

Tisbury School Committee
4:00PM, Tuesday, June 25, 2024
Emergencies Services Building Conference Room

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TSC Members Present: Chair Amy Houghton, Jen Cutrer, Michael Watts,
SAC: Elizabeth Clark-Derrick, John Custer, Mary Gossling*,
John Guadagno, Emily Leveyt, Lisa Phelan, Jane Taylor,
Staff: Richie Smith – Superintendent,
Mark Friedman – Business Administrator, Prin. John Custer,
Mary Gossling, Emily Leveyt, Jane Taylor,
Others: Marni Lipke

* Late Arrivals or early departures of TSC or SAC members.

- The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) meeting was called to order at 4:03PM.
- The Tisbury School Advisory Council (TSAC) meeting was called to order at 4:03PM.
(*Recorder's note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.*)
- TSC Chair Amy Houghton expressed everyone's gratitude (reenforced by Superintendent Richie Smith) to all the teachers and staff with special thanks to Technologist Sue Leonard for their quick work in packing up their classrooms so that the modular units could be wrapped for immediate shipment.

I. Approval of Past Tisbury School Committee (TSC) Meeting Minutes

• **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. JEN CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. MICHAEL WATTS THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS; MAY 14, 2024 AND, JUNE 10, 2024.**

II. Approval of Past Tisbury School Advisory Council (TSAC) Meeting Minutes

• **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. JANE TAYLOR AND SECONDED BY MR. JOHN GUADAGNO THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 28, 2024 MEETING WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

III. Principal's Report

A. Personnel

1. Staffing Update (See documents.)

Principal John Custer emphasized the importance of hiring early to forestall competition with other schools, to lessen the stress of late hires and reduce the opening day scramble. There were many changes including 3 new positions:

- Special Education teacher position (see 1/9/24 Minutes p.2 #III A);
 - Custodian – summer/new building duties in collective bargaining negotiations—made particularly difficult by the lack of Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) regionality;
 - Facilities Manager – in negotiations with a good candidate.
- The School was still advertising for 4 positions but new hires included:

- Spanish teacher Ms. Lorena Crespo from the Edgartown School,
- Ms. Sarah Feldman and Ms. Jessica Buckley (both familiar to the