

**UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD  
6:30PM, Tuesday, March 21, 2022  
By Zoom Cloud Conference**

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

**Others:** Supt's Shared Services Office: Matt D'Andrea, Mark Friedman, Hope Macleod, Ruda Stone, Richie Smith,  
Principals: Donna Lowell-Bettencourt, Mary Boyd, Susan Stevens,  
Staff: Catherine Mafcher, Donna Swift,  
Auditors: CLA - Chris Rogers,  
Press: MV Times – Eunki Seonwoo, MVTV – Shavannae Anderson, Vineyard Gazette – Louisa Hufstader,  
**Recorder:** Marni Lipke, \*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. (*Recorder's Note: This discussion has been grouped and summarized for clarity and brevity.*)

**Public Comment** (Agenda Item #II)

It was agreed that the public could comment at the end of any agenda topic, but that otherwise this item would be moved to the end of the meeting as part of the wrap up.

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

**A. Including But Not Limited To: January 20, 2022; February 22, 2022**

The grant funded Education Support Professional (ESP) position and 2 days of counseling were confirmed. Thanks were repeated to Administration, Principal Donna Lowell-Bettencourt and Kim Garrison for their collaboration on the grant (see 1/20/22 Minutes p.3-4 #IV B) and for their recognition of staff dedication.

- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE:*  
- *JANUARY 20, 2022 MINUTES, AND*  
- *FEBRUARY 22, 2022 MINUTES;*

*ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, ABSTENTIONS AS ABSENT: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

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

**A. Donna Lowell-Bettencourt – West Tisbury School (WTS)** (See documents on file.)

**1. Donations**

- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ACCEPT WITH GRATITUDE THE WARING COMMERCIAL HIGH SPEED IMMERSION BLENDER; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

- Although some students came to school in August to meet teachers, see classrooms and take evaluations, only 23% of incoming 1<sup>st</sup> graders were at or above reading grade level in September.

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Mathematics status followed the nationwide trend – only 19% at or above grade level and 75% were significantly below it. WTS had made significant progress as 53% were now at or above reading grade level and 50% were at or above math grade level (with only 36% significantly below). The levels reflected missed pre-schools, abbreviated kindergarten, some remote learning, compounded by continuing significant attendance changes, due to residual pandemic absences and un-enrollments, as well as Covid related school exposure spikes, quarantining, etc.

- Other grades showed less dramatic effects demonstrating the importance of having primary grade foundational skills: 2<sup>nd</sup> grade – 73% reading, and 64% math and progress to 76% both reading and math with many significantly above grade level.

• The WTS was using multi-approach academic, behavioral and emotional support with many intervention using the Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS). As more students caught up to grade level resources were shifted to those in greater need.

- Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt and Asst. Prin. Mary Boyd applied for a grant to fund an expanded 8 week summer school for close to 100 students. The grant could add a number of attractive features such as gym, art, field trips, etc. that would also make it easy for parents. At the end of the meeting there was a brief discussion on other funding options (e.g. Elementary and Secondary School Relief (ESSER) III funds, budget residuals, etc.) in case the application failed.

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

### 1. Library Services

\* Kate DeVane entered the meeting at 6:50PM.

The Chilmark School was designed as part of the Town campus with the Chilmark Community Center as a gym and the Chilmark Public Library as the school library. Lately there was friction over pandemic protocols for student use of the Library: masking, sneezing, exclusion of an entire class if any student had been sick, exclusion of a student due to inability to vaccinate, requirement for negative Covid test, etc.; and the Chilmark Librarian was advocating for a separate school library. The UIRSC noted:

- possible documentation delineating the Public Library as the school library;

- Library Director, Library Board of Trustees, Select Board and UIRSC purview and authority;

- universal rules for all adults and children using the Library.

• The UIRSC asked Superintendent Matt D'Andrea to approach the Chilmark Select Board on resolving the issue as soon as possible.

### 2. Chilmark School Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning (HVAC) Project

(See Minutes: 3/2/21 p.2 #IV, & 5/4/21 Minutes p.1-2 #V B, & 8/26/21 p.3 #V A, & 9/20/21 p.3-4 #IV C, & 10/25/21 p.1 #II.)

