

Tisbury School Committee
4:00PM, Tuesday, December 10, 2019
Emergency Services Building

1

TSC Members Present: Chair Amy Houghton, Janet Packer, Michael Watts*,
Staff: John Custer – Principal, Melissa Ogden – Assist. Principal;
Whitney Burke, Meredith Golthwait, Rita Jeffers, Natalie Krauthamer,
Matt D’Andrea – Superintendent, Richie Smith – Asst. Superintendent
Amy Tierney – Business Administrator,
Others: Dan Doyle,
Marni Lipke – Recorder * Late Arrivals or early departures

The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) meeting was called to order at 4:11PM.

I. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

- **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. JANET PACKER AND SECONDED BY MS. AMY HOUGHTON THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED; 2 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS:**
- **NOVEMBER 12, 2019,**
- **NOVEMBER 22, 2019, AND**
- **NOVEMBER 29, 2019.**

V. Principal's Report

A. School Events (See documents on file & below: Meetings/Events.)

- Principal John Custer and Instrumental Music teacher Mr. Ray Fallon were very enthusiastic about the All Island Band concert. The annual holiday sing along was scheduled for December 19th. Everyone was encouraged to attend.
- The fifth grade was participating in the Annual Wreaths Across America Ceremony.
- The Responsible Organization of Advisory Representatives (ROAR) student council would visit the Massachusetts State House and meet Representative Dylan Fernandes (see Minutes: 2/12/16 p.3 & 3/14/17 p.4 #VI).
- The School Building Committee would hold a public forum to introduce Tappé Architects to the community.
- Teachers would gather after school on January 15th in a Teacher Community of Practice (similar to previous learning communities).
- The TSC scheduled its next meeting, hopefully back in the Tisbury School.

B. Staffing Update

All positions were now filled. Ms. Heather McCarthy was performing well as the new Middle School Education Support Professional (ESP), and Ms. Amy Jones was recently hired to fill Ms. Alice Robinson’s ESP position.

VI. Faculty Report

- The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) phase two playground funding application was recommended by the Community Preservation (CPC) (see 7/1/19 Minutes p.1). Accolades went to PTO President Siobhan Mullin for her hard work and advocacy.

- There would continue to be one kindergarten through fourth grade (K thru 4) and one fifth through eighth grade (5 thru 8) teacher representative at TSC meetings. Staff was encouraged to inform the TSC of any comments or questions. The TSC asked that the Student/Learning Spotlight be reinstated on the agenda once staff and students were resettled in the building (see below: Actions).
- The faculty were all anticipating returning to the Tisbury School building and said they were very satisfied with the clear communications from Prin. Custer and the Superintendent Matt D'Andrea.

II. Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) Budget (See documents on file & below: Actions.)

A. Recommended Proposed Increases or Decreases

- There had been no discussion with the Town except the annual letter from the Finance Committee (FinCom) which requested 0% rise in discretionary spending, or written justification for any increases. (Capital Planning was in a different category.) A draft Tisbury School FY21 Budget placeholder would be submitted by the December 16th deadline. 1% of the FY21 Budget was ~ \$71,585
- Draft #1 showed a 5.63% increase due principally to:
 - \$131,700 (or 2% of the 5.63%) residential (out-of-district) tuition (FY20 tuition to be funded with Circuit Breaker and School Choice funding);
 - \$3,260 modest increase to the School Resource Officer (SRO);
 - \$1,573 for off-Island field trips (10 trips at \$600 per trip—most Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) had 15 trips).
- Although health supplies were budgeted, there was a \$3,200 decrease in Home Economic supplies.
- The TSC expressed concern about unbudgeted Special Education (SpEd) expenses such as the recent out-of-district tuition situations.
 - The Student Support Directors monitored special needs pre-schools and predicted upcoming costs as well as they could. So far there were none for FY21.
 - \$265,000 was not unusual for a single residential / out-of-district tuition.
 - Circuit Breaker would reimburse some of the tuition costs but always lagged a year behind. It had to be kept in a separate account and could not be used to reimburse School Choice. In addition there was a time limit on rollovers requiring unspent funds be returned to the State.
 - Other resources such as the Manter Fund could not be used.
 - A tuition warrant article might generate Town Meeting discussion raising confidentiality issues. Some Towns included such tuition in Selectmen's Unclassified Department budgets.
 - A Special Education stabilization account which could rollover from year to year was allowed under Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 40 Section 14E. It would cover unbudgeted or unexpected SpEd expenses (residential tuition, one-on-one Education Support Professionals (ESPs), required therapies, shared services costs, and equipment—there was some confusion over whether it covered SpEd transportation). (Other MVPS Committees were considering establishing the same.) Such a fund:
 - would have to be established by Town Meeting vote;
 - would require TSC and Selectmen permission for expenditure;
 - could not exceed 2% of annual net school spending;

° could receive Circuit Breaker funds—shifting them to year-to-year rollover.

- If established, such an account would be under-funded at first but could be built up from various sources or residuals—for example the one-year circuit breaker lag would mean the School would get a final year of reimbursement after a student left the School.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. PACKER AND SECONDED BY MR. MICHAEL WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORTED A TISBURY TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLE TO ESTABLISH A RESERVE FUND FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND OUT-OF-DISTRICT COSTS; 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

• Counting the \$50,000 FY20 budget commitment (less than 1% of the budget) and the FY20 residential tuition School Choice was estimated at about \$128,000 and School Choice revenue continued to decrease. Although the TSC had been pleased to extend a School Choice offset gesture in recent years, the School was currently in a tight budgeting situation with shrinking resources.

• IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO ELIMINATE THE \$50,000 SCHOOL CHOICE COMMITMENT FROM FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET DRAFT #2.

