

Up-Island Regional School District School Committee Meeting
Monday, September 16, 2019, 5:00PM
West Tisbury School, Room #113

Present: Chair: Skipper Manter, Robert Lionette, Kate DeVane, Roxanne Ackerman
Others: Supt's Shared Services Office: Matt D'Andrea, Richie Smith, Amy Tierney,
Principals: Donna Lowell-Bettencourt, Susan Stevens, Mary Boyd,
Press: MVTV
Recorder: Richie Smith

Call to Order

(Agenda Item #I)

The meeting of the Up-Island Regional School Committee was called to order by Chair Kate DeVane. (*Recorder's Note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.*)

Minutes

(Agenda Item #II)

A. August 26, 2019

• *KATE DEVANE MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 26, 2019 MINUTES AS AMENDED; SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Principals' Report

(Agenda Item #III)

A. West Tisbury – Donna Lowell-Bettencourt

- After School programing, planned as part of expanded health/wellness and as enrichment, was very popular among students and parents (see documents on file).
- Principal Donna Lowell-Bettencourt accepted nine of the 36 Tisbury School students who applied under the School Choice extension. In addition three of the four West Tisbury students who had chosen Tisbury School returned to the West Tisbury School (WTS). Skipper Manter made a point of 12 unplanned students due to the Tisbury School situation. Oak Bluffs School (OBS) accepted seven students.

B. Chilmark – Susan Stevens (See documents on file.)

Head of School Susan Stevens engaged the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) to run a social-emotional learning workshop for the entire staff on their first day back.

Finance

(Agenda Item #IV)

A. Expenditure & Revenue Report (See documents on file.)

- Timely audit work showed a \$95,766 General Fund beginning balance rolled over from Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19)— which was likely to be the Excess and Deficiency (E & D) certification.
- \$112,500 of the \$166,831 in Circuit Breaker balance (always reimbursed a year behind) would be transferred into the FY20 Budget. There was a discussion on accounting procedures.
- The UIRSC asked about establishing a stabilization fund for such rollovers. Separate stabilization funds could be established by a vote of all three towns for: special education, capital or transportation expenses; after which the UIRSC would have revenue and spending authority.

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Prin. Lowell Bettencourt favored a special education stabilization reserve to fund such unforeseen expenses as tutoring for student hospitalizations.

- Town votes for residential placement or special education spending created confidentiality issues in small communities.
- There was a general agreement that any stabilization fund should have a maximum cap.
- The UIRSC requested Business Administrator Amy Tierney to draft an article to create a Special Education Stabilization Fund.

B. Fiscal Policy List (See documents on file.)

Skipper Manter drafted the policy in favor of what he felt was common sense, and in relation to recent financial decisions at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS). The discussion covered a number of issues

1. The Budget would be reconciled monthly.

- Others suggested quarterly transfers.

2. UIRSC permission would be required to spend line items beyond the budgeted amounts.

3. Funds could only be spent as specifically appropriated.

- These two seemed to be linked and were generally UIRSC practice in severe cases.
- Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt explained that these policies would cause difficulties since the UIRSC met monthly and there were unforeseen events that had to be attended to immediately: e.g. a new student requiring special services (English Language Learner (ELL) translation, special education services, etc.). Spending was charged as accurately as possible to the correct line. She proposed "department" rather than "budgeted line" be policy.

4. Establish Reserve Funds for Sections B and C (starting in FY21) (tied with #5 below)

5. All E & D funds would be returned to Towns as soon as prudent and in time for Town financial planning for the following Annual Town Meeting (ATM).

- E & D overages would no longer be dedicated to the Other Post Employee Benefits (OPEB) liability.
- Use of E & D to fund the reserve line was less predictable, more procedurally cumbersome, confusing and less timely than voting a reserve into the budget.
- E & D created by reserve fund residuals would be returned to the Towns as revenues, resulting in the same net effect with a different process. The establishment of a reserve would substantially increase the budget and was likely to be difficult to explain to voters. On being asked by Supt. D'Andrea, Skipper Manter, although never supporting a budget, committed to whole heartedly supporting this portion only. He would adamantly oppose any stabilization fund if E & D funds were not returned to the Towns.

- When the UIRSD regionalized they were advised to eliminate previous reserve funds and establish E & D. Further research on E & D versus reserve fund requirements was requested.

- Ms. Ackerman considered the UIRSC had been and continued to be fiscally responsible, and referenced to the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) trainings.

6. Reduction of line items on all building maintenance lines would be prohibited.

- Noting examples of other MVPS facility problems, this was to show commitment to continued building maintenance as facilities aged.
- Supt. D'Andrea, although acknowledging the problem, expressed concern that the UIRSC was tying it's own hands.

