

Tisbury School Committee
4:30PM, Tuesday, January 12, 2021
Tisbury School Conference Room

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TSC Members Present: Chair Amy Houghton, Janet Packer, Michael Watts*,

Staff: John Custer – Principal, Melissa Ogden – Asst. Principal;
Matt D’Andrea – Superintendent, Richie Smith – Asst. Superintendent,
Mark Friedman – Business Manager, Student Support – Nancy Dugan,
Anna Cotton, Meredith Goldthwait, Kate Harding, Siobhan Mullin,
Nicole Shirley, Jane Taylor, Anne Williamson,

Others: Jynell Kristal – FinCom, Siobhan Mullin – PTO,
Marni Lipke – Recorder

* Late Arrivals or early departures of TSC members.

The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) meeting was called to order at 4:34PM.

I. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

• **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. JEN CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. AMY HOUGHTON THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 8, 2020 MEETING WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED; 2 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.**

II. Superintendent’s Report

A. All Island School Committee (AISC)

A late January or early February meeting was planned to take care of a number of items.

B. COVID Testing Program

* During this conversation Mr. Michael Watts entered the meeting at 4:39PM.

Last week 538 staff tests were sent to Miramus and came back negative. The Test Manager was doing a great job at coordination. Going forward 900 individuals would be tested each week. Each building had a designated number of tests to be distributed randomly on Wednesday, returned on Thursday, with results available on Saturday. The TSC commended the rollout of the testing and the dedication and flexibility of the staff and nurses when overcoming glitches. The TSC suggested Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) be posted on the Superintendent’s website. For example explaining how pooled results worked.

- Each collected sample was bar coded (to preserve privacy) before being sent for testing;
- The lab kept each test separate while combining a portion for pooled analysis;
- If the pool results were negative no further action was needed;
- If a pool tested positive, each sample was tested until the positive was identified (hopefully by Monday of each week).
- The positive barcode was reported to the Supt.’s Of. who then notified the individual and Board of Health.

• This was part of the program to keep students and teachers safely in-person. Today was the most in-person Martha’s Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) day in almost a year. All kindergarten through 4th grades (K thru 4) were back in school, 5th thru 8th grades were in-person hybrid according to each school plan, and the Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) had begun its hybrid rollout.

- It was noted that the September 2019 school split was a good orientation for current Tisbury MVRHS freshmen class.

C. New England School Development Council (NESDEC) Enrollment Projections

Statistics were based on birth rates, building permits and other regional trends. After many years of declining enrollment (~ 15% from 319 to 272) NESDEC projected a significant increase of over 65 students in the next 5 years—10 year projections (100 student increase) were less reliable. This had serious implications for the School Building Project.

- Last spring Principal John Custer accepted 6 of 7 School Choice applicants, however the greater shifts came during the school year when families moved around the Island. Usually Tisbury School had 10-15 fewer students 'choicing' in than 'choicing' out (see below: Actions).

III. Financial Report (See documents on file.)

A. Fund Balances

- School Choice revenues had been received and the Fund was healthy at \$201,000.
- The Town had not yet rolled over FY20 balances, but invoices continued to be paid.

C. School Choice Funding Request (See 11/10/20 Minutes p.3 #IV A.)

To correct the Tisbury proportional share of asymptomatic testing costs:

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. WATTS AND SECONDED BY MS. CUTRER THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY AUTHORIZED THE USE OF ADDITIONAL \$1,061.26 OF SCHOOL CHOICE FUNDS FOR COVID TESTING: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. CUTRER—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.

B. Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Budget (See 12/8/20 Minutes p.3 #B.)

This Draft recalculated the Supt.'s Office Shared Services allocation increase at 3.89% by accounting for all School Choice and Shared Services students by resident town (rather than school attendance). No other changes were made and Prin. Custer was comfortable with this was a level serviced budget, with only contractual and obligatory increases (assessments, transportation, etc). The 3% total increase was comparable to other school districts across the Island. Tisbury continued to be a K thru 8 school with 2 sections per grade and a population of diverse needs. Finance Committee (FinCom) representative Ms. Jynell Kristal commended Prin. Custer for his financial stewardship and clear explanations.

