

MARTHA’S VINEYARD REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL (MVRHS)
School Committee Meeting
Monday, April 3, 2023 at 6:00 pm
Library or Zoom

Present: Chair – Robert Lionette, Roxanne Ackerman*, Jennifer Cutrer, Skipper Manter, Louis Paciello, Kathryn Shertzer
Zoom: Vice Chair (VC) – Kimberly Kirk*, Michael Watts

Staff: Principal – Sara Dingley, Assistant Principal – Jeremy Light, Coordinator of Pathways and Special Projects – Samuel Hart, Director of Guidance & Counseling – John Fiorito, Student Intervention Coordinator – Sheryl Taylor Thompson, Finance Director – Suzanne Cioffi, Facilities Director – Mike Taus

MVEA: Martha's Vineyard Educators Association (MVEA) Co-President – Cheri Cluff

Supt.'s Office: Superintendent – Richard M. Smith, Ed.D., Director of Student Support Services – Hope MacLeod, School Business Administrator – Mark Friedman, English Language Learners (ELL) Director – Leah Palmer

Towns/County: Oak Bluffs – Maura McGroarty, Tisbury – Nancy Gilfoy, West Tisbury – Clark Rattet

Press: MVTimes – Jenna Bernstein, Vineyard Gazette – Louisa Hufstader, MVTV

Recorder: Teresa Kruszewski **Late arrivals or early departures of MVRHS SC members*

*VC Kirk arrived at 6:04 PM.

*Roxanne Ackerman left the in-person meeting at 7:24 PM and joined Zoom at 7:50 PM and left at 8:24 PM.

Please note: All business will consist of a discussion and possible *vote* to take action.

Call to Order

The meeting of the Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School Committee (MVRHS SC) was called to order at 6:02 PM by Chair Robert Lionette; all votes would be taken by roll call. Public participation was encouraged, and asked to use the Zoom ‘hand raise’ feature to be recognized. The meeting was recorded; video cameras were asked to be turned off except for MVRHS SC members or Administrators or when actively participating; attendees were asked to identify themselves with first and last names. (*Recorder’s Note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.*)

Welcome - Chair

(Agenda Item #I)

Chair Lionette said there was a full agenda; it was a beautiful spring day on the Island.

Public Comment

(Agenda Item #II)

Rebekah Eldeiry read her prepared statement, detailing her reasons why she was an opponent for the installation of a synthetic turf. Skipper Manter said the discussion may or may not be conducted in Executive Session, depending on the vote. (*Please see below, Executive Session, Agenda Item #IX*)

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Routine Reports

(Agenda Item #III)

A. Student Report

1. Student Report of Activities:

The Junior President apologized for not being present at the past few meetings; she reported on a wide range of student activities and accomplishments including music, drama, sports, career day, the [race] cultural retreat, Housing Bank coalition to Boston, charity events and the many awards and recognitions given to students.

B. Principal

1. General Update:

Principal Sara Dingley said each month they were highlighting Heritage, Holiday and Health through food and the history of that food. This month was to honor Brazilian heritage. Through sharing [cafeteria] food with students, it enabled the focus to create a sense and culture of belonging and inclusion. Sheryl Taylor Thompson was leading this, working to continue that tradition of belonging by recognizing the contributions of different sub-groups. Principal Dingley said the Brazilian Culture Night would be held in May.

2. Measuring Graduation Success:

Principal Dingley and John Fiorito recapped accomplishments of how the Guidance Department supported students, including those that were exploring options outside of college.

The MVRHS Post Secondary Process presentation was screen shared for the group; Mr. Fiorito said a substantial number of students were accepted into Ivy League Schools.

Topics reviewed were: *The 2022-2023 (Coming out of Covid) statistics; Colleges and Universities accepting top MVRHS students; Massachusetts State Colleges and Universities; Enrollment Declines for Most Colleges, But Record Applications for Top Colleges...It's Confusing Out There; Highlights of the Post Secondary Process; Changes and Initiatives from Guidance.*

Principal Dingley said the college process was about managing stress and expectations and hitting deadlines. Helping students manage that process was a big task, and with the help of guidance they were working toward the best ways to make that happen; she said junior year was the time to support the college process and career exploration process.

