

**Tisbury School Committee
in Joint Meeting with the
Tisbury School Advisory Council
4:00PM, Tuesday, March 9, 2021
Tisbury School Conference Room**

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- TSC Members Present:** Chair Amy Houghton, Jen Cutrer, Michael Watts,
SAC Members Present: Wiet Bacheller, John Custer, Sean Debettencourt,
Meredith Goldthwait, John Guadagno, Kelly Hayes,
Melissa Larsen, Jim Norton, Nicole Shirley, Jane Taylor,
Sarah Ward,
- Staff:** John Custer – Principal, Melissa Ogden – Asst. Principal;
Matt D’Andrea – Superintendent, Richie Smith – Asst. Superintendent,
Mark Friedman – Business Manager,
Sean DeBettencourt, Meredith Goldthwait, Kelly Hayes, Rita Jeffers,
Natalie Krauthamer, Emily Levett, Nicole Shirley, Anne Williamson,
- Others:** PTO - Siobhan Mullin, Marni Lipke – Recorder
Town Jeff Kristal – Select Board, Jynell Kristal – FinCom,
* Late Arrivals or early departures of TSC members.

The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) and the Tisbury School Advisory Council (SAC) meetings were called to order at 4:03PM.

I. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

- **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. JEN CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. MICHAEL WATTS THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, ABSTENTIONS AS ABSENT):**
 - FEBRUARY 9, 2021 AND
 - FEBRUARY 23, 2021;**MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. AMY HOUGHTON—AYE.**
- **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. MEREDITH GOLDTHWAIT AND SECONDED BY MS. SARAH WARD THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 16, 2020 TISBURY SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING WERE APPROVED: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 3 ABSTENTIONS due to absence: MR. JIM NORTON—ABSTAIN, MS. WARD—AYE, MS. KELLY HAYES—AYE, MS. MELISSA LARSEN—AYE, MS. GOLDTHWAIT—AYE, MS. WIET BACHELLER—ABSTAIN, MR. SEAN DEBETTENCOURT—ABSTAIN, MS. JANE TAYLOR—AYE, MR. JOHN GUADAGNO—AYE, PRINCIPAL JOHN CUSTER—AYE.**

II. Superintendent’s Report

A. All Island School Committee (AISC) - A meeting was planned for the near future.

B. COVID Testing Program

- The most recent participation was 892, just short of the 900 per week goal. Positive results were very low. The program continued to be very effective in detecting and containing school spread and was expected to continue to the end of the school year. Martha's Vineyard Hospital (MVH) scheduled an educators’ vaccination clinic on March 11th and some staff were aggressively pursuing other opportunities. There was a glitch in the website.

- Department of Education mandate was to be full in-person: kindergarten (K) through 5th grade by April 5th and 6th through 8th grade by April 28th—as yet no date set for high schools. The MVPS adopted the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 6 ft. distancing guidelines, however the DOE suggested 3-6 ft.—with some research showing the difference presented minimal risk. In any case Tisbury School would face substantial adjustments in space, scheduling and transportation.

C. School Choice Vote

All Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) participated, which was beneficial for many students. In keeping with Superintendent Matt D'Andrea's recommendation:

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO CONTINUE PARTICIPATING AS A KINDERGARTEN THROUGH EIGHTH GRADE SCHOOL OF CHOICE FOR THE 2021-2022 ACADEMIC SCHOOL YEAR; 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.

III. Financial Report

A. Fund Balances (See documents on file & below: Actions.)

Balances were favorable. The Revolving Lunch deficit was due only to State reimbursement delays. The Manter Fund reflected the lack of field trip spending.