Once again the Request for Proposal (RFP) garnered very little interest and only one sub-standard bid at \$1,878,000 (UIRSD/Chilmark funding totaled \$1,264,000 including a 15% contingency margin). The Working Group met and consulted with the Owners Project Manager (OPM) but had not yet formulated a recommendation on how to proceed. The UIRSC expressed frustration, but no contract could be executed without pre-existing appropriated funds.

- Timing might be part of the difficulty since the 60 day work window (while the School was vacant) was during the summer tourist season, while transport and housing were at their most difficult. The Working Group was considering an option to find a temporary school location to vacate the building during the school year.

- Other options included breaking the project into sections, which presented some difficulties in procurement regulations.

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**Finance** (Agenda Item #V)

**A. Expense and Revenue Report** (See documents on file.)

- Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) Business Administrator Mark Friedman and Head of Chilmark School Susan Stevens were doing their best to grapple with the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) pressure from the additional classroom expenses (see 6/22/21 Minutes p.5-6 #D) and Nurse's salary. Mark Friedman projected that with very tight budgeting and the support of \$39,000 in ESSER III funding, the site budget should be within about \$1,000 of being on, under or over-budget.
- Other Chilmark site unexpected expenses included: the Septic invoice at \$11,000 (see 2/22/22 Minutes p. 2-3 #V A) and fuel costs which were a MVPS wide problem.
- The District part of the budget could be about \$20,000 over budget due to unexpected increase in the Dukes Count assessment.
- Of the ~\$100,000 Contingency Line, \$16,000 was voted to cover an additional Chilmark Education Support Professional (ESP), and \$50,000 was committed to the WTS Energy Feasibility study.
- Overall the WTS site would be on or under-budget, despite overruns such as septic issues (\$19,000+) and the classroom leak (see 2/22/22 Minutes p. 2-3 #V B). Insurance would reimburse the ceiling leak after invoices were paid and minus a \$5,000 deductible.
- As the Cape Cod Collaborative representative Kate DeVane again raised the issue of researching less expensive health insurance alternatives (see 2/22/22 Minutes p.4).

**B. Chilmark School Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Budget Concerns**

The UIRSC discussed other options besides the Contingency Line to relieve budget pressure, in particular Excess and Deficiency (E & D) regulations specified use for unexpected costs due to emergencies such as the septic and ceiling leak issues. E & D protocols were noted.

- ROXANNE ACKERMAN MOVED TO WITHDRAW \$40,000 FROM EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY; THERE WAS NO SECOND. The matter would be put on the next agenda.

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

**C. West Tisbury School Energy Feasibility Study – Status Update**

Bidding closed and there were two finalists to be interviewed this week. As this was a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) pricing was not yet established but would be considered as part of the contract negotiation process.

**A. School Choice Vote for 2022-2023**

At this time of year the MVPS elementary schools voted on whether to participate in School Choice, offering students the opportunity to attend schools that might better meet their and their families' needs. The UIRSC discussed the issue.

- Skipper Manter reiterated his objections (insufficient reimbursement rates re: per pupil costs, additional classroom triggers, etc.) and suggested a 5 year freeze on School Choice in consideration of recent population increases and to age out current School Choice students.
- It was also noted that the Tisbury School construction project was likely to generate a number of School Choice requests.
- Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt reported the number of WTS School Choice students was greatly diminished by a large graduating class and minimal acceptance of School Choice requests because of:
  - population growth (see Minutes: 10;18/21 p.4 #VI B, & 8/26/21 p.2 #ii), and
  - stretched resources for the WTS 2-year commitment to bring students up to grade level (see above).
- Other UIRSC members noted:

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- confidence in School leadership, who understood day-to-day pressures and School status in managing School Choice applications with caution and flexibility;
- setting a bad precedent in not participating;
- changed assessment policies that had reduced School Choice inequities;
- reciprocal generosity and support for other Towns at their times of need.
- The issue of giving priority to children of staff was raised as a matter of convenience for those staff trying to get to work on time while simultaneously delivering their children to hometown schools.
- *ROXANNE ACKERMAN MOVED TO CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL CHOICE FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR; KATE DEVANE SECONDED;*
- *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO AMEND THE SCHOOL CHOICE POLICY TO ADD PRIORITY TO CHILDREN OF UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT STAFF ALONG WITH SIBLINGS OF UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENT SIBLINGS; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED THE AMENDMENT: AMENDMENT WITHDRAWN; MOTION PASSED: 4 AYES, 1 NAY, 0 ABSTENTIONS: KATE DEVANE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—NAY, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

It was agreed that the policy amendment would be put on the next agenda.