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7. Inform Towns of any anticipated shortfalls requiring further appropriation.

- CHAIR KATE DEVANE DECLARED THIS THE FIRST READING OF THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCIAL POLICY WITH CONCERNS ON NUMBERS 2, 3 AND 5. All comments and questions should be sent to Supt. D'Andrea.

C. West Tisbury School (WTS) Parking Lot Repairs

Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC) Special Projects Planner Dan Doyle was conferring with West Tisbury Planning Board agent Jane Rossi on reducing the number of curb cuts, in tandem with the bike path project. The UIRSC requested Dan Doyle attend their next meeting. Skipper Manter was not particularly supportive because it was an expensive outlay for 15 minutes congestion in the morning and there was a loss of parking places. Kate DeVane reiterated the current configuration's serious problems, including handicap compliance issues (See Minutes: 3/18/19 p.1-2 #III & 5/20/19 p.1 #III B & 8/26/19 p.1-2 #III C.)

D. West Tisbury School (WTS) Building Use Funds

WTS building use revenues (~\$500-\$1,000) were currently returned to the General Fund. Some MVPS had Building Use Accounts, which could spent on custodial expenses, repairs, etc. Larger WTS amounts such as revenues from Presidential press conferences (see Minutes: 9/19/16 p.6 #D & 3/20/17 p.5 #XII) were voted to scholarship funds.

E. Capital Projects Requests (See documents on file.)

The WTS and Chilmark projects named in the bond (see 3/21/16 Minutes p.1-2 #IV B) were completed and all moneys were expended. Capital projects from the FY18 budget were also completed. Of the FY19 warrant article projects, the WTS alarm panel was completed and the Chilmark heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) work was still in process (see below). Of the FY20 warrant articles the:

- WTS Bell Wing roof was completed with a few outstanding bills, and the outdoor deck Phase 1 and the parking lot designs were in early phases;
- Chilmark flooring was completed at \$10,500.
- FY21 projections included Phase 2 of the Chilmark Windows and WTS decks.
- (The UIRSD billed Towns as invoices came in. The UIRSC discussed residual return mechanisms.)

F. Chilmark Heat Update

A working group was reviewing the Chilmark HVAC project. There was already an open contract with Griffith & Vary. However the South Mountain designs could not be used for construction so another designer might be necessary. (See Minutes: 1/28/19 p.1-2 #III A, 4/8/19 p.1-3 #II A, 6/24/19 p.1-2 #VI B, & 8/26/19 p.1 #III A.) The UIRSC requested the working group present a proposal at the next UIRSC meeting.

G. Suggested FY21 Budget Increases – Superintendent & School Principals

Supt. D'Andrea introduced the Administrators' FY21 goals and requested UIRSC to consider its own goals and financial increase percentage targets. Negotiated raises averaged 2.5% but other variables included steps, lane changes, enrollment, etc. The UIRSC asked to see a base budget.

Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt presented the WTS educational plan.

- Educator Growth requested stable PD spending for:
 - Lucy Calkins reading program,

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- reinvigoration of the Responsive Classroom, and
- continuing support for the Co-Teaching model,
- Student Need was currently focused on class size, particularly in the upper grades due to growth from Charter School returning students. The WTS might move to three sections in one of the grades. Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt preferred to keep current staffing levels rather than hire partial Full Time Equivalents (FTEs). The UIRSC suggested sharing staff with other schools.
- Health and Wellness increases were:
 - an additional \$5,000 to come up to the originally projected \$10,000 for after school programs (see above #III & Minutes: 11/6/17 p.1 #II & 10/29/18 p.3);
 - special education evaluation which might impact the budget;
 - \$2,224 for the second year of the technology upgrade (see 11/15/18 Minutes p.1-2 #IV);
 - additional health, instructional and special education supplies—probably offset by school choice fund increases as well as tuition reductions from the Charter School;
 - modest increases in: sports (uniforms, coaches, etc.), music and drama salaries, and ELL translations.
- Security and School Safety
 - The building was in excellent shape and Administration would have an updated preventive maintenance plan at the October meeting.
 - The WTS' only rubber roof warranty was in constant use and would terminate in 2022, at which point money for a design was requested with a view to replace the roof the following year.
 - Some outside shingles needed replacing.
 - The out-of-date elevator to the stage was expensive to repair and should be replaced.
 - Increased technology was expanding the WTS electrical needs so it was hoped the School would be included in the Town energy audit.
 - Synergy Report recommendations would be reviewed for: no cost, budgeted cost and additional funding sources.
- Regional Lunch Program
 - A cover and fencing for the outdoor refrigerator and freezer would increase lunch staff safety and security issues—and/or a long term capital campaign might expand the kitchen space.
 - The donated Hobart dishwasher was approaching capacity and age restrictions.

