

**UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD
6:00PM, Monday, June 20, 2023
West Tisbury School**

Page 1 of 6

Present: Chair – Jim Newman, Roxanne Ackerman, Robert Lionette,
Skipper Manter, Alex Salop,
Others: Supt's Shared Services Office: Richie Smith, Mark Friedman,
Hope MacLeod,
Principals: Donna Lowell-Bettencourt,
Staff – Ellen Rossi, Donna Swift,
Press – Louisa Hufstader – Vineyard Gazette, 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. The UIRSC enjoyed and commended the 8th Grade graduation, especially the student speaker.

Approval of Minutes (Agenda item #II)

A. Including But Not Limited to: May 15, 2023

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 15, 2023 MINUTES; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Principals' Report (Agenda Item #III)

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

1. Surplus Items

4 items were slated for surplus in the continuing kitchen renovation. Each item was held until a replacement was assured.

- A valuable custom stainless steel hood with all fans was recommended to be put out to bid.
- 3 items donated from the old Edgartown School (see 11/1/11 Minutes p.1 & 3 #II) were recommended for discard:

- a Hobart dishwasher beyond its useful life;
- a working Budget range with a defunct oven attached;
- a Vulcan stack oven with failed temperature control (despite expensive repairs) which could only be removed by taking it apart—re-assembly costs were more than it was worth. Removal was a priority in the renovation work.

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO DECLARE SURPLUS AND ADVERTISE FOR BID THE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL KITCHEN STAINLESS STEEL HOOD; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO DECLARE SURPLUS AND DISCARD THE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL KITCHEN: - HOBART DISHWASHER,
- BUDGET RANGE AND OVEN, AND
- VULCAN STACKING OVEN;*

ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD
June 20, 2023

Page 2 of 6

2. Out of State Travel

- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE OUT OF STATE TRAVEL AS FOLLOWS:*
 - *7TH GRADE SKI TRIP TO GILFORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE FEBRUARY 7-9, 2024, AND*
 - *8TH GRADE TRIP TO THE UNITED KINGDOM IN JUNE 2024;*
- *ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*
- 6th grade Outdoor/Nature's Classroom would be at Camp Wingate Kirkland, Yarmouth Port.

3. Inter-District School Choice Policy - 2nd Reading

(See Minutes: 4/13/23 p.6-7 #VI A, & 5/15/23 p.3 #VB.)

- Robert Lionette proposed making a commitment to students already in the UIRSD whose families moved out of district, arguing these were usually renters, a more vulnerable population, and that school might be the most stable part of a child's life. He suggested prioritizing such children even if it meant having to add a third section to a class, and pointed out the disparity between residential students who lose their slot by moving with School Choice students who were assured a place for the entirety of their elementary/middle school education.
- Although her heart agreed, Principal Donna Lowell-Bettencourt explained the difficulties.
 - School populations were not stable during the year; families moved in as well as out, Charter School or out-of-district School Choice students left or returned. Of those moving out of district some asked to stay while some did not. Some moves were into purchased houses.
 - The UIRSD was a highly desirable district already accepting more school choice students than it sent. If there was space, the UIRSD did its best to accommodate students who chose to stay, e.g. working hard to keep eighth grade students who's family had moved. However classes were already exceeding the 20 student cut-off triggering teacher contract mandated permission.
- The UIRSC discussed issues and compromises:
 - non-policy case-by-case decisions as prone to accusations of unfairness;
 - evaluation of former resident students on a year-by-year basis as unnecessary once they had been accepted as School Choice;
 - different culture of each Martha's Vineyard Public School (MVPS) that made School Choice such an asset;
 - UIRSD financial considerations of changing from regular to school choice status;
 - UIRSD separate/unique policy as disrupting global MVPS School Choice practice;
 - placing families that have moved into the preferred lottery with siblings and staff children.
- The UIRSC requested data on: how many times sibling and staff children were refused, and possible language to add former resident students to the priority lottery for the 3rd reading.
- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED THE SECOND READING OF THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL CHOICE POLICY AMENDMENT SUCH THAT SCHOOL CHOICE PRIORITY WILL ALSO BE GIVEN TO STUDENTS OF THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT FACULTY AND STAFF; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 4 AYES, 1 NAY—SKIPPER MANTER, 0 ABSTENTIONS.* Mr. Manter said there were too many children.

UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD

June 20, 2023

Page 3 of 6

4. Donation

• *ALEX SALOP MOVED TO ACCEPT A \$2,729.70 DONATION FROM ROSEMARY SAMOLA FOR NEW CHILDREN'S BOOK FOR THE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL LIBRARY; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

B. Susan Stevens – Chilmark School

**1. Chilmark School Revolving Fund re: Preschool Rent & Heating/
Ventilation/Air Conditioning (HVAC)**

(See Minutes: 10/18/04 p.1-2 #VII, & 5/31/05 p.3-4 #II, & 12/19/22 p.2-4 #IV D, & 4/13/23 p.4-5 # 1 & IV C, & 5/15/23 p.1 #III B.)

- The two methods of accepting money were further detailed.
- The Chilmark School Revolving Fund balance could be rolled over from year to year and expanded to include the annual Pre-School rental payments or HVAC repair funding.
- Donations could be accepted into miscellaneous revenue and earmarked for specific purposes and/or locations e.g. Chilmark School or WTS, but could not be rolled over.
- There was debate on accepting the donation with estimates but not final bills in hand—for necessary changes to facilitate the Pre-Schools continued occupancy (flooring, storage, etc.). MVPS Business Administrator Mark Friedman recommended accepted the funds as a donation. Administration would review the work quotes, proceed with the alterations, and return to the UIRSC with any changes in status.

2. Chilmark Donation

• *ROXANNE ACKERMAN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE \$10,700 DONATION FROM THE CHILMARK PRE-SCHOOL TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CHILMARK SCHOOL; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Finance (Agenda item #IV)

A. Expenditure Report (See documents on file.)

B. Budget Transfers (See documents on file.)

UIRSC Administrators and Mr. Friedman had worked hard tracking and closing out the Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) budget. Both Schools were very tightly within budget.

- WTS ~ \$129,100 overage highlights were as follow:
 - as projected, Regular Substitutes (universal MVPS shortfall) and Kindergarten (K) Teacher Salaries;
 - Nurse's Substitutes and Custodial Contractual—outside contractors for custodian absences (also a universal MVPS shortage);
 - General Maintenance driven by generator repair (see Minutes: 9/19/22 p.2-3 #IV C, & 10/17/22 p.3-4, & 12/19/22 p.2 # B 2)—the FY24 line allowed for steep inflation;
 - contractual Health and Dental Insurance, plus Student and Building Insurance reflecting underwriters' reluctance to insure anything close to an ocean.
- The \$31,400 Chilmark School overages were similar:
 - Regular and Nurse's substitutes, and all insurance costs;
 - Copier Lease and Nurse's Supplies,

UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD

June 20, 2023

Page 4 of 6

- fortunately mild winter minimizing both schools' fuel overages.
- The UIRSC revived the issue of quarterly budget transfers (see Minutes: 10/1/01, & 9/6/02 p.1 #II, & 9/15/19 p.2 #B). Factors included:
 - avoiding possible shortfalls in case of revenue shortfalls or unforeseen expenditures;
 - increased transparency and regular reporting allowing close budget tracking;
 - regular reporting of concerns and overages;
 - shifts throughout the year that might result in having to revoke or change transfers;
 - adding to the workload of the already overburdened Business Administrator;
 - transfers reflecting unforeseen changes, not budgetary failing.
- The UIRSC requested major deficits or changes be highlighted in the expenditure reports.
- *ALEX SALOP MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE FISCAL YEAR 2023 UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT END-OF-YEAR BUDGET TRANSFERS AS PRESENTED; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Superintendent's Report (Agenda Item #V)

A. All-Island School Committee (AISC) Meeting (See below: Meetings/Events.)

Everyone was encouraged to attend the one-hour AISC meeting.

B. Central Office Organizational Configuration

This would be the first restructuring of the Central office in at least 20 years, with a focus on human resources and curriculum but severely limited by budget restrictions.

- Former Edgartown School Principal John Stevens was hired as a half-time Assistant Superintendent covering daily operations, transportation and capital projects, with hopes he will continue next year.
- Superintendent Richie Smith proposed using the remaining funds in the Assistant Superintendent's salary line to stipend current staff to cover areas he was still overseeing from his previous term as Assistant Superintendent.
 - human resources—through payroll or financial staff to support, hiring, licensing, etc.
 - coordination of curriculum among the MVPS—not to impose but to coordinate internal and external Professional Development (PD).

The UIRSC suggested a one-item AISC agenda, expressing concern about expanding current positions, and the need for an Assistant Superintendent to fill in during Superintendent absences.

C. Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Non-Union Salaries (See documents on file.)

Background data included Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), step and other increases for the 5 MVPS unions, as well as Island Towns' staff increases.

- A 5% COLA was proposed as in line with FY23 inflation.
- Lower increases would be less than Town and union raises.
- Additional steps were negotiated for all 300 MVPS teachers.
- The proposed increase was within the voted FY23 pool of funds.
- The UIRSC debated merit pay; with objections on both sides, some promoting merit as a standard factor and some objecting to personality-based decisions. Principal Donna Lowell-Bettencourt received an exemplary evaluation; however MVPS increases were not merit based.

UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD

June 20, 2023

Page 5 of 6

- Former Supt. Jim Weiss had proposed a standard administrative pay matrix which failed decisively—highlighting MVPS’ inability to come to consensus.
- A standard administrative increase matrix would allow for more accurate budgeting.
- Retention of quality staff and Island cost of living were important factors.
- Supt. Smith proposed a future look at MVPS Information Technologist pay in terms of market corrections and retention of personnel, which some UIRSC member suggested should be part of the FY25 budget process.
- As an aside it was suggested the UIRSC build its budget on need rather than what might pass at Town Meetings.
- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE 5% NON-UNION SALARY INCREASES AS RECOMMENDED BY SUPERINTENDENT RICHIE SMITH; ALEX SALOP SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

D. Student Support Services Update

- Student Support Director Hope MacLeod thanked all teachers, Education Support Professionals (ESPs), and other providers serving the MVPS children throughout this unique school year.
 - Project Headway had available daycare spots for peers and offered them to MVPS staff before opening them to the public.

Personnel (Agenda Item #VI)

A. Leaves of Absence (See documents on file.)

- *ALEX SALOP MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS FOR WEST TISBURY SCHOOL EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS ANNIE OLLEN AND CHARLOTTE DELASIN; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.* Both were taking one-year-only WTS intervention positions. The UIRSC wished them both good luck.
- Approval/acknowledgement of resignations, retirements and leaves of absence was standard school committee protocol.

Public Comment (Agenda Item #VII)

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

West Tisbury Town Administrator Jen Rand informed Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt that due to Board of Health (BOH) staff changes, the Town was currently unable to collect the WTS mandated water samples. The UIRSD was responsible for water testing. Sampling estimates were: \$2,204 each, \$4,079 for the remainder of the calendar year, and \$6,675 for FY25—lab fees were already included in the UIRSD budget. The Town was looking at various solutions. No UIRSC action was needed at this time.

Adjournment

- *ALEX SALOP MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 7:59PM; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

continued >

UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD
June 20, 2023

Page 6 of 6

Meetings/Events

- **AISC Meeting – 5:00PM, Thursday, June 22, 2023 - MVRHS/Zoom**
- **UIRSC Meeting – 6:30PM, Wednesday, July 12, 2023 – WTS/Zoom**
- **Cabinet Retreat - July 31 - August 3, 2023**

Documents on File:

- Agenda 6/20/23
- All Expenditure Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (15 p.) 6/20/23
- UIRSD FY23 Year End, Proposed Year-End Budget Transfers June 20, 2022
- Martha's Vineyard Public Schools, Office of Superintendent of Schools memo re: Management and Non-Union Salary Adjustments, 6/20/23
- FY24 Step, COLA, Total Percentage Increase...
- Delasin email re: LOA 6/16/23
- Ollen email re: Leave of Absence Request 5/26/23

Minutes approved 7/12/23