- Parent Teacher Organization Co-President Siobhan Mullin pointed out that it was unlikely school children would be vaccinated by September 2021 and asked about budgeting pandemic contingency funds (outdoor spaces, cleaning, nurses, transportation, etc.). The September 2021 unknowns were considered but it was hoped that alternate sources, grants or supplemental funding would be available—and were preferable to burdening taxpayers.

- The TSC discussed the political issues and realities of the Special and Annual Town Meetings (STM/ATM) including the school budgets, four MVRHS warrant articles, and the large School Building Project vote.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. WATTS AND SECONDED BY MS. CUTRER THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE TISBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT FISCAL YEAR 2022 GENERAL FUND BUDGET AT \$7,903,820.21 (OR 3.0% INCREASE) AS PER DRAFT #3.0: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. CUTRER—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.

IV. Principal's Report (See documents on file.)

A. Reopening Update (See Minutes 11/10/20 p.2 #V A & 12/8/20 p.2 #V B.)

• Prin. Custer expressed Administrators' and staff's delight in the yesterday's start of the middle school in-person hybrid with 5th and 6th grades in the school for the first week—to alternates weeks with 7th/8th grade in-person attendance.

- With the approval of the Health and Safety Advisory Committee the School hoped to expand K thru 4 from 4 to 5 days a week—for a continued abbreviated day (9:00AM – 1:40PM) to accommodate staggered transportation and arrival/departure.
- The TSC asked about expanding to a full day. Administrators strongly confirmed the continuing goal (all students in full days) along with the importance of meaningful education (not just students in the building) while dealing with mask/distancing protocols, shifting rooms and staff, etc. They noted the as-yet untested middle school return (particularly the challenge of the larger 7th and 8th grades) as well as the as-yet incomplete testing cycle.
- It was important to set realistic expectations and the Tisbury School building presented insurmountable size constraints given the 6 ft. distance regulation. Temporary facilities were explored but were not possible within this school year (see below: #V).

V. Tisbury School Building Committee (TSBC) Report (See below: Meetings/Events.)

TSC members were encouraged to attend the joint Select Board/FinCom/TSC meeting with the financial consultant, which would present a number of options to finance the School Building Project—acknowledged by all to involve substantial taxpayer layout. Current bond rates and infrastructure argued strongly for financing a project now.

- Vanguard Modular met with Town Administrator Jay Grande and Dept. of Public Works (DPW) Director Kirk Metell on additional temporary quarters (whether for Covid-19 related distancing or the School Building Project) and would prepare an estimate based on 4 classrooms with restrooms. Vanguard had Island experience and reported that a March 2020 commitment/decision to proceed was required in order to transport and install temporaries by September 2021. Pricing was partly contingent on lease versus purchase.

- Assistant Superintendent Richie Smith had been attending weekly Martha's Vineyard Diversity Coalition meetings and asked that Coalition representatives be invited to the next TSC meeting. Chair Amy Houghton had attended a December meeting and looked forward to their input on how they could partner with the School.

Adjournment

- **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED MR. WATTS BY THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:50PM: MS. CUTRER—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.**

Appendix A: Meetings/Events:

- TSC/TSBC/Select Board/FinCom – 6:30PM, Wednesday, January 13, 2021 – Zoom
- TSBC – TBD 5:00PM, Monday, January 25, 2021 - Zoom
- MVRHSC – 5:00PM, Monday, February 1, 2021 – Zoom
- TSC – 4:30PM, Tuesday, February 9, 2021 – Zoom

Appendix B: Actions

- Supt. D'Andrea – post testing FAQ on website.
- Supt. D'Andrea/Prin. Custer – report resident Tisbury student numbers (Falmouth Academy, home school, etc.)
- Prin. Custer/Ms. Houghton – post MV Diversity Coalition invitation and agenda item.

continued >

Appendix C: Documents on File:

- Agenda 1/12/21
- NESDEC, Tisbury Elementary School, Vineyard Haven, MA, 2020-2021 Enrollment Projection Report (9 p.)
- Tisbury School FY'22 Budget Analysis #3.0 Draft, January 12, 2021
- Tisbury School Budget for 2019/2020, Draft #3 – January 12, 2021 (Shared Services Vote on 12 10 2020)
- Tisbury School Fund Balances Fiscal Year 2020-2021 1/8/21

Minutes respectfully submitted by Office On Call/Marni Lipke.

Marni Lipke – Recorder

Date

Amy Houghton – TSC Chair

Date

Minutes approved 2/9/21