

**Tisbury School Committee**  
**4:00PM, Tuesday, January 10, 2023**  
**by Zoom Conference Remote Access Only**

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**TSC Members Present:** Chair Amy Houghton, Jen Cutrer, Michael Watts,  
**Others:** Daedalus Projects/CHA – Michael Owen, Aditya Modi,  
Tappé Architects – Chris Blessen, Toby Zaltsman,  
**Staff:** John Custer – Principal, Superintendent Richie Smith  
Mark Friedman – Business Administrator,  
Ruth Ambrozaitis, Elizabeth Bradley, Julie Brand,  
Catherine Coogan, Meredith Goldthwait, Kate Harding,  
Natalie Krauthammer, Rita Jeffers, John Mode, Jane Taylor,  
Anne Williamson, SAC - John Guadagno,  
**Town:** Wastewater - Jared Meader,  
**Press:** Louisa Hufstader -Vineyard Gazette,

\* Late Arrivals or early departures of TSC members.

The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) meeting was called to order at 4:03PM. Chair Amy Houghton hoped for a great new year for everyone. Students along with everyone else were excited to watch the daily progress on the School Project and Ms. Houghton praised the professional team of Owners Project Manager (OPM) Daedalus Projects/CHA Consulting, Tappé Architects and Construction Manager, W.T. Rich.

I. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

• **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. MICHAEL WATTS AND SECONDED BY MS. JEN CUTRER THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 13, 2022 MEETING WERE APPROVED 2 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSTENTION** due to absence: MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—ABSTAIN.

II. Superintendent's Report

A. All Island School Committee (AISC)

The AISC was having trouble getting quorum for meetings so, citing the Vineyard Gazette article by Julie Wells "*Finding a Rhythm on the Rollercoaster That Was 2022*", Superintendent Richie Smith reported on the status of the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS). He greatly appreciated the honor, challenge, fun and fulfillment of being Superintendent after serving 21 yrs as staff. His educational philosophy was based on Harvard Education Director Roland Barth that student achievement is primarily linked to the relations among the adults serving a school system (see 9/13/22 Minutes p.2) so his focus was to work in the best interest of the students, to improve effective collegial relations and to increase trust and communications.

- Two large building projects (Tisbury School and the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS)) had pushed the Island communities to an unprecedented place in dealing with contracts, nationwide shortages and difficulties.
- The Central Office and Health & Safety Committee continued to balance learning and health during the current Covid variant uptick. Particular thanks went to school nurses.

- Like many school systems nationwide in the aftermath of the pandemic, MVPS was struggling with staffing and transportation shortages.
- A consultant team would be on Island starting January 26th to continue to explore better ways to support wider cultural inclusion.
- Supt. Smith had engaged Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) Field Director and school governance specialist Ms. Dorothy Presser to give a two-way training and workshop to all school committee members.
- As a special aside Supt. Smith reported he often used Tisbury School staff as an example of resilience when speaking to the larger community.

#### B. Shared Services Update (See documents on file.)

This month's newsletter gave a short synopsis on each shared services program:

- Project Headway for 3 to 5 yr. olds with moderate to severe challenges;
- Bridge Program for school age students with needs (including autism spectrum) beyond the resources of their home schools;
- Compass Program for school age students with intensive emotional needs.
- (The law allowed only 7 challenged and 7 peer students per classroom.)
- The Central office also provided related services:
  - physical and occupational therapy (PT & OT), Speech/Language,
  - specialists to visit and counsel regular teachers on special needs management,
  - Early Childhood (EC) Coordinator and EC Outreach Educator,
  - Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) who worked with all programs.

### III. Financial Report

#### A. Fund Balances (See documents on file.)

- \$100,000 in School Choice funds committed to the Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) Budget (see 3/15/22 Minutes p.3) had not yet be drawn so actual available funds were \$245,615. School Choice revenue would be minimal for the remainder of FY23 so Administration and the TSC were being cautious and thrifty, so far approving only:
  - \$50,000 for the conversion of the American Legion kitchen/cafeteria;
  - \$1,500 for YMCA childcare during the School shutdown;
  - \$12,775 for steel barricades for the physical education field.

#### B. Fiscal Year 2024 (FY2024) Budget

(See documents on file & Minutes: 12/14/21 p.2 #III B.)

- Version #2.1 presented a 4.96% increase of which:
  - 1.39% was the Central Office assessment, and
  - 4.53% was salary / contractual due to recent collective bargaining agreements, with the remainder being student accident insurance and utility increases.
  - Maintenance lines were reduced ~ \$100,000 since the School would use the temporary modulars for all of FY24. FY23 repair/maintenance funds were currently available.
- For a broader context, budget versions now showed:
  - enrollment (at 256 students—likely due to ongoing building/construction issues), and
  - State reimbursements: Chapter 70 including Student Opportunity Act (SOA) funds strictly targeted for Special Education and English Language Learners (ELL) instruction, and Chapter 71 – transportation.

