

**UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD  
6:15PM, Tuesday, June 22, 2021  
West Tisbury School Library and  
By Zoom Cloud Conference**

**Page 1 of 6**

Present: Chair – Alex Salop, Roxanne Ackerman\*, Kate DeVane\*, Robert Lionette, Skipper Manter,

Others: Susan Conlan, Rebekah Thomson, Nick Waldman,  
Supt's Shared Services Office: Matt D'Andrea, Richie Smith,  
Mark Friedman, Nancy Dugan, Ruda Stone,  
Principals: Donna Lowell-Bettencourt, Mary Boyd, Susan Stevens,  
Staff: Robyn Dori, Kaitlyn Kurth, Catherine Mafcher, Victoria Phillips,  
Ellen Rossi, Donna Swift,  
Towns: West Tisbury – Kate Warner  
Press – MVTV – Shavanae Anderson, MV Times - Lucas Thors,

\*Late arrivals or early departures of UIRSC members

**Call to Order** (Agenda Item #I)

The Up-Island Regional School Committee (UIRSC) meeting was called to order.

\* Roxanne Ackerman was absent at various points, leaving the in-person meeting and rejoining by remote participation.

*(Recorder's Note: As the first in-person/remote hybrid format, this meeting had serious technical difficulties: muting/unmuting, background noise, human error, etc.; consequently Minutes (including some motions) are summarized and occasionally extrapolated from partial information.)*

**Approval of Minutes** (Agenda Item #II)

**A. Including But Not Limited To: May 4, 2021**

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 4, 2021 MINUTES; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

**Principals' Report** (Agenda Item #III)

\* Kate Devane entered the meeting during this conversation and was occasionally absent due to technology problems.

**A. Susan Stevens – Chilmark School** (See documents on file.)

The Weekly Peek was particularly important this year because Administration and staff were unable to meet with parents. For example pictures of student-made whale models were hung on clothes racks outside the school with QR codes attached for parents to scan for detailed information. The 2nd/3rd grade class made a ship model with separate groups taking various parts of the ship.

**B. Donna Lowell-Bettencourt – West Tisbury School (WTS)**

• Principal Donna Lowell-Bettencourt thanked everyone, particularly families and teachers, who worked so hard to manage this difficult year—also commending Assistant Principal Mary Boyd who put in many, many hours of planning.

• In response to UIRSC interest, she outlined future programming, which was designed after reaching out for teacher/class assessments with the goal of reducing or avoiding regression:

- robust summer school with invitations to 39 students for literacy and math, 8 for socio-emotional support, plus the regular Extended School Year (ESY) for WTS and Shared Services students;
- start of school/fall 2021 universal assessment, including Response to Intervention (RTI) to move students to on-track curriculum.

**UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD**

**June 22, 2021**

**Page 2 of 6**

**Superintendent's Report** (Agenda Item #V)

**A. Annual Town Meeting (ATM) Update**

The Aquinnah Town Meeting wrapped up the season Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup> with all Towns approving all school budgets and warrant articles, including the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) articles. Superintendent Matt D'Andrea thanked the community for their support.

**B. Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Non-Union Salary Recommendation**

This year the recommendations included the restored FY21 increases for a total of 4.5%, total increases within the budgeted amount.

• *ON A MOTION DULY MADE AND SECONDED THE FISCAL YEAR 2020 SALARY ADJUSTMENTS FOR MANAGEMENT AND NON-UNION PERSONNEL AS PROPOSED WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE.*

**Personnel** (See documents on file.) (Agenda Item #VII)

**A. Resignations**

**B. Leaves of Absence (LOA)**

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ACKNOWLEDGE, ACCEPT OR APPROVE:*

- *THE RESIGNATION OF WEST TISBURY SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE WORKER NISA WEBSTER AS OF JUNE 4, 2021,*

- *THE RESIGNATION OF WEST TISBURY SCHOOL MUSIC TEACHER ALEXIS MACTAYLOR AS OF JUNE 22, 2021,*

- *THE RESIGNATION OF WEST TISBURY SCHOOL LIBRARY/TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL KATE ATHEARN,*

- *A LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR WEST TISBURY SCHOOL ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHER ANNEMARIE RALPH FOR THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR;*

*ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

• These were key educators, but Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt had been successful so far in hiring replacements—although housing continued to be an issue. Some positions were still being advertised on both State and local hiring websites and press.

