

**UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD
5:00PM, Monday, August 15, 2022
By Zoom Cloud Conference**

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Present: Chair – Alex Salop, Roxanne Ackerman, Robert Lionette*, Skipper Manter,
Others: Supt's Shared Services Office: Richie Smith, Mark Friedman,
Hope MacLeod, Ruda Stone,
Principals: Donna Lowell-Bettencourt, Mary Boyd, Susan Stevens,
WTS SAC: Samuel Hall, Elle Lash,
Chilmark PreSchool - Elizabeth Hirsch, Deb Zetterberg,
Towns: Chilmark Select Board – Warren Doty,
W. Tis. FinCom – Greg Orcutt
Press: MV Times – Eunki Seonwoo, Vineyard Gazette – Louisa Hufstader,
MVTV – Gabby Bottcher,
Recorder: Marni Lipke *Late arrivals or early departures of UIRSC members

Call to Order (Agenda item #II)

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

Minutes Read and Approved (Agenda item #II)

A. Including But Not Limited to: May 23, 2022 & June 21, 2022

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 23, 2022 AND JUNE 21, 2022 MINUTES; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

Principals' Report (Agenda item #III)

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

Head of School Susan Stevens raised a number of issues, some for ongoing consideration.

1. Electric Charging Stations (See 3/2/21 Minutes p.2 #B.)

The public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations would take up 3 parking places in the School lot which was already too small for staff parking and Ms. Stevens raised student safety and security issues, including public use of bathrooms in the building. Most schools with charging stations had signage saying “Staff and Students Only”. Chilmark Select Board member Warren Doty and the UIRSC strongly supported electric chargers but acknowledged her concerns and would consider the matter—possibly taking into account school and off-school hour parking.

* Robert Lionette entered the meeting at 5:09PM.

2. Preschool Space (See Minutes: 9/20/21 p.1-2 #III A & 10/25/21 p.3.)

2022-23 enrollment was 70 students with New England School Development Council (NESDEC) projecting 85 in 2023-24 (see 1/19/21 Minutes p.3 #VII B). Although the preschool was a great asset, the School was now struggling with space issues such as classroom size in relation to multi-age teaching and continuing enrollment increases (see 6/22/21 Minutes p.5 #D). Discussion points were as follows.

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- There was general strong support for the preschool, which had helped populate the current enrollment. In addition universal preschool was priority goal across the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) and both UIRSD School Advisory Councils (SACs) and School Improvement Plans (SIPs).
- Warren Doty reported the very positive value to Chilmark and the Island community of good preschools and the clear commitment of the Chilmark Select Board. Other Chilmark venues had been explored (Church, Parish House, Community Center, Library, etc.) without success, whereas the current location was deemed a great asset so the Town was now considering capital or modular additions to the School.
- Chilmark Preschool Board member Deb Zetterberg confirmed the continuing exploration for other locations and also reported on the expanded preschool numbers forcing them to deny some parents their requested schedule.
- Some dissension in the UIRSC suggested that as a private entity the preschool should be given notice the UIRSD-taxpayer-funded School needed the space.
- The UIRSC would gather population/enrollment data and research possible capital options.

3. Chilmark Library Contract Update - The contract was completed.

4. Student/Staff Update & Needs

Two 2022-23 multi-age classes would be over 20 students with some new Special Education (SpEd) demands, triggering the need for additional support. After due consideration, Ms. Stevens proposed an Education Support Professional (ESP) as the most financially efficient solution, but the position was not in the FY23 budget which was predicated on a 54-student population. Positions were hard to fill but there was a current candidate. Issues included:

- short timeframe before school started in September;
- mandate implications on whether the new position was population or SpEd driven;
- personnel as between the Superintendent, Student Support Director and Head of School.
- There was UIRSC precedent on approving positions pending funding (see 6/22/21 Minutes p.4-5 #D), but Mr. Manter maintained it was only on which Line to draw from, whereas this position was completely unfunded.
- The UIRSC agreed to call a special meeting (see below: Meetings/Events).

5. School Advisory Council (SAC) Update (See documents on file.)

The SAC presented two SIP drafts on Chilmark School goals:

- enhancing inclusiveness particularly with the community—everyone missed the visits to Windermere Nursing Home.
- working with the West Tisbury School (WTS) on funding for universal preschool/prekindergarten (K);
- expanding enrichment through creative scheduling including activities before and after school;
- data driven teaching and learning through educational programs;
- partnering with the WTS on sustainability and Green Ribbon status: composting, electricity monitoring by students, EV charging stations, etc.