Head of School Susan Stevens built her plan around Supt. D'Andrea's Strategic Plan.

- A 20% increase in the school nurse would allow her to deliver the health and wellness social emotional learning services—Prin. Stevens was also looking to increase her 10% for the current school year.
- Student reading needs suggested a 0.2 FTE reading teacher—increased from 0.6 to 0.8 FTE (including special education reading goals).
- Additional funds would cover travel and expenses for four teachers to attend Lucy Calkins writing workshop the summer of 2020.
- The UIRSC explored custodial needs. Both Principals were looking to refinish floors with lower maintenance (no wax) surfaces.
 - Prin. Stevens was working with the Fire Chief on quotes to replace the fire alarm system.
 - In the longer term, the Synergy Report recommended a number of expensive measures including door replacements, vestibules, etc.

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Supt. D'Andrea had heard and wished to honor the Towns' request for conservative spending— which was one of his reasons for polling the UIRSC on their budget objectives.

The UIRSC thanked the Administrators for their detailed presentations.

- Skipper Manter prioritized warrant articles for: in-school cameras, a Chilmark School generator, an additional flashing sign at the WTS, and the stage elevator.
- Robert Lionette requested the data that drives the goals (for example enrollment and class sizes) and emphasized the need for maintenance plans and constant vigilance.
- Kate DeVane asked about attention not only to new programs but also to closing old or completed programs and re-using those resources, but focusing on student and staffing needs.

H. 2019-2020 Up-Island Percentage Payment to High School

The Town of Tisbury offered to offset any additional expenses from the emergency housing of the Tisbury School middle school students at the MVRHS. Roxanne Ackerman advocated for more regional thinking and noted:

- other resources available for the Tisbury School students,
- the Islandwide conversation on the MVRHS funding formula.

Superintendent's Report

(Agenda Item #V)

A. Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) Budget – See above.

B. Enrollment

All the MVPS had increased enrollment except the Tisbury School— which was not only dealing with the current facility crisis but as previously projected.

C. All-Island School Committee (AISC) – To be determined

D. Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)

Schools were required to have AHERA testing every three years, despite a lack of asbestos in the construction or in previous testing. MVRHS Facilities Director Mike Taus was coordinating MVPS testing (Chilmark School - \$750, WTS - \$2,000).

The UIRSC requested regular reports on the standard testing (air and water quality, asbestos, lead, etc.)

Personnel

(Agenda Item #VI)

A. Retirement

- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ACCEPT WITH GREAT APPRECIATION FOR THE YEARS OF SERVICE THE RETIREMENT OF WEST TISBURY SCHOOL SCIENCE AND MATH TEACHER SUSAN MILLER; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Up Island Regional School District (UIRSD)

(Agenda Item #VII)

A. Out-of-State Travel Requests

- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO AUTHORIZE OUT OF STATE TRAVEL AS FOLLOWS;*
- *UNITED KINGDOM AND WEST TISBURY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND TEACHER(S) TO NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND ON SEPTEMBER 20, 2019;*

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- *STUDENTS AND TEACHER(S) FOR PLASTIC FREE MV TO NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK FOR THE CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT OCTOBER SEPTEMBER 20-21, 2019;*
 - *TWO CHILMARK SCHOOL TEACHERS TO MIAMI, FLORIDA FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT;*
- ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair (Agenda Item #VIII)
The UIRSC discussed the budget schedule especially in terms of member schedules.

Adjournment

- *SKIPPER MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 7:20PM; SECONDED BY ROBERT LIONETTE; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Appendix A - Meetings

- **UIRSC Budget – 5:00PM, Thursday, October 3, 2019 – WTS**
- **MVRHSC - 4:00PM, Monday, October 7, 2019 – MVRHS LCR**
- **MARS/MV Mediation Presentation - 6:00PM, Monday, October 7, 2019 – MVRHS PAC**
- **UIRSC – 5:00PM, Monday, October 21, 2019 – Chilmark School**

Documents on File:

- Agenda 9/16/18
- Chilmark School Weekly Peeks (2 p.) 9/5/19
- Chilmark School Daily Specials
- Chilmark School Calendar of Events 2019-2020
- 11 Things to Say When Kids Cry
- Trust Generators
- Adults need Social-Emotional Intelligence, Habits and Dispositions with One Another (4 p.)
- Five Social and Emotional Competencies (8 p.)
- UpIsland Regional School District Financial Policy
- Up Island Regional School District Fund Balances Fiscal Year 2019-2020 (2 p.) 9/15/19
- Revenue Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2019-2020 9/15/19
- All Expenditure Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2019-2020 (11 p.) 9/15/19
- UIRSD Capital Projects Update – June 30, 2019 (2 p.)

Minutes approved 10/21/19.