

**Martha's Vineyard Regional High School
Transportation Sub-Committee Meeting
Tuesday, June 15, 2021
10:00 AM**

Present: Sub-Committee Members: Chair–Kimberly Kirk, Kris O’Brien, Michael Watts,

Others/Staff: Supt. ’s Office: Superintendent – Matt D’Andrea, School Business Administrator – Mark Friedman,

Assistant Principal – Barbara-jean Chauvin, Finance Manager – Suzanne Cioffi, Transportation Director – Marc Rivers, VTA –Chyenne Ward, VTA–Anastasia Carter, Roxanne Ackerman, Anderson Bus – Jim Anderson and Jason Raposa,

Recorder: Minah Worley

(Recorder’s Note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity).

Call to Order: (Agenda Item #I)

The meeting of the Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) Transportation Sub-Committee was called to order by Chair Kimberly Kirk at 10:15 AM on June 16, 2020.

Approval of Minutes 02.16.21: (Agenda Item #II)

MICHAEL WATTS MOVES TO APPROVE THE 02/16/2021 MINUTES; KRIS O’BRIEN SECONDS; MOTION PASSES: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTION: MS. KIRK—AYE, MS. O’BRIEN—AYE, & MR. WATTS—AYE.

MVRHS Website Transportation info: (Agenda Item #III)

Transportation Director Mark Rivers explains to the Committee that typically, most schools have a transportation website or at least a dedicated page where bus and transportation information is gathered for the public. Mr. Rivers would like a web page to help inform the community of the bus schedules.

Comments:

- There was a question to the Committee where the transportation bus schedule would be digitally located and who would manage the site. Supt. Matt D’Andrea confirmed that the Martha’s Vineyard Public School website would host the page and the Transportation department along with the Supt. IT department would manage the bus schedule and information.

Bus Driver/Monitor Job Description: (Agenda Item #IV)

Mr. Rivers updates the Committee regarding revisiting and editing the Bus Driver/Monitor job description. Several years ago, Jimmy Flint had written verbiage, but Mr. Rivers hopes to provide a more updated job description that reflects the new transportation policy. A new job description will help the Transportation department clarify job position responsibilities internally as well.

Comments:

**Martha's Vineyard Regional High School
Transportation Sub-Committee Meeting
Tuesday, June 15, 2021
10:00 AM**

- Mr. Rivers will share the current Driver/Monitor job description with the Committee. The next steps will be to edit and update the job description to be consistent with the new Transportation Policy recently passed.

Fleet Planning overview: (Agenda Item #V)

Chair Kirk explains to the Committee that today's electric bus fleet discussions are an exploratory exercise to educate the Committee about the possibilities and options regarding electric buses.

School Business Administrator Mark Friedman updates the Committee that the MVYPS has twenty-five full-size buses as our fleet. In addition, approximately two to three get replaced or repaired yearly to keep the MVRHS fleet transportation system reliable for the school year. Mr. Friedman further explains the electric bus pilot program in how the MVRHS received a state grant to purchase two electric buses. Currently, the MVRHS is waiting on two Towns to approve the warrant articles to go forward with the electric bus purchase proposal, and Mr. Friedman further expresses the positive opportunities clean energy and financial cost savings the electric bus pilot could be, but also informs the Committee that it is also a complicated process.

Anderson Bus Company has been the vendor supplying the MVYPS with gas bus vehicles for many years. Today, Jim Anderson joins the Committee to educate further and share the opportunities of what a clean energy transportation fleet could be.

Jim Anderson shares a brief history of Anderson Bus Company, a second-generation family business that services the New England region with gas and electric Blue Bird school buses. Mr. Anderson shares a wealth of positive benefits of electric buses because it is the future of the automotive industry. Mr. Anderson further shares that currently, there are grants and government support to push the needle further forward to clean energy nationwide. Two of the main constraints of electric buses that Mr. Anderson shares are the high price tag of the buses and the cost of the charging infrastructure.

Comments

- Mr. Anderson clarifies electric buses are no different than gas buses, just a quieter and environmentally conscious approach. It was also clarified again that the only difference between electric-powered vs. gas buses is the capital expense at the beginning costs.
Please note, long term expenses are reduced because of less need for yearly repairs and maintenance.
- It was clarified that electric buses aren't considered "cutting edge" new tech in the automotive market since they are a proven method in the independent industry. However, the deployment into public services is still in the infancy stage.
- Mr. Anderson explains the potential revenue source concept of Vehicle to Grid (V2G). Meaning the electric buses use lithium-ion batteries as energy/fuel charged by the electric grid. During peak times, the grid will use extra electricity stored on the lithium-ion batteries. The grid/electrical company will then subsidize the electric bill or "buy" back electricity from the MVRHS.

**Martha's Vineyard Regional High School
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- *Please note, Mr. Anderson fully understands the Committee's reservations with new technology, and the deployment is successful. Still, Mr. Anderson further explains that electric power companies have also stepped into becoming partners supporting the V2G program with further subsidies.*
- Mr. Rivers asks the Committee and Anderson Bus Company if it is possible to use the \$500,000 grant to go towards infrastructure costs or if the MVRHS can hold off purchasing the two electric buses until costs are lower. It was clarified that the \$500,000 grant is only for electric bus purchases.
- A Committee member asked for clarification regarding third-party financing and leasing electric bus options. Mr. Anderson provided detailed processes of turnkey leasing and financing electric buses. *Please note, with this non-independent route. The leasing company will own the charging infrastructure and vehicles.*
- Discussions conclude with the takeaway that more government-funded grants are to be awarded at the federal level, assisting schools with transitioning towards electric clean energy buses. Chair Kirk thanks Anderson Bus Company for educating and joining the MVRHSC.

Tracking Technology Discussion: (Agenda Item #VI.)

Mr. Rivers explores a request for bus monitoring technology to serve the MVRHS better. Mr. Rivers is hoping for a scan card system to help identify and track students for safety reasons. Further discussions were TABLED due to time.

Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair: (Agenda Item #VII.)

None.

Executive Session: Preparation of Contract Negotiations: (Agenda Item #VIII.)

TBA.

Adjourn: (Agenda Item #IX)

KRIS O'BRIEN MOVES TO ADJOURN THE TRANSPORTATION SUB COMMITTEE MEETING; MICHAEL WATTS SECONDS; MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. KIRK—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE.

Meetings/Events: (by Zoom)

- TBA

Documents on File:

- Transportation Sub Committee Agenda 06.14.2021.pdf

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Respectfully submitted,

Minah Worley – Recorder

Date

Kimberly Kirk – Transportation Chair

Date

Matt D'Andrea – MVRHSD Superintendent

Date