IV. Principal's Report

A. Reopening Update (See documents on file & 1/12/21 Minutes p.23 #IV A.)

- K through 4th grade were in school 5 days a week 8:15AM to 2:40PM. However the alternating week middle school classes had a shortened day from 8:15AM to 1:40PM. Classroom and schedule changes would be instigated during April vacation, for example the gym was being used as an alternating 5th and 8th grade classroom. Principal John Custer and staff were most comfortable with 6 ft. distancing which could be accommodated with the current in-person Cohorts. However, although all wanted to see students in the building, if more students shifted from Cohort D remote learning, the School would face serious distancing challenges. Out of 290 students, Cohort D enrollment was currently: 21 K through 4th grade and 24 in 5th through 8th grades.
- Prin. Custer would not invite Cohort D to be in-person for possible MCAS testing—as not worth the health risk.
- In another step forward for meaningful education, Unified Arts instruction was scheduled to start March 15th.

B. Temporary School (See documents on file.)

Prin. Custer was looking forward to seeing the plans for the temporary school, emphasizing the need for adequate space for all programs to provide two years of quality education during renovation/construction. A good meeting with the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) on the proposed school project brought out the importance of accurate information on the lead up to the vote re: how it will be built, why it costs so much, etc. Regular bimonthly TSC/Select Board (TSB) meetings were scheduled to address the issues. Three articles would be discussed at today's meeting:

- actual school project;
- site planning/construction of the temporary school—without specific language on scope and size; Prin. Custer and Mr. Watts expected to have serious input for the design, with MVPS Business Administrator Mark Friedman to assist with procurement;

- solar array funding for a sustainable school—possibly delayed for a year or two in keeping with solar installation timeline toward the end of the project.
- Town leadership was solidly supportive of the project moving forward as a whole.

V. Staff Report

Prin. Custer was saddened to recommend:

- **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY WITH GRATITUDE ACKNOWLEDGED THE RETIREMENT OF LONG TIME SIXTH GRADE SCIENCE AND MATH TEACHER SUE CANHAM AS OF SEPTEMBER 4, 2021; 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. CUTRER—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.**
- Staff was concerned about the challenges coming back to all in-person school particularly in terms of:
 - unified arts teachers traveling from class to class:
 - extreme difficulties of simultaneously teaching in-person and remotely, and
 - middle school education model that did not adapt well to remote learning.
- While acknowledging that it was not the same education, Chair Amy Houghton, cited the amazing work of the staff rising to the year's challenge and was sure the problems could be resolved in the same creative transformation.
- Administrators emphasized staff unhappiness.

Adjournment

- **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. WATTS AND SECONDED BY MS. CUTRER THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:00PM: MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.**
- **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. BACHELLER AND SECONDED BY MR. GUADAGNO THE TISBURY SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:00PM: MS. WARD—AYE, MS. HAYES—AYE, MR. DEBETTENCOURT—AYE, MS. BACHELLER—AYE, MR. GUADAGNO—AYE, PRINCIPAL CUSTER—AYE.**

Appendix A: Meetings/Events:

- TSBC/PTO – 6:30PM, Thursday, March 18, 2021 – Zoom
- TSC/Select Board – TBD, Tuesday, March 23, 2021 – Zoom
- MVRHSC – 5:00PM, Monday, April 5, 2021 – Zoom
- TSC – 4:30PM, Tuesday, April 13, 2021 – Zoom
- STM/ATM – TBD 12:00N June 12, 13, 2021, 4:00PM June 14, 2021

Appendix B: Actions

Prin. Custer – send out Manter Fund report.

Appendix C: Documents on File:

- Agendas (2 p.) 3/9/21
- Tisbury School Fund Balances Fiscal Year 2020-2021 3/8/21
- Custer email re: Introduction of in-person unified arts classes 3/8/21
- Article Submission Form, Annual Town Meeting (ATM), Revised, Article – To Fund Solar Array for School 2/16/21

continued >

Appendix C: Documents on File (cont.):

- Article Submission Form, Special Town Meeting (STM), Article – To Fund Renovation and Expansion of Elementary School 2/23/21
- Article to reappropriate unexpended balance of Article #1 3/1/21
- Canham letter of retirement 3/8/21
- Custer email re: Manter Fund Investment 3/10/21

Minutes respectfully submitted by Office On Call/Marni Lipke.