• Supt. D'Andrea informed the UIRSC that he had granted Head of Chilmark School Susan Stevens, a one time only stipend from Covid grant funds, covering 10 days pay during the 2020 summer break to cover extra work done to prepare the building for Covid restricted opening. Ms. Stevens had brought this matter to the UIRSC at the time (see 7/20/20 Minutes p.4 #VI) and one reason it had not been granted was the unknown budgetary impact of the pandemic. Supt. D'Andrea emphasized that this was a one-time-only payment for additional work, that would not be compounded in her salary and was not a merit stipend. The UIRSC discussed the following issues.

- Supt. D'Andrea had paid similar stipends to some but not all other requests from Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) staff—occasioning some very difficult decisions. Many MVPS staff worked very hard without compensation.

- Members disagreed on Superintendent versus UIRSC authority to grant the stipend. The stipend was not part of the UIRSD budget. The grant funds were at the discretion of the Superintendent, who was informing the UIRSC of his action. Personnel matters were not within UIRSC purview.

- There was some support for increasing Ms. Stevens summer pay which annually exceeded the 5 contracted days.

**Up Island Regional School District (UIRSD)** (Agenda Item #IV)

**A. Appointing a Task Force for Environmentally-Friendly Building Updates**

(See 5/4/21 Minutes p.1 #IV A.)

Since he was not available to make the necessary calls Chair Alex Salop proposed ceding authority to populate the Task Force to West Tisbury Energy Committee Chair Kate Warner.

# UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD

June 22, 2021

Page 3 of 6

- It was suggested the Superintendent's Office send letters to the Towns to choose representation.
  - The UIRSC would consider Task Force administrative funding (minutes, meeting posting, etc.)
  - After some discussion on the size and constitution of the Task Force:
    - *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO RECONSTITUTE THE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY BUILDING TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP AS FOLLOWS:*
      - *WEST TISBURY ENERGY COMMITTEE CHAIR, KATE WARNER,*
      - *MVPS BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR – MARK FRIEDMAN,*
      - *CHILMARK TOWN REPRESENTATIVE,*
      - *AQUINNAH TOWN REPRESENTATIVE,*
      - *WEST TISBURY TOWN REPRESENTATIVE (SELECT BOARD OR FINANCE COMMITTEE),*
      - *WEST TISBURY SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE,*
      - *UIRSC REPRESENTATIVE,*
      - *CHILMARK SCHOOL OR WEST TISBURY SCHOOL CUSTODIAN—AS NEEDED PENDING EACH MEETING'S AGENDA;*
- SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

## Finance

(Agenda Item #V)

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

The UIRSD FY21 Budget was stable with very few negatives, most of which were pandemic-generated variances common across the MVPS:

- no district-wide deficits;
- West Tisbury School – Special Education (SpEd) teachers salaries, Nurse/s Substitutes, Custodial Supplies, Power/Light (open windows), with small negatives in separation costs and insurance;
- Chilmark – Longevity, Furniture (pandemic social distancing desk purchases), Nurse's Salary (see Minutes: 8/27/20 p.2 & 9/1/20 p.4 #B, & 11/9/20 p.2 #IV A), Custodial Supplies, Power/Light, with minor overages in insurance. (The Chilmark Nurse salary was paid within the General Fund without use of grant funds.)

### B. Year-End Budget Transfers (See documents on file.)

In response to UIRSC questions it was noted that there were still some FY21 accounting measures and charges (MVRHS transportation cost distributions, debt service, etc.) but Administration did not anticipate any out of the ordinary end-of-year expenses. Due to pandemic budget uncertainty, FY21 vacancies were often not filled so funds could be held in reserve for unforeseen expenses; consequently there were substantial residuals and without guarantees or specifics, FY21 would produce more Excess and Deficiency (E & D) than in recent years. MVPS Business Administrator Mark Friedman expected to complete the year-end closing and have an E & D estimate earlier than last year—at which time the UIRSC could discuss its actions.

- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 WEST TISBURY SCHOOL SITE END-OF-YEAR TRANSFERS AS DOCUMENTED; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 CHILMARK SCHOOL SITE END-OF-YEAR TRANSFERS AS DOCUMENTED; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

### C. Revolving Fund – Lost/Broken Equipment

Administration in consultation with Technologist David Crawford considered the implications of the enlarged computer equipment inventory loaned out to families and students for remote schoolwork during the pandemic, some of which was likely to be lost, not returned or damaged. Such expenses were partially covered by insurance but there was a \$30-40 deductible charge. In accordance with MVRHS practice it was proposed the UIRSC establish a revolving fund account under Massachusetts

## UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD

June 22, 2021

Page 4 of 6

General Law (MGL) Chapter 71 Section 47 (not requiring a Town Meeting vote), to allow families to pay costs/deductibles—with scholarship funding available for those in need. There was a similar fund (which also tracked materials) for lost or damaged library items, however the UIRSD was advised not to co-mingle funds and to keep a separate account for Technology equipment because it was a different department and involved different tracking (serial numbers, etc.). The UIRSC discussed:

- family/student responsibility and obligation, despite best intentions;
- economic equity issues penalizing families already in hardship;
- order of magnitude (700 student MVRHS fund generated \$2-5,000 per year);
- request that Supt. D'Andrea research/draft a policy.

• *ON A MOTION DULY MADE AND SECONDED, THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED THE CREATION OF A WEST TISBURY SCHOOL LOST BROKEN EQUIPMENT FUND AND A CHILMARK SCHOOL LOST BROKEN EQUIPMENT FUND; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

• The WTS roof design Request For Proposal (RFP) garnered one bid from Russo Barr Associates, a reputable firm that also worked on the MVRHS 2015 roof replacement, at not more than \$40,000 with some possible minor reimbursable expenses. The UIRSC asked why the previous design could not be re-used to reduce costs. It was part of the responsibility and due diligence of a firm to physically inspect and attest to the current status of the roof, not taking anything for granted to avoid later change orders, including sub-structure issues, possible test borings, differing materials and exact construction specifications (specs).

• *ON A MOTION DULY MADE AND SECONDED THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AWARDING THE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL ROOF DESIGN CONTRACT TO RUSSO BARR ASSOCIATES: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: KATE DEVANE—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

• Just as the Chilmark School Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning (HVAC) construction bids vastly exceeded expectations and available funds, the \$380,000 bid on the reduced project for insulation upgrade and HVAC controls (see 5/4/21 Minutes p.1-2 #V A) was more than double the \$150,000 Owners Project Manager (OPM) estimates. The 2021 summer construction timeline was now passed and the work could not proceed while school was in session or during the short school vacations. Administration therefore returned the issue to the UIRSC to consider various options.

- The construction market was not predictable in terms of the permanent or semi-permanent effect of the current boom.

- The UIRSC could return to Chilmark (and the other UIRSD Towns) to re-fund the project in a warrant article.

- The UIRSC could go out to bond for the single project—requiring notice to the Towns and a 60 day waiting period or Special Town Meeting approval. The bond advisor considered there was no advantage to the delays that would result from bundling in other UIRSD projects.

- Local professionals reviewed the current School HVAC and considered it was sufficiently reliable to withstand the coming year.

- It was agreed this should be an agenda issue for the FY23 budget discussions, with a timeline of a March 2022 RFP, summer construction and bond payments starting in fall 2022.

### **D. Chilmark School – 2021-22 Expected Enrollment Increase & Budget – Possible Vote**

The Chilmark School projected two 2021-22 classes that would exceed 20 students, (24 in Kindergarten/1<sup>st</sup> grade (K/1) and 21 in 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> grade) at which point the teacher's contract required Administration/UIRSC discussion with the attendance of the teachers in question on options to address the situation. Preferred multi-age class size was less than 18 students and most MVPS stand alone kindergartens were 12-13 students. In addition projected enrollment for the near future continued the growth trend. Ms. Stevens proposed to resolve both problems by adding a 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade class that would move the "bubble" up through the school for the next 4-6 years.

• The Reading/Math Specialist taught a similar class during the recent pandemic year and agreed to continue for 2021-22. Education Support Professional (ESP) might include returning staff from

**UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD**

**June 22, 2021**

**Page 5 of 6**

maternity leave and one already in the FY22 Budget, resulting in an estimated shortfall of about \$36,000. The School might advertise for a 0.6 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Math/Reading/Art teacher.

- There were 3 School Choice students: one Individual Education Plan recommended student, and two children of teachers. It was common MVPS practice to prioritize teachers children allowing them simplify their schedules and arrive/depart on time. Ms Stevens reminded the UIRSC that even if School Choice enrollment was eliminated the classes would still exceed 20 students and emphasized that School Choice decisions were made in the best interest of the students.

- Mr. Manter returned to his objections to School Choice and School Choice reimbursement (see 12/15/20 Minutes p.2). Special Education expenses were reimbursed by the sending Township, sometimes beyond and sometimes under incurred expenses (WTS usually profited by the exchange). Mr. Manter also objected to teachers' children having an impact on enrollment.

- Some members commended Ms. Stevens for her creative solution to the situation.

- *KATE DEVANE MOVED GIVE HEAD OF CHILMARK SCHOOL SUSAN STEVENS THE BUDGETARY ABILITY TO CREATE THE CLASS AS SHE PROPOSED; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 4 AYES, 1 NAY, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SKIPPER MANTER—NAY, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

- There were a number of variables still in play so funding amounts and sources could not be final, however for the ESP position Mr. Friedman suggested:

- use of \$15,800 as the 16% Chilmark share of the \$98,799 contingency reserve; and

- transfer from the Principals Conferences and Professional Development and other Principal lines.

The process involved the same sort of transfers as voted above and the vote could be delayed until figures were more settled.

- Mr. Manter repeatedly objected that the Contingency draw would penalize West Tisbury and should be adjusted for a different site-based formula. Mr. Friedman explained that there were a number of formulas within the UIRSD budget and the difference in question (~ 0.1% of the Contingency Reserve only) was a de minimus amount in a multi-million dollar budget. Other members objected to the constant repetition of the issue and emphasized the Up Island Regional School District as a unified whole for the benefit of the Region's children.

- *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO AUTHORIZE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR MARK FRIEDMAN TO ALLOCATE FUNDS TO COVER THE ADDITIONAL CHILMARK SCHOOL CLASS AS PROPOSED; KATE DEVANE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 4 AYES, 1 NAY, 0 ABSTENTIONS: KATE DEVANE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—NAY.*

- Mr. Friedman might return to the UIRSC if final amounts or staff configuration differed substantially from the above proposal.

**Up Island Regional School District (UIRSD)**

(Agenda Item #IV)

**B. Reorganization**

Current Vice Chair Roxanne Ackerman was not able to take on the role of Chair this year. Traditionally the UIRSC changed Chairs each year, however it was also suggested that a two-year term was beneficial in allowing the Chair to gain experience.

- *KATE DEVANE MOVED TO NOMINATE ALEX SALOP AS CHAIR AND ROBERT LIONETTE AS VICE CHAIR; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION SUPERSEDED.*

- *ON A MOTION DULY MADE AND SECONDED THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MOVED TO CONTINUE THE CURRENT OFFICERS: ALEX SALOP AS CHAIR, ROXANNE ACKERMAN AS VICE CHAIR: MOTION PASSED: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSTENTION—SKIPPER MANTER.*

**Public Comment - None** (Agenda Item #VIII)

## UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD

June 22, 2021

Page 6 of 6

### Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair (Agenda Item #IX)

- *ON A MOTION DULY MADE AND SECONDED THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY MOVED TO ACCEPT A \$700 DONATION FROM THE MARTHA'S VINEYARD STRIPED BASS AND BLUEFISH DERBY SANCY PACHICO MEMORIAL YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP TO THE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL; 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE.*
- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ACCEPT \$4,000 FROM THE CHILMARK SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION TO PURCHASE FOUNTAS & PINNELL READING KITS; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: KATE DEVANE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE.*
- In view of the technical problems manifested at this meeting, to continue the increased public convenience and participation, and to reduce the travel-based carbon footprint Skipper Manter advocated returning to the Zoom format for UIRSC meetings. Mr. Salop advocated for modeling a return to normalcy and suggested a possible hybrid with resolution of technical issues.  
- (Mr. Manter also proposed a ban on MVRHS students driving to school. Ms. Stevens referred to her Electric Vehicle (EV). Alex Salop looked forward to biking with Mr. Manter to UIRSC meetings.)

Meetings/Events:

- **UIRSC – TBD**

### Adjournment

THE CHAIR ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 8:49PM.

### Documents on File:

- Agenda 6/22/21
- Name (Original Name)... User Email...attendance sheet
- Chilmark School 5/7/21 Weekly Peek (4 p.)
- What to Ask Kids Instead of “How was your day?”
- Stevens email re: Whale Exhibit (4 p.) 5/11/21
- Chilmark School 6/16/21 Weekly Peek (4 p.)
- Humpback Whale/QR Code
- Ship model photo
- Up-Island Regional School District All Expenditure Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2020-2021, (14 p.) 6/21/21
- Up-Island Regional School District Revenue Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2020-2021, 6/21/21
- UIRSD FY21 Year-End Proposed Budget Transfers June 22, 2021
- D’Andrea memo re: Management and Non-Union Salary Adjustments 6/22/21
- MacTaylor letter of resignation 5/11/21
- Webster email re: Last Day 5/24/21
- Ralph email re: Next Year 5/27/21

**Minutes approved as amended 9/20/21**