- Version 2.1 did not reduce staffing in any way, (a grant-funded vacancy left over from the Pandemic remote learning was zeroed out (see 10/13/20 Minutes p.2 #IV B)).
- Compared with other national and Island schools, in this time of spiking inflation, this was a lean, conservative but responsible budget. Thanks and commendations went to Principal John Custer, MVPS Business Administrator Mark Friedman and Assistant Principal Melissa Ogden for their hard work.
- **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED MR. WATTS BY THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE TISBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT FISCAL YEAR 2024 GENERAL FUND BUDGET AT \$8,314,616.49 (OR 4.96% INCREASE) AS PER VERSION #2.1: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. CUTRER—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.**

B. Grants – No action needed.

#### IV. Principal's Report

##### A. School Events (See documents on file.)

Prin. Custer gave full credit to staff, teachers and Education Support Professionals (ESPs) for their creative and meaningful off- and on-Island events, and in school presenters in response to construction issues and disruptions.

- He gave a shout-out to the Edgartown School and Boys and Girls Club for providing venues for boys basketball practice and to the MVRHS which had been welcoming throughout this difficult 3-4 years.

##### B. Community Preservation Act/Committee (CPA/CPC) Funds (See documents on file.)

For 4 years the TSC and Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) were co-applicants to the CPC for playground improvements, resulting in \$400,000 in CPC funding. However the September 2022 Special Town Meeting (STM) vote to fully fund the School included playground equipment and grounds landscaping and consequently after confirmation from Town Administrator Jay Grande and Financial Director Jon Snyder, this year's application was denied and the banked funds redistributed to other projects.

- The TSC thanked the CPC for their past generosity.

##### C. Legion Building Kitchen/Cafeteria Update

Students were using the American Legion cafeteria but contractors continued to resolve kitchen renovation glitches. Thanks went to Building Commissioner Ross Seavey and Assistant Supt. John Stevens for their coordination and oversight.

##### Retirement (See documents on file.)

The TSC reluctantly acknowledged Ms. Ambrozaitis retirement, commending all she had done for the School and heartened by her planned continued involvement as a substitute.

• **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGED WITH GRATITUDE THE RETIREMENT OF EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL MS. RUTH AMBROZAITIS AT THE END OF THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR; 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. CUTRER—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.**

## V. Tisbury Wastewater Superintendent

Nitrogen loading and watershed were one of the hardest issues in the Comprehensive Wastewater Planning and the Tisbury School was advantageously placed outside the Lagoon and Tashmoo watersheds. Consequently the Department considered it an ideal location for a leaching field under one of the playgrounds. This would require percolation tests, pits and monitoring wells before and in coordination with construction landscaping and infiltration engineering and playground equipment (see below: Actions). Some of the geo-technology studies for the School Project could provide useful data. If it was found to be viable, the Department would return to the TSC for further permissions. The field would have no impact on students.

• **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED LEACHING FIELD PRELIMINARY TESTING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS IN COORDINATION WITH THE SCHOOL PROJECT CONSTRUCTION TEAM; 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. CUTRER—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.**

### A. Field Behind Emergency Services Facility

The TSC and Administration thanked Wastewater Superintendent Jared Meader for the use of the field above the Emergency Services Facility (ESF) and commended the fencing.

## VI. Tisbury School Building Project Report

### B. Project Update (See documents on file & below: Actions.)

- The School had fully moved into temporary modulars and the majority of the punch list was completed—the lead time being a little more than expected. Thanks went to Mr. Seavey and the teachers for their hard work and adaptability. The lower parking area needed better fencing and configuration for safety and aesthetics.
- Huge amounts of soil were being removed to bring the new gym wing down to grade and in preparation for drilling and piles. Neighbors and staff would be informed of noise schedules (drilling, pounding, large equipment).
- Abatement and selective demolition (walls/sheetrock) were in process from the third floor down. Environmental monitors showed clear air reports.
- Photos, completion percentage (now 12%) and time-lapse before-and-completed-renderings would be posted on the Project website along with the monthly reports. The team and Tisbury Building Committee (TSBC) wanted communications to be easy to find.

insurance covers bldg under construction more than expected.

### A. Approval of Project Invoices (See documents on file & below: Actions.)

Most invoices were standard monthly amounts and the TSC was the new review TSC, they were included in the School warrant for payment. These covered December 2022.

- The building-under-construction insurance was \$882,944, more than \$500,000 higher than anticipated, due to insurance system catastrophic losses and to the 1929 building wood (as opposed to masonry) framing. Many options were explored but this was the best available. W.T. Rich hoped other savings (and if necessary contingency funds) would cover the delta.