Chair Lionette asked to frame the areas that were relevant, the responsibilities for the Committee, so that there could be a deeper dive at the next meeting/s including the goals and objectives; Mr. Fiorito looked forward to the follow-up. Chair Lionette asked if the Guidance Department was adequate for the needs of today?

C. Superintendent

1. General Update:

Superintendent Richard M. Smith said Maura Healey, Governor of Massachusetts, approved another two years of remote meetings until 2025; the results of the Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) Analysis was being reviewed and would help set the foundation for the strategic plan, targets to move forward with for the following year/s.

Superintendent Smith introduced and welcomed back Lisa Belcastro, Harbor Homes MV/ Winter Shelter Coordinator for a recap, as the shelter season had ended.

Ms. Belcastro thanked the Committee for their support of the shelter. She said 36 guests registered over the season, the most ever; she gave a heartfelt thanks for the approved additional days that were

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granted including Christmas Day and multiple days during the extreme weather/storms; she recapped the [minimal] 911 calls.

Chair Lionette thanked her and the staff for the work that had been done; he asked about the timing to begin this discussion for the next year. Ms. Belcastro said a grant had been received from the State for a permanent home, but listed the challenges that went along with that. She would approach the Committee in May with this request so that it could be completed by June, 2023, to have this location as a back-up, if needed.

2. Upcoming All Island School Committee Meeting and Annual Town Meetings:

Superintendent Smith said Wednesday April 12, 2023 the All Island School Committee was meeting at 6:00 PM with quite a few agenda items as the school year was coming to a close; he reviewed the upcoming Town Meeting schedule and recapped the Administrative Representatives for each:

- West Tisbury - April 11, 6:00pm
- Edgartown - April 11, 7:00pm
- Oak Bluffs - April 11, 7:00pm
- Chilmark - April 24, 7:00pm
- Vineyard Haven - April 25, 7:00pm
- Aquinnah - April 26, 7:00pm

D. Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Program Update

Samuel Hart said two School Building Committee (SBC) Meetings had been held to date; an Op-Ed (with representation of all six towns) was drafted in support of the two Warrant Articles, 11 SBC members had added their names (through legal counsel, those that held certain positions had restrictions for signing); the SBC drafted a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for Town Meetings.

Mr. Hart said based on the results of the Town Meetings, the MVRHS would be invited to join the Feasibility Study Period; he commented this was nerve wracking and exciting.

Superintendent Smith acknowledged those that had contributed and put a great deal of time throughout the 270 day eligibility period:

- Coordinator of Pathways and Special Projects – Samuel Hart
- Principal – Sara Dingledey
- School Business Administrator – Mark Friedman,
- Asst. Superintendent of Operations, Facilities & School Projects – John Stevens

Consents: VOTES REQUIRED

(Agenda Item #IV)

A. Minutes:

SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 6, 2023 AND MARCH 20, 2023 MVRHS SC MINUTES AS WRITTEN; KRIS O'BRIEN SECONDED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 9 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MS. ACKERMAN—AYE, MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE, MR. MANTER—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MR. PACIELLO—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE & MR. WATTS—AYE.

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B. Personnel:

- ◆ Meredith Trimmer in a letter dated March 22, 2023 wrote: I need to resign my position of 182 day food helper in the kitchen.
- ◆ Caroline Fyler, Science Teacher, in an email letter dated February 21, 2023 wrote: I wanted to let you know that I accepted the position at Lawrenceville. Thank you for 8 great years at MVRHS! I am happy to help you and Mike in any way I can with the logistics of my exit and finding my replacement.
- ◆ Debbie L. Brew, Special Education Teacher, in a letter dated September 15, 2022 wrote: I wanted to let you know about my planned retirement after my birthday on 08 August 2023, with my last day of teacher contractual work being 30 June 2023.

SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ACKNOWLEDGE; LOUIS PACIELLO SECONDED.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 9 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

MS. ACKERMAN—AYE, MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE, MR. MANTER—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MR. PACIELLO—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE & MR. WATTS—AYE.

C. Grants and Donations:

Suzanne Cioffi presented three small donations: a bass to the Jazz Band, [solicited] donations to build school supplies for families in need, as part of a Capstone Project (Chair Lionette asked for an itemized list once completed), seeds for a mobile Garden Club in partnership with Island Grown Initiative (IGI).

SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ACCEPT WITH GRATITUDE; LOUIS PACIELLO

SECONDED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 9 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

MS. ACKERMAN—AYE, MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE, MR. MANTER—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MR. PACIELLO—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE & MR. WATTS—AYE.

Mark Friedman presented the following:

-Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Federal Funds:

Fund Codes: 240 & 262: \$3,135.00

-Mass Service Alliance/Americorp, The Agency

Public/Private Collaboration: \$5,000.00

-(DESE) Federal Funds: Fund Code 525: \$90,000.00

-(DESE) Federal Funds: Fund Codes: 140 & 305: \$1,225.00

-(DESE) State and Trust funded: Fund Codes: 117/225B: \$100,000.00⁺

Co-teaching / inclusion for students with disabilities and English learners:

FY23 Fund Code 117 allocation to Martha's Vineyard - \$100,000.

FY24 \$699,173 and FY25 \$729,418

(funding of year 2 and 3 contingent upon availability and will have to be applied for separately)

[⁺Additional details below]

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SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE FIVE GRANTS AS PRESENTED; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED. MOTION PASSED: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE, MR. MANTER—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MR. PACIELLO—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE & MR. WATTS—AYE.

1. Creation of ESL position to facilitate grant award:

+Leah Palmer screen shared her presentation that detailed the co-teaching model and how it was/would be implemented throughout the District in all schools. She reviewed disparities and how this grant would help close the gap; input had been given from all District Principals for the grant application and spending the awarded monies. Superintendent Smith explained how the schools/positions were selected; the principals had a great amount of input.

The discussion included setting best practices for special needs and English Language Learners (ELL), inclusive practices within the classroom using a strong co-teaching model; using people in a different way to be sustainable when the grant runs out; the practicality of two teachers in the room and how the model worked; knowledge and support for teachers to be successful in this process, with resources as needed for professional development.

Superintendent Smith screen shared the detailed, three year budget with the breakdown of spending, including benefits for this \$1.5 million grant; Ms. Palmer said she would share the detailed budget and slide show presentation with everyone.

Members asked:

- If the FY 2026 budget would need to support this once the grant cycle ran out; Ms. Palmer said the positions were very clear, they were one year only (OYO).
- There was less than three months to spend the first year funding of \$100,000; Ms. Palmer said she had been working behind the scenes to get everything set; Mr. Friedman explained the timeline for spending; everything was formalized to move forward, once approved.

D. Out of State and Overnight Travel:

Newspaper Club

5/04/23 – 5/05/23: Boston University, MA

Project Vine Boston Trip

5/18/23 – 5/19/23: Best Western, Danvers, MA

SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE OVERNIGHT/OUT OF STATE TRAVEL AS PRESENTED; LOUIS PACIELLO SECONDED. MOTION PASSED: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MS. ACKERMAN—AYE, MS. CUTRER—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE, MR. MANTER—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MR. PACIELLO—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE & MR. WATTS—AYE.

E. Legal Expenses Funding:

Mark Friedman said two new invoices had been received for services rendered from the Attorney representing the MVRHS for the appeal of the Oak Bluffs Planning Board decision. There would be [approximately] an additional five hours billed to complete this phase of Summary Judgement.

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He said the total amount would be \$4356.25 and would exceed the \$30,000.00 which was allocated for this appeal (of which \$631.25 remained). *(Please see document on file for details: APPROVED Minutes MVRHS SC May 23, 2022 Special Meeting.pdf; Track and Field Project: (Agenda Item #IV), pgs 3 & 4)*

Mr. Friedman offered the option of using the legal expense line within the budget to pay for these additional expenses, as there were funds available. He said this funding request should complete this phase; the next steps were unknown.

