

**UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD  
6:30PM, Wednesday, April 27, 2022  
West Tisbury School and By Zoom**

**Page 1 of 5**

Present: Chair – Alex Salop, Kate DeVane, Roxanne Ackerman, Robert Lionette\*,  
Skipper Manter by phone,  
Others: Supt's Shared Services Office: Richie Smith, Mark Friedman, Hope MacLeod,  
Ruda Stone,  
Principals: Donna Lowell-Bettencourt, Susan Stevens, Mary Boyd,  
Towns – Chilmark Library Director Ebba Hierta,  
West Tisbury Energy Chair – Kate Warner,  
Press – Louisa Hufstader – Vineyard Gazette,  
Recorder: Marni Lipke \*Late arrivals or early departures

**Call to Order** (Agenda item #II)

The Up-Island Regional School Committee (UIRSC) meeting was called to order. Superintendent Matt D'Andrea could not attend due to a fire near his house.

*(Recorder's Note: Discussions have been grouped for clarity and brevity.)*

**Public Comment** – (To be moved to the end of future agendas) – None (Agenda Item #II)

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

**A. Including But Not Limited to: March 21, 2022 & April 7, 2022**

• KATE DEVANE MOVED TO APPROVE THE:

- MARCH 21, 2022 MINUTES, AND

- APRIL 7, 2022 MINUTES;

ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.

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

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

The English/Language Arts (E/LA) MCAS tests were completed today and the math/science round would start shortly. Staff and students came back rested from the spring vacation to the prospect of a lot of work and play in the short time before the end of the school year. Graduation was expected to return to the usual protocol (see below: Meetings/Events).

- Administration was awaiting word on the summer school grant (see 3/21/22 Minutes p.2 #IV A). If successful, the grant would automatically extend into a second year, which would align with the WTS two-year goal to catch students up to pre-pandemic levels.

- Later in the meeting everyone was invited to the first WTS musical since the pandemic, *The Wizard of Oz* to be performed this weekend—students were very, very excited.

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

Chilmark students also finished the MCAS E/LA testing. Events included: May Day games and May Pole dance, Pizza & Puberty Night, off-island bowling (for student sized bowls), the Walk to the Sea, Tinker Day for Science/Technology/Engineering/Math (STEM) projects, Water Day, and graduation.

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

April 27, 2022

Page 2 of 5

**Finance** (Agenda item #V)

## **A. Expense and Revenue Report**

\* Robert Lionette entered the meeting at 7:13PM, towards the end of this conversation.

Principal Donna Lowell-Bettencourt and Head of School Susan Stevens had been working with Business Administrator Mark Friedman on end of Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) projections.

• The WTS site was expected to be ~ \$36,000 under-budget due to residuals from periodic vacancies that would cover deficits such as:

- overall maintenance,
- student insurance,
- substitutes (see 10/25/21 Minutes p.1-2 #III),
- nurse expenses, etc.

Administration usually planned long-term maintenance in June, replacing a couple classroom floors, topping off the fuel oil tank, etc. but this year might be tight. The UIRSC considered rising fuel price strategies (lock-ins, projections, etc.). Like many Island municipalities, the UIRSD was part of the competitive Dukes County rates.

• The Chilmark site was projected to be ~ \$6,000 over-budget re: previously noted issues: increased enrollment/additional classroom, nurse's salary, and septic problems (see 3/21/22 Minutes p.3 #V).

• The Districtwide part would be ~ \$19,000 over-budget, mostly driven by:

- the Dukes County Retirement assessment (showing the lag time between retirement and assessment)
- health insurance costs from staff changes.

• The UIRSD FY22 Budget would be about \$11,000 in the black, but the residual did not conform to the various sites.

• The UIRSC considered how to address the situation.

- The Districtwide assessment formula was almost the same as the WTS site assessment formula and precedent was to shift funds between those parts.

- FY22 Contingency Line (in the Districtwide site) balance was projected at ~\$32,000 after draws:

◦ \$16,000 Chilmark School additional classroom (see 6/22/21 Minutes p.5-6 #D);

◦ up to \$50,000 for the WTS Energy Feasibility study (see 12/7/21 Minutes p.2 and below: #V B).