Marni Lipke – Recorder

Date

Amy Houghton – TSC Chair

Date

Minutes approved 5/25/21

**Tisbury School Committee
in Joint Meeting with the
Tisbury Select Board
5:00PM, Tuesday, March 9, 2021
by Zoom Cloud Conference due to Covid-19 Restrictions**

1

Present: Chair Amy Houghton, Jen Cutrer,
Select Bd: Chair Jim Rogers, Larry Gomez, Jeff Kristal,
Others: Members of the Public including: Carl Adelson, Pamela Brock, Caitlin,
Chris Cassidy, Patrice Davenport, Lynne Fraker, Jason Frigon,
Adam Guaraldi Jared Meader, Ashley Medeiros, Debby Packer,
Laura Silber Peter & Nancy, Recorder – Marni Lipke,
Schools: Supt. Matt D’Andrea, Asst. Supt. - Richie Smith, Prin. John Custer,
Asst. Prin. Melissa Ogden, Julie Brand, Kelly Hayes, Rita Jeffers,
Melissa Larsen, Emily Levett, Nicole Shirley, Anne Williamson,
PTO – Siobhan Mullin,
Town: Town Administrator – Jay Grande, Administrative Assistant Alex BenDavid,
Treasurer – Jonathan Snyder, Moderator - Deborah Medders,
TSBC: Harold Chapdelaine, Prin. John Custer, Rita Jeffers, Rachel Orr,
Jim Rogers,
Planning Bd. - Chair Elaine Miller, Ben Robinson, Cheryl Dobel,
FinCom: Chair Nancy Gilfoy, Jynell Kristal, Laura Rose, Sarah York,
Ambulance – Tracey Jones, Library – Amy Ryan, Arch Smith,
DPW Director Kirk Metell, Building Inspector – Ross Seavey,
Press: MVTV, MV Times – Rich Saltzberg, Maia Coleman – Vineyard Gazette,
* Late Arrivals or early departures of TSC members.

Call Meeting to Order

- The Tisbury Select Board (TSB) was called to order at 5:10PM.
 - The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) was called to order at 5:11PM.
- (Recorder’s note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.)

1. Modular Classroom/Temporary School (See Minutes: 2/9/21 p.3-4 #V & 2/23/21.)

Town Hall staff were getting ready to close the warrant.

- The largest article was \$55,000,000 to fund the Tisbury School project to be voted a Special Town Meeting (STM) on Sunday, June 13, 2021 and then at the ballot.
 - It was suggested that as the solar array would not be in construction in Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) that the article be postponed until FY23 or FY24—with the some support from the Tisbury School Building Committee (TSBC). In the meantime grant and alternative funding would be aggressively pursued.
 - Another article would repurpose funds from the 2019 School environmental emergency article (see 9/18/19 Minutes) to insure language was sufficient for temporary school facilities use. These funds, in conjunction with the \$2,500,000 in the above School project article, should be sufficient.
- The temporary facility would incorporate comments from Tisbury School Principal John Custer to meet all educational needs.

- It was agreed that to maintain flexibility the temporary school article should not delineate an address. The article was sponsored by both the TSB and the TSC (see below: Actions).
- The TSB/TSC would meet when the draft temporary school drawings were submitted.
 - The TSBC and Owners Project Manager (OPM) were working diligently on outreach including to neighborhood residents, West Chop seasonal home owners, the Vineyard Haven Business Association, and to any private groups requesting personal meetings.

Adjournment

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:34PM: MS. HOUGHTON—AYE, MS. CUTRER—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE.

Appendix A: Meetings/Events:

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Appendix B: Actions

Mr. Grande – edit Temporary School article as follows:

- sponsored by Select Board and School Committee
- delete address and add temporary school in case another site has to be found.

Appendix C: Documents on File:

- Agendas (2 p.) 3/9/21

Minutes respectfully submitted by Office On Call/Marni Lipke.

Marni Lipke – Recorder

Date

Amy Houghton – TSC Chair

Date

Minutes approved 5/25/21