Kris O'Brien asked to separate the two, to pay the bills for services rendered and to take up in later discussion, the estimate of what was left. Mr. Friedman said the two invoices [of bills incurred] totalled \$3112.50.

Chair Lionette said the \$30,000 was presented as a recommendation by the District's Attorney; he said that knowingly exceeding the line item budget, addressing it after the fact was really frustrating and was not appropriate.

Suzanne Cioffi said the \$30,000.00 was identified in last year's budget, the legal expense line.

Skipper Manter said the \$30,000.00 was determined to be more than enough to cover the expenses for this litigation; he was concerned that the Attorney went ahead and spent money above and beyond what had been appropriated without coming back for the Committee to address.

Ms. O'Brien reviewed the dates for the process and what the bills represented:

January 13, 2023 submittal made on our behalf for the motion of Summary Judgement
February 14, 2023 the Town was due, their response.

She said what will happen next is the judge will look at all documentation provided, set a date for a hearing where the attorneys would argue their cases; she recommended going into Executive Session for that discussion.

Ms. O'Brien suggested that the [Attorney] time spent with the Committee and Administration be reviewed, to understand the impact to the overall invoicing/billing and what was going above and beyond the hours.

*KRIS O'BRIEN MOVED TO PAY \$3112.50 FOR THE BILLS WE HAVE INCURRED;
LOUIS PACIELLO SECONDED. MOTION PASSED: 6 AYES, 3 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.
MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MR. PACIELLO—AYE,
MS. SHERTZER—AYE & MR. WATTS—AYE.
MS. ACKERMAN—NAY, MR. LIONETTE—NAY & MR. MANTER—NAY.*

Chair Lionette and Ms. O'Brien debated continuing this discussion for the additional funding request in Open Session versus Executive Session. Members discussed the steps to move forward including capping legal fees, spending money for legal fees, allocating money for legal fees from the legal expense line.

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KIMBERLY KIRK MOVED TO ALLOCATE FUNDS TO COMPLETE THE LITIGATION AT THIS POINT IN TIME; LOUIS PACIELLO SECONDED.

Chair Lionette asked if the motion had an amount, he had issues with writing a blank check as the expenses so far exceeded the amount committed to; VC Kimberly Kirk said she didn’t give one.

Michael Watts challenged why setting a cap for legal fees was being discussed; he compared this to Immigration Attorney Fees, where a cap wasn’t set. He said we voted on an estimate; he recommended going into Executive Session for further discussion and to return to Open Session for a vote.

Mr. Manter challenged the motion *to complete the litigation* as it was leaving it open, this could go on for appeal after appeal leaving the Attorney to ‘driving the bus’. VC Kirk said putting a number on this would detrimentally impact the chances of success in this undertaking, which a majority of this Committee voted to support, to finalize the appeal that we started.

*KIMBERLY KIRK MOVED TO ALLOCATE FUNDS TO COMPLETE THE LITIGATION AT THIS POINT IN TIME; LOUIS PACIELLO SECONDED. MOTION PASSED: 5 AYES, 4 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MS. KIRK—AYE, MS. O’BRIEN—AYE, MR. PACIELLO—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE & MR. WATTS—AYE.
MS. ACKERMAN—NAY, MS. CUTRER—NAY, MR. LIONETTE—NAY & MR. MANTER—NAY.*

F. Third Reading of Grants, Policies and Procedures :

Tabled.

Finance

(Agenda Item #V)

A. Revenue and Expenditures:

Tabled.

SubCommittee Updates

(Agenda Item #VI)

A. Athletics:

Tabled.

B. Transportation:

Tabled.

C. Facilities:

Tabled.

Old/New Business

(Agenda Item #VII)

Tabled.

Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair/Announcements

(Agenda Item #VIII)

None.