- A draw outside of the Chilmark "share" of the Contingency Line would invoke a different formula, however, the difference was fairly minimal, maybe in the hundred dollar range on a \$32,000,000 budget. Skipper Manter objected to any variation away from exact assessments, no matter the amount.

- The Contingency Line could also cover the Districtwide part deficit.

- The septic problems and the additional classroom fit the parameters of Excess and Deficiency (E & D) for unanticipated or emergency expenses. However E & D protocol was awkward and time-consuming, which was why the UIRSC instituted the Contingency Line (see 12/5/19 Minutes p.2).

- Regional versus silo spending was a constant issue with the UIRSC, as it was with many regions, although marked variation in school size and town finances made the UIRSD particularly challenging.

• *KATE DEVANE MOVED TO WITHDRAW UP TO \$6,000 FROM THE CONTINGENCY LINE TO COVER ANY CHILMARK SCHOOL SITE OVERAGE; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 4 AYES, 1 NAY, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—NAY.*

- (There was a suggestion that another \$6,000 be withdrawn to cover the WTS classroom floor maintenance and balance the withdrawals.) The Towns would be notified of the Contingency Line use.

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

April 27, 2022

Page 3 of 5

### **B. Approval of Contract for the West Tisbury School (WTS) Energy Feasibility Study**

(See documents on file & 12/7/21 Minutes p.1-2 #III A.)

17 companies responded to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and this was the unanimously preferred vendor. The Environmentally-Friendly Building Task Force entered into extensive negotiations on a scope of work that was the right balance of information and cost/value. The UIRSC expressed their appreciation for the Task Force members: Kate Warner, Robert Hanneman, Roxanne Ackerman, and Jim Newman with support from Mark Rosenbaum. Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) continued to be in the forefront sustainable public school buildings.

- The UIRSC expressed trepidation about current inflationary and unpredictable construction costs.

• *KATE DEVANE MOVED TO APPROVE AND AUTHORIZE SIGNATORIES FOR THE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL FEASIBILITY STUDY CONTRACT WITH RDH BUILDING SCIENCE, LLC AS RECOMMENDED BY THE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY SCHOOL BUILDING TASK FORCE; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE.*

### **C. Use of Excess and Deficiency (E & D) for Repair of Projects at the Chilmark and West Tisbury Schools** (See documents on file.)

The WTS was still working on \$20,000 in insurance reimbursement for financial losses due to the leak, and septic repair costs were \$19,300 for the WTS and \$11,688 for Chilmark School, totaling ~ \$51,000 of unexpected expenses. After the commitment to the FY23 Budget, E & D balance was \$375,614, (about 2.5% of the operating budget). The UIRSD cited:

- the 45 day waiting period for E & D draws,

- the WTS roof (see 1/20/22 Minutes p.3 #B) and Aquinnah Annual Town Meeting article;

- E & D residual to insure a good bond rating.

The idea was put forward to give the tight FY22 budget some extra reserve space however no action was taken at this time.

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

All UIRSC seats would come up for election in November 2022. Assistant Superintendent Richie Smith urged all members to pull nomination papers. The UIRSC asked the Administration to share nomination papers and opportunities with the wider education community.

#### **A. Town Meeting Update** (See below: Meetings/Events.)

Administration expressed their gratitude for the Towns' consistent support of school budgets. The last Annual Town Meeting was Aquinnah on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### **B. Student Support Services Update** (See documents on file.)

Student Support Director Hope MacLeod introduced a monthly newsletter with links and in-depth topics. This month's topic was differentiating between Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and 504s. Members were invited to contact Ms. MacLeod with any topics of interest.

• 504s applied to individuals with a disability that significantly impacted a major life function (building access, health, etc.) and required accommodations, modifications and occasionally services which allowed the student to access academics at the same level as their peers. This plan could follow an individual to college and workplaces.