- GovConnection, Inc. was computer hardware (server, etc.) upgrades.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) APPROVED AND RECOMMENDED THE FOLLOWING DECEMBER 1 THROUGH 31, 2022 INVOICES TOTALING \$2,302,671.04 TO BE SENT TO TOWN HALL FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT:

- CHA DECEMBER 31, 2022 INVOICE FOR \$27,500.00,
  - W.T. RICH DECEMBER 31, 2022 INVOICE FOR \$1,286,901.00,
  - TAPPÉ ARCHITECTS DECEMBER 31, 2022 INVOICE FOR \$48,125.00,
  - MARTHA'S VINEYARD INSURANCE AGENCY, INC. INVOICE FOR \$882,944.96,
  - CARROLL'S M.V.R.T. NOVEMBER 31, 2022 INVOICE (# 36011) FOR \$2,262.50,
  - CARROLL'S M.V.R.T. NOVEMBER 31, 2022 INVOICE (# 36223) FOR \$3,970.00,
  - PROJECTDOG, INC. AUGUST 19, 2022 INVOICE (# 19778) FOR \$4,455.90,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC OCTOBER 28, 2022 INVOICE (# 73444992) FOR \$1,677.16,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC OCTOBER 29, 2022 INVOICE (# 73447239) FOR \$1,834.40,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC OCTOBER 30, 2022 INVOICE (# 73447632) FOR \$818.01,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC OCTOBER 31, 2022 INVOICE (# 73450409) FOR \$13,48664,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC NOVEMBER 1, 2022 INVOICE (# 73455199) FOR \$5,144.28,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC NOVEMBER 4, 2022 INVOICE (# 73466234) FOR \$1,229.26,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC NOVEMBER 4, 2022 INVOICE (# 73466256) FOR \$3,497.28,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC NOVEMBER 8, 2022 INVOICE (# 73481388) FOR \$115.63,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC NOVEMBER 8, 2022 INVOICE (# 73481412) FOR \$3,399.80,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC NOVEMBER 9, 2022 INVOICE (# 73485855) FOR \$3,925.89,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC NOVEMBER 10, 2022 INVOICE (# 73490236) FOR \$1,991.88,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC NOVEMBER 10, 2022 INVOICE (# 73490264) FOR \$1,377.95,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC NOVEMBER 11, 2022 INVOICE (# 73495360) FOR \$3,325.00,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC NOVEMBER 16, 2022 INVOICE (# 73511229) FOR \$2,712.26,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC NOVEMBER 17, 2022 INVOICE (# 73516323) FOR \$545.43,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC DECEMBER 14, 2022 INVOICE (# 73607533) FOR \$1,182.93,
  - GOVCONNECTION, INC DECEMBER 19, 2022 INVOICE (# 73621057) FOR \$337.98;
- MS. CUTRER—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.

## VII. School Staff Comments

The TSC extended its appreciation to staff. Staff highly commended Prin. Custer and Asst. Prin. Ogden for their support and facilitation of any and all problems. Former staff were surprised at the quality of the temporary modulars: heating, lighting and food preparation.

Adjournment

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. WATTS AND SECONDED BY MS. CUTRER THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:23PM: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MS. CUTRER—AYE, MR. WATTS—AYE, MS. HOUGHTON—AYE.

### Appendix A: Meetings/Events:

- TSBC - TBD, Monday, January 23, 2023 by Zoom
- TSC – TBD, 4:00PM, Tuesday, February 14, 2023

### Appendix B: Actions

Prin. Custer/Ms. Houghton – print, sign, deliver invoices to Town Hall.

Mr. Watts/CHA/W.T. Rich – keep neighbors and staff informed of noise schedule.

Mr. Watts/Mr. Meader – set meeting with W.T. Rich, CHA, etc. re: leaching field tests.

### Appendix C: Documents on File

- Agenda 1/10/23
- Tisbury School Events
- Ambrozaitis resignation letter 11/15/22
- Custer/Hickey cover email re: TSC meeting notice for 1/10/2023 1/9/23
- Tisbury School Fund Balances Fiscal Year: 2022-2023 1/9/23
- Tisbury School FY'24 Budget Analysis, 2.1 Draft January 10, 2023
- Tisbury School Budget for 2023/2024, Version #2.1 - January 10, 2023 (5 p.)
- Custer/Grande/Dietterich emails re: CPC funding application for playground (3 p.) 1/10/23
- Tisbury Student Support Services Update (2 p.) January 2023
- Tisbury School Addition and Renovations Project Invoices, For Period: December 01, 2022 – December 31, 2022 (44 p.)
- Tiger Tales January 2023 (8 p.)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Office On Call/Marni Lipke.

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Marni Lipke – Recorder

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Date

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Amy Houghton – TSC Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Minutes approved 3/14/23