• Transportation costs had recently been shifted from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) to local schools, more closely reflecting actual run costs. The MVPS were now beginning to see economies of scale in decreased pricing from more route runs. The Transportation budget included a number of different assessment and reimbursement formulas.

- The MVRHS was reimbursed by Chapter 71 funds for the number of its runs. However, among the elementary/middle schools, only the Up Island Regional School District also received Chapter 71 reimbursement.

- Every year most MVPS elementary schools were projected for 15 off-Island and 200 on-Island field trips each—including all sports and music trips.

• As the Tisbury School Building Committee II representative Mr. Watts reported Town dissatisfaction with lack of facility maintenance budgeting—currently at \$8,500. The TSC discussed:

- staff and student safety as a priority;

- implications of shrinking School Choice balance and revenue;

- modern best practice maintenance guidelines suggesting 10% of overall budget;

- building issues needing attention before/ during any construction project (lead/ asbestos encapsulation, water seepage, front stairs, envelope, windows, Heating/ Ventilation/ Air Conditioning (HVAC), etc.;

as well as adequate maintenance budgeting for any future facility;

- FY20 capital repair article spending status (see Minutes: 12/11/18 p.1-2 #IV A & 1/14/19 p1 #I A.);

- possible political impact on a future project spending;

- importance of informing Annual Town Meeting (ATM) of Finance Committee background letter;

- presentation as part of FY21 Budget or as warrant article to add to FY21 Budget.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. WATTS AND SECONDED BY MS. PACKER THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED INCREASING LINE #350 (PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE) TO \$310,000 TOTAL IN_

THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET DRAFT #2; 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. PACKER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED ELIMINATION OF THE \$50,000 SCHOOL CHOICE COMMITMENT FROM FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET DRAFT #2; 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

III. Financial Report

A. Fund Balances (See documents on file.)

These balances were readjusted today as follows:

- Revolving School Lunch with family/staff debt resolutions was ~ \$10,000 in the black;
- The \$50,000 School Choice commitment was shifted into the FY20 Budget (see 2/19/19 Minutes p.3 #VI);
- The Town was now paying remediation invoices from Special Town Meeting (STM) Article #2.

B. Unanticipated FY2020 Student Support Expenses (See 11/12/19 Minutes p.2 #E.)

To the great relief of the School and a family a second out-of-district/residential placement was not recommended at this time (see also above: p.2-3 #II).

II. Superintendent's Report

A. All Island School Committee (AISC) - Nothing to Report

B. Remediation Work Update (See documents on file.)

The third floor was completed and cleared by the Environmental Hygienist. The School bathrooms would be open to students and staff tomorrow (the trailer was rented through December 20th). The second floor was in process and the first floor started. Completion date projection was still December 20, 2019.

- Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning (HVAC) would not be totally completed by the January move-in but was progressing satisfactorily.
- The Environmental Hygienist was careful and thorough in his assessments, an excellent investment (see below: Actions).
- The Town of Tisbury had put out a call for foster parents (see documents on file).
- Town Report entries were due January 3, 2020 (see below: Actions). asked for draft please

Adjournment

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. PACKER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:51PM.

Appendix A: Meetings/Events:

- Town Report Deadline – January 3, 2020
- MVRHSC - 5:00PM, Monday, January 6, 2020 – MVRHS LCR
- TSC – 8:30AM, Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at the Tisbury School
- Special/Annual Town Meeting – 7:00PM, Tuesday, March 31, 2020

continued

Appendix B: Actions

- Ms. Packer/Mr. Watts – contact Ms. Houghton with input for TSC Town Report.
- Supt. D’Andrea – include “cleared by Environmental Hygienist” in update letters.
- Ms. Houghton – consult BOS Selectmen re:
 - Special Education Stabilization article and
 - \$300,000 Facility Maintenance increase.
- Ms. Tierney/Prin. Custer/Ms. Houghton – FY21 Budget Draft #2 and cover letter:
 - eliminate \$50,000 School Choice,
 - increase preventive maintenance to \$310,000.
- Ms. Tierney/Prin. Custer/Ms. Houghton – draft and submit FY21 Special Education Stabilization warrant article.
- Prin. Custer - contact Facilities Director Kirk Mettall re:
 - front step engineering to address water leakage;
 - amount remaining in Warrant Article account to cover step repair/leakage.

Appendix C: Documents on File:

- TSC sign in sheet 12/10/19
- TSC Agenda 12/10/19
- Larsen/Finance Committee letter re: FY2021 Town Department Budgets
- Tisbury School Fund Balances Fiscal Year 2019-2020 12/10/19
- Tisbury School Events
- Tisbury Community Preservation Committee – November 18, 2019, Final Recommendations for FY2020-21
- D’Andrea letter re: Tisbury School update 11/15/19
- D’Andrea letter re: Tisbury School update 11/25/19
- (MGL) Part 1: Administration of Government, Title VII Cities, Towns and Districts, Chapter 40 Powers and Duties of Cities and Towns, Section 13E School District Reserve Funds to pay for Unanticipated or Unbudgeted Costs for Special Education, Out-of District Tuition or Transportation (2 p.)
- Tisbury School FY’21 Budget Analysis Draft #1, December 10, 2019 12/9/19
- Tisbury School Budget for 2019/2020 Draft #1, December 10, 2019 (7 p.)
- Tisbury School Employee List for 2020-2021 Proposed Budget (3 p.) 12/9/19
- Houghton/Conklin/Davis email re: (Town of Tisbury MA) foster care 12/10/19

Minutes respectfully submitted by Office On Call/Marni Lipke.

Marni Lipke – Recorder

Date

Amy Houghton – TSC Chair

Date

Minutes approved by the Tisbury School Committee 1/14/20