• IEPs applied to all of the same parameters but also required specialized instructional services and was limited to kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

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

April 27, 2022

Page 4 of 5

- The UIRSC had 17 students on 504 plans and 87 on IEPs which was fairly consistent over the years.
- Teacher trainings included beginning of year and periodic updates and sign-offs on procedures and staff met with Guidance throughout the year.
- The first Island Parent Advisory Council (IPAC) since the pandemic was sparsely attended but active in planning recruitment and a basic rights training was being scheduled.

### **C. Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) Regional Agreement**

(See documents on file & below: Meetings/Events.)

Standing open meetings which would include Town managers and accountants were scheduled to workout a funding formula. Members were invited to send suggested formulas or scenarios to the Superintendent's Office.

- This agenda item was tabled in consideration of the precarious negotiations already in progress. UIRSC comments could be discussed after a proposal was presented.
- Roxanne Ackerman strongly advocated for a magnet junior high in the MVRHS building project.

### **Personnel** (Agenda Item #VII)

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

- *KATE DEVANE MOVED TO ACKNOWLEDGE WITH REGRET AND WITH APPRECIATION FOR THEIR SERVICE THE RESIGNATIONS OF WEST TISBURY SCHOOL*
- *HEALTH AND WELLNESS TEACHER LAURA EDELMAN AT THE END OF THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR AND,*
- *ASSISTANT COOK LYDIA FISCHER (EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY);*
- ROBERT LIONETTE AND SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE.*

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

In response to correspondence on Chilmark School/Chilmark Public Library relations (see 3/21/22 Minutes p.2 #IV B 2) the UIRSC had instructed the Superintendent to contact the Chilmark Select Board to set up a stakeholder meeting (UIRSC member, Chilmark Library Board of Trustees representative, Chilmark Town representative, with invitations to Ms. Stevens and Library Director Ebba Hierta). For various reasons, that meeting did not happen. The UIRSC expressed reluctance to discuss the matter without proper agenda notification and in open meeting.

- Ebba Hierta reported the Board of Trustees refused an open meeting, as not appropriate where personnel matters might be discussed and issued an invitation for a private meeting with the Superintendent. The Library welcomed the Chilmark students, although its staff was not trained to be school media specialists.
- A discussion showed confusion on:
  - whether the requested meeting would be public,
  - purview/authority, and
  - whether the issue was policy or operational.
- The UIRSC refused the meeting with the Superintendent, emphasizing the many authorities involved and repeated its offer of the afore-mentioned private meeting with stakeholder representatives. (A UIRSC / Library Trustees meeting would be public with the exception of a possible Executive Session.)
- Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt offered WTS library use to Chilmark students until the matter was resolved.

**UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD**  
**April 27, 2022**

**Page 5 of 5**

Meetings/Events

The UIRSC agreed to continue with the Zoom component to encourage public participation. There was a discussion on Chilmark School access to Zoom technology, hopefully for the June meeting.

- MVRHSC – 6:00PM, Monday, May 2, 2022
- AISC – 6:30PM, Thursday, May 5, 2022
- Aquinnah STM/ATM – 6:30PM, Tuesday, May 10, 2022
- MVRHSC Regional Formula – 6:00PM, Tuesday, May 17, 2022
- **UIRSC – 5:00PM, Monday, May 23, 2022 – West Tisbury**
- WTS Graduation – 5:30PM, Thursday June 16, 2022 – Agricultural Hall
- Chilmark School Graduation – 10:00AM, Friday June 24, 2022 – Chilmark Community Center

**Adjournment**

• *KATE DEVANE MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:21PM; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, KATE DEVANE—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

**Documents on File:**

- Agenda/Revised Agenda (2 p.) 4/27/22
- Chilmark School Weekly Peek (3 p.) 4/08/22
- All Expenditure Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2021-2022, (15 p.) 4/26/22
- Revenue Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2021- 2022 4/26/22
- UIRSD Unexpected Repair Expenses & E & D Analysis FY22 – 4/25/22
- Contract between UIRSD and RDH Building Science, Inc. (55 p.) 4/28/22
- UIRSD Student Support Services Update April 2022 (2 p.)
- Regional Agreement, Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (13 p.)
- Edelman resignation letter 4/11/22

**Minutes approved 5/23/22**