**B. Student Opportunity Act – Introduction & Overview**

After the pandemic delays, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) revived work on the Student Opportunity Act, supporting sub-groups of need (see 6/18/20 AISC Minutes p.4 #II B) with additional Chapter 70 funds. Sub-groups included: students of color, low socio-economic families, English Language Learners (ELL) and Special Education (SpEd) students. Assistant Superintendent Richie Smith submitted (without UIRSC vote) a 3-year plan demonstrating how each MVPS supported its sub-groups, including how achievement disparity was addressed and budgeted. Amendments to the Plan regarding: pandemic closure impact, different strategies, etc. were due in April. Background information and budget impacts would be sent for UIRSC for discussion and vote at the April meeting.

- This was not a strategic plan but rather a report on how the UIRSD targeted sub-groups to close the achievement gap with 21 evidence-based programs, like the Extended School Year (ESY).
- A 30-40 minute webinar was available as an outline of the program.
- About 37 Massachusetts school districts received 85% of the funding based on foundation budgets, so the UIRSD was likely to obtain minimal funds (\$11,700 in FY21 for SpEd and ELL, preliminary FY23 estimate \$12,090)—allowing the filing of the short form.
- The UIRSC asked that Mr. Smith send the link and sub-groups. performance statistics

**Personnel** (Agenda Item #VII)

**A. Resignation** (See documents on file.)

- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RESIGNATION OF WEST TISBURY SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS OLIVIA BECCHIO (EFFECTIVE APRIL 29, 2022) AND LAIS SCHOENHERR (EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY); ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE. It was hoped they would both re-apply for positions.*

**Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair - None** (Agenda Item #VIII)

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Meetings/Events

- MVRHSC – 5:00PM, Monday, April 4, 2022
- UIRSC – 6:30PM, Thursday, April 7, 2022
- UIRSC – TBD

**Adjournment**

- *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:23PM; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

**Documents on File:**

- Agenda 3/21/22
- Chilmark School Weekly Peek (3 p.) 3/09/22
- Schoenherr resignation letter 3/16/22
- Becchio resignation letter 3/17/22
- All Expenditure Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2021-2022, (15 p.) 3/17/22
- Revenue Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2021- 2022 3/17/22
- Chat: Mary Boyd to Everyone (6:56 & 6:57 PM) From the Chilmark Library Website.

**Chilmark Library Express Services**

We open for adult and YA (12+) browsing and express services at all regular hours. In addition to browsing and checking out adult and YA books and DVD sections, express services include print/fax/copy/scan, hold pick up and reference requests.

The children's room is open for walk-in browsing from 10:30 AM - 5:00 PM on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, and 12:30 PM - 6:00 PM on Wednesday. There are capacity limits and you may have to wait if others are in the room ahead of you. Appointments are no longer necessary to visit the children's room. The children's room is closed to public access from 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM on Wednesdays and all day on Fridays to accommodate school use.

**HOURS:**

Sunday/Monday: Closed  
Tuesday: 10:30 AM - 5:00 PM  
Wednesday: 10:30 AM - 6:00 PM  
Thursday: 10:30 AM - 5:00 PM  
Friday: 10:30 AM - 1:30 PM  
Saturday: 10:30 AM - 5:00 PM

**Children's room walk-in hours:**

Tuesday 10:30 AM - 5:00 PM  
Wednesday 12:30 PM - 6:00 PM  
Thursday 10:30 AM - 5:00 PM  
Saturday 10:30 AM - 5:00 PM

Chilmark School appointments and closed to the public:

Wednesday 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM  
Friday 10:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Masks covering nose and mouth will be required for ages 2+ regardless of vaccination status.

**Minutes approved 4/27/22**