The UIRSC requested the SIP format match previous years, with funding estimates included and commented that SIPs were less about current practices than blueprints for future progress and budgeting.

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

1. Summer School (See Minutes: 5/23/22 p.2 #B, & 6/21/22 p.1 #III A.)

The program was highly successful with attendance (and enthusiasm) beyond expectations. Many WTS teachers were part of the staff so that continuity, familiarity and relationships facilitated programming. Families reported that children would otherwise have been fairly idle due to lack of funds and/or other program timing or availability. Families and teachers praised the program for the fun, the learning and free financial accessibility. The UIRSC and Administration expressed their gratitude to Island Grown Initiative (IGI) for 4 weeks of free lunches. The grant written specifically for the WTS, covered two years (provided State funding was available) and focused on recovery from the pandemic. Hopefully students would actively improve their standing as well as not experiencing the usual summer back-step.

- The UIRSC suggested such a successful program might be continued beyond the 2 years and requested it cover the entire UIRSD—both goals were largely a matter of funding. Many people, particularly Principal Donna Lowell-Bettencourt and Assistant Principal Mary Boyd had worked extremely hard to design, fund and implement the program.

2. Staffing Update

Many vacancies were filled, however a music teacher, 2 ESP positions and a part-time kitchen assistant remained open after 2 rounds of advertising and interviews. Backup plans were in progress. The Island housing crisis and high cost of living continued to be staffing obstacles.

3. Building Update (See also below: #VI C.)

- Repairs to the Music and Social Studies rooms were nearing completion and Administration was making progress with insurance reimbursement negotiations over billing errors and high Island prices (see Minutes: 3/22/22 p.3 #2, & 6/21/22 p.3 #III B).
- Overall the building was in good shape and would be thoroughly cleaned after the busy summer with included the Extended School Year (ESY) program as well as the Summer School.

4. School Advisory Council (SAC) Update (See documents on file.)

Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt thanked the expanded SAC: Sam Hall, Elle Lash, Graham Houghton, Nonie Madison, and new community member Robin Moriarity—filling the required parity between staff and community members. This was a belated 2021-22 SIP and the 2022-23 SIP was expected to similar focusing on the same three goals but with different actions.

- The UIRSD Schools were partnering on Green Ribbon status with events such as Earth Day, campus cleanup, advocacy with the State Legislature on Beacon Hill, the WTS green feasibility study (see 2/16/21 Minutes p.2 & B), and a future priority on student behaviors and attitudes.

- A SAC Subcommittee was actively exploring universal preschool: costs, resources and parameters (including Federal and State), grants, structure, start up, and interviews/feedback from other Martha's Vineyard preschool directors who were helpful and forthright. Private preschools always had a wait list for families and parents were unanimously in favor of universal pre-schooling. The differential in public and private staff training and pay was noted.

- The WTS would continue its intense focus on promoting student social-emotional wellbeing. This was a well-known issue stemming from the Covid pandemic and was/would be addressed with a long list of programs: therapeutic ESPs, grants, Summer School (see above #III B 1) and

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Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to track progress and prioritize those needing deeper levels of support. The Plan also focused on parent engagement and the home-school connection.

- The UIRSC would review, discuss and vote on UIRSD SIPs in September.

5. Out-of-State Field Trips

- Last year's very successful 6th grade overnight trip on Outdoor/Nature's Classroom (previously at Alton Jones) was located at Camp Grotonwood and would be repeated this year October 25-28, 2022 at Camp Wingate Kirkland in Yarmouth Port.
 - Administration met with parents on their wishes for the 8th grade trip, and although last year's Niagra Falls trip was instructive and successful, there was overwhelming support to return to the United Kingdom (UK) exchange trips. Consequently Bridgewater School students from Warrington, UK would visit West Tisbury in October 2022.
 - *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO APPROVE THE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL:*
 - *7TH GRADE SKI FIELD TRIP TO GUNSTOCK RESORT GUILFORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE FEBRUARY 8-10, 2023;*
 - *8TH GRADE TRIP TO THE UNITED KINGDOM, IN JUNE 2023;*
- SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

Old/New Business (Agenda Item #VI)

A. Update - 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, & 5/23/22 p.3 #D, & 6/21/22 p.2-3 #IV C.)

The Request for Proposal (RFP) received one very credible bid from Keenan & Kenny Architects, who had extensive experience in municipal projects including the WTS 2011 repairs and the current Chilmark Firehouse. A contract for \$65,000 was negotiated including coordination of the generator project (location, electrical feed, etc.) deliverable over next 2 months to construction drawings and exploration of bidding structure (for example whether phased by trade or as a whole). The goal was a successful bid for the project—with the proviso that the construction market continued highly volatile.

- This was a necessary incidental and related expense to be drawn from the warrant article residual of \$200,000—with additional project funds available from the Intermunicipal Municipal Agreement bond at \$950,000, and the ~\$126,000 Chilmark Green Communities grant.

B. Authorize Superintendent to Sign the Contract with the Chilmark School HVAC Project Architect

- *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO SIGN THE CONTRACT WITH KEENAN AND KENNY ARCHITECTS FOR THE CHILMARK SCHOOL HEATING/VENTILATION/AIR CONDITIONING PROJECT FOR UP TO \$65,000; SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

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C. Authorize Superintendent to Sign the Contract with the Selected Bidder for the West Tisbury School Roof Project

RFP bidding closed at the end of June (available warrant article funds ~ \$643,000) garnering 4 bidders between \$824,000 high, \$489,000 low bids. The additional \$47,000 for insulation and \$22,000 for a skylight were listed as alternates to allow for bidding flexibility but are returned into the full project here since it was bid within its budget. The low bidder had good references, and had already met with Administration on a target completion date by Thanksgiving 2022.

• *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO SIGN THE CONTRACT WITH MDM ENGINEERING CO. INC. OF DUDLEY, MASSACHUSETTS FOR THE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL ROOF PROJECT FOR UP TO \$558,000; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

Personnel (Agenda Item #V)

A. Rescind Resignation (See documents on file.)

Lais Schoenfield (see 3/21/22 Minutes p.4 #VII A) was unable to find childcare and so;

• *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED APPROVE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL LAIS SCHOENHERR'S RESIGNATION BE RESCINDED; SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

B. Resignation (See documents on file.)

• *ROXANNE ACKERMAN MOVED TO ACKNOWLEDGE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY THE RESIGNATIONS OF:*

- *CODRIN CREANGA FROM HIS POSITION AS WEST TISBURY SCHOOL EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL AND PART-TIME KITCHEN ASSISTANT POSITIONS (to be full-time WTS Assistant Cook);*

- *BROOK AVAKIAN FROM HER WEST TISBURY SCHOOL EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL POSITION (to be Assistant Early Childhood Coordinator at Martha's Vineyard Community Services (MVCS);*

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

C. Leave of Absence (See documents on file.)

• *ROXANNE ACKERMAN MOVED TO APPROVE A LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR WEST TISBURY SCHOOL EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL SARAH DEBETTENCOURT (to be one-year-only Tisbury School Intervention Teacher); ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

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D. Retirement (See documents on file.)

After many beloved years at both UIRSD Schools;

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ACKNOWLEDGE WITH MUCH APPRECIATION AND CREDIT FOR ALL THE WONDERFUL THINGS SHE DID FOR THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, THE RETIREMENT OF WEST TISBURY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL ORLAITH MCCARTHY ESTES AS OF OCTOBER 14, 2022; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.* She would overlap with and help train her replacement, Jessica Estrella.

Public Comment – None (Agenda Item #VI)

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

MVPS Student Support Director Hope McLeod was available to answer any questions.

Meetings/Events

- ~~UIRSC – 5:00PM, Monday, August 22, 2022 – Zoom~~
- UIRSC – 5:00PM, Monday, September 19, 2022 – TBD

Adjournment

• *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 6:33PM; SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

Documents on File:

- Agenda 8/22/22
- West Tisbury School 2021-2022 School Improvement Plan
- Chilmark School - School Improvement Plan 2022-23 (2 p.)
- Chilmark School SAC Goals (2 p.)
- Schoenherr email re: Withdraw of Resignation 7/6/22
- Estes email re: intent to retire 6/28/22
- Creanga email re: ESP part time 7/6/22
- Avakian resignation letter 7/28/22
- DeBettencourt leave of absence extension request letter 8/10/22

Minutes approved 9/19/22