund had used grants and resources to purchase and hire cutting edge equipment and international, comprehensive grass experts. They protested the schools lack of consultation with the Field Fund, the MVRHSC lack of change, and that Huntress Assoc. as a professional sports large business artificial turf firm. They reminded the public that most current athletes grew up on bad fields and urged the Island to go with a regenerative organic process.
- Mr. Terry Donohue of MV@Play was converted years ago to turf since two engineers testified that grass fields could not bear the usage loads. It was suggested the matter be referred to and argued before the Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC).
- 65 Martha's Vineyard Soccer United parents signed a letter rejecting use of turf protesting about environmental issues, player safety/health, a keep-up-with-the-Joneses attitude, and playing surface performance issues.
- The Vineyard Conservation Society (VCS) urged the schools not to give up on grass, citing: conservation of land, materials, Island character, solid waste, growing research on plastic and resulting regulation, sustainability and responsibility.
- A number of coaches testified to the current unsafe, overused facilities that generated choking dust, mud, broken bones, etc. and urged everyone that doing nothing was not okay, to stop delaying and pleading for the community to support either choice and move forward. Most advocated for a turf field for a variety of reasons:
 - support of five grass fields—loved but not realistic given short growing season/heavy usage;
 - playing surface differences for practice and for visiting teams;
 - dissimilarity between sneakers on elementary/middle school children vs. young adults in cleats;
 - other alternatives to failed grass (e.g. bluestone dust) as less acceptable.One coach strongly advocated for grass fields as important for promoting outdoor experience and avoiding micro-plastics in the aquifer.
- MVRHSC members, students and parents and community members spoke to both sides of the debate, stressing similar issues to those noted above:
 - environmental concerns (plastics, aquifer, love of outdoors, etc.);
 - playing surface: (different game practice, safety, injuries, etc.),
 - better athletic facilities for students during the current trend toward obesity;
 - long-standing poor conditions resulting in injuries, lost opportunities, and poor performance;
 - usage burden,
 - engineering expert recommendations.Other topics were raised.
- Extensive funding would be needed—\$11,000,000 for all three phases.
 - Some volunteered to participate in fundraising and advocated for everyone joining together.
 - The reason for the current state of the fields was budget restrictions and taxpayer burden.

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- There was an altercation on reasons for the failure of the lucrative Field Fund partnership. The MVRHSC and Administration stated the Field Fund requested assurances not within the legal authority of the MVRHSC. Field Fund advocates challenged the statement as specious and were cut off by the Chair for personal attacks.
- To conserve funds, and to avoid redundancy, Mr. Manter proposed delaying the project for two years pending decisions on the larger MVRHS project master plan. He protested, as was usual, the use of Excess and Deficiency (E & D) funds as over-assessment and preferred taxpayer vote.
- Mr. Lionette stated the MVRHSC rejected Town Meeting vote for fear of a one-day delay.
- Ms. Houghton explained her vote as not coming from fear but to expedite design and show good faith in moving forward on a necessary step towards required information, project vote and completion.
- An MVPS parent was disappointed in the undemocratic procedure and suggested the matter be put to the Annual Town Meetings.
- Some people agreed it should go before Annual Town Meetings, some protested the additional delay and divisiveness.
- Ms. O'Brien stressed that as elected officials in keeping with democratic process the MVRHSC had explored and debated the subject numerous times in open meetings, had held a number of public forums, and reviewed comments, letters, emails, and phone calls.
- Ms. Kirk accepted the Huntress Assoc. recommendation based on extensive analysis, and advocated for collaboration.
- In response to some confusion over usage projections, Mr. Huntress clarified that five fields could not sustain the current usage load.
- *MS. JANET PACKER MOVED TO APPROVE FIRST PHASE OF ATHLETIC FIELD PROJECT BEING THE TRACK REHABILITATION WITH A SYNTHETIC TURF INFIELD AS PROPOSED BY HUNTRESS ASSOCIATES JANUARY 31, 2019 PROPOSAL AND RECOMMENDED BY THE MARTHA'S VINEYARD REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION; MS. MEGAN ANDERSON SECONDED;*
- *MS. PACKER CALLED THE VOTE MS. KIMBERLY KIRK SECONDED THE CALL; CALL RESCINDED BY MS. PACKER AND MS. KIRK AT MR. MANTER'S REQUEST;*
After more debate (summarized above):
- *MS. KIRK CALLED THE VOTE AGAIN; MS. PACKER SECONDED;*
MOTION PASSED 5 AYES, 4 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. SHERTZER—AYE, MS. PACKER—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MS. ANDERSON—AYE, MR. LIONETTE-NAY, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—NAY, MR. MANTER—NAY, MS. ACKERMAN—NAY.

Personnel	(Agenda Item #VIII)
C. Retirement/Resignation(s) - Tabled	
Old/New Business - None	(Agenda Item #IX)
Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair - None	(Agenda Item #X)
Executive Session – Not needed.	(Agenda Item #IX)

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Adjournment

(Agenda Item #XII)

- *MS. HOUGHTON MOVED TO ADJOURN 7:32PM; MS. PACKER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. PACKER—AYE, MS. ANDERSON—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE, MR. MANTER—AYE, MS. ACKERMAN—AYE.*

Appendix A - Meetings

- Facilities Subcommittee – 8:00AM, Tuesdays, February 5, 2019 - MVRHS Culinary
- Facilities Subcommittee – 8:00AM, Tuesday, February 20, 2019 - MVRHS LCR
- AISC - 5:00PM, Monday, February 11, 2019 - MVRHS LCR
- **MVRHSC - 6:30PM, Monday, February 11, 2019 - MVRHS LCR**
- Transportation Subcommittee – 1:00PM, Tuesday, February 19, - MVRHS LCR
- **MVRHSC - 5:00PM, Monday, March 4, 2019 at the MVRHS LCR**
- AISC - 5:00PM, Monday, March 25, 2019 at the MVRHS LCR

Appendix B - Agreed Upon Tasks

- Administration – send Athletic Waiver Policy to MVRHSC.

Appendix C - Documents on File:

- Agenda 2/4/19
- Sign In Sheet (5 p.) 2/4/19
- February meeting schedule
- With the approval of the School Committee...
- Sound Foundation check 12/12/18
- Johnson/Sound Foundation letter 12/11/18
- Exxon Mobil/Global Companies check 12/6/18
- Exxon Mobil Fuels Educational Alliance 1/16/19
- MacDonal check 12/21/18
- Falmouth Volunteers in Public Schools Grant
- MVRHS Track Project Financial Review Overall Master Plan
- MVRHS Grass Field Policy 8/24/17
- Moran email re: Resignation 1/15/19

Respectfully submitted,

Marni Lipke – Recorder

Date

Kris O'Brien – MVRHSC Chair

Date

Matt D'Andrea – MVRHSD Superintendent

Date

Minutes approved 3/4/19