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Executive Session

(Agenda Item #IX)

Executive session, subject to the Chair's declaration, to discuss litigation strategy and funding/appropriation therefor, pursuant to G.L. c. 30A subsection 21(a)(3), in the matter of Martha's Vineyard Regional School District v. Oak Bluffs Planning Board, Land Court No. 22 MISC 000294.

(Agenda Item #X)

(Please see above: E. Legal Expenses Funding)

To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual. The individual to be discussed in such executive session shall be notified in writing by the public body at least 48 hours prior to the proposed executive session; provided, however, that notification may be waived upon written agreement of the parties.

(Agenda Item #XI)

Chair Robert Lionette said the individual was informed and waived the right to attend.

KRIS O'BRIEN MOVED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:15 PM, NOT TO RETURN TO OPEN SESSION, TO DISCUSS THE REPUTATION, CHARACTER, PHYSICAL CONDITION OR MENTAL HEALTH, RATHER THAN THE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE, OF AN INDIVIDUAL, OR TO DISCUSS THE DISCIPLINE OR DISMISSAL OF, OR COMPLAINTS OR CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST, A PUBLIC OFFICER, EMPLOYEE, STAFF MEMBER OR INDIVIDUAL. THE INDIVIDUAL TO BE DISCUSSED IN SUCH EXECUTIVE SESSION SHALL BE NOTIFIED IN WRITING BY THE PUBLIC BODY AT LEAST 48 HOURS PRIOR TO THE PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION; PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT NOTIFICATION MAY BE WAIVED UPON WRITTEN AGREEMENT OF THE PARTIES; AND TO INVITE SUPERINTENDENT – RICHARD M. SMITH, SCHOOL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR MARK FRIEDMAN, PRINCIPAL SARA DINGLEDEY, FINANCE DIRECTOR SUZANNE CIOFFI AND RECORDER TERESA KRUSZEWSKI TO BE PRESENT THROUGHOUT; LOUIS PACIELLO SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 8 AYES, 1 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS. MS. ACKERMAN—AYE, MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MR. PACIELLO—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE & MR. WATTS—AYE. MR. MANTER—NAY.

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Adjournment [AT THE CONCLUSION OF EXECUTIVE SESSION]

(Agenda Item #XII)

*SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MVRHS SC MEETING AT 8:29 PM;
LOUIS PACIELLO SECONDED. MOTION PASSED: 8 AYES, 0 NAYS,
0 ABSTENTIONS. MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. KIRK—AYE, MR. LIONETTE—AYE,
MR. MANTER—AYE, MS. O'BRIEN—AYE, MR. PACIELLO—AYE, MS. SHERTZER—AYE &
MR. WATTS—AYE.*

Appendix A - Meetings/Events

— MVRHS SC – Monday, May 1, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Appendix B - Agreed Upon Tasks: None.

Appendix C - Documents on File:

- Agenda MVRHS SC 4.3.23.docx
- 2023 FAQ MSBA Warrant Articles.pdf
- IV. A. DRAFT Minutes MVRHS SC MARCH 20, 2023 Special Meeting.pdf
- IV. A. DRAFT MVRHS SC Minutes March 6, 2023 Meeting.pdf
- IV. B. DB RETIREMENT LETTER.pdf
- IV. B. Fyler ltr 2.21.23.docx
- IV. B. Meredith Trimmer Ltr. 3.22.23.pdf
- IV. C. mvrhs school committee 04032023.pdf
- IV. D. Out of State Travel Request.pdf
- IV. D. PV Boston Overnight travel form (1).docx
- IV. F. Federal Grants Manual MVYPS Grants Draft FY23 -4 03-2023 - Final Reading.pdf
- School Committe Vouchers 4.3.2023.pdf
- V. A. MVRHS General Fund Expenditures 3.31.2023.pdf
- V. A. MVRHS General Fund Revenue 3.31.2023.pdf
- participants_87662586340 (6).csv

Respectfully submitted,



Tereša Kruszewski – Recorder

May 1, 2023

Date

Robert Lionette – MVRHS SC Chair

Date

Richard M. Smith, Ed.D. – MVRHSD Superintendent

Date

APPROVED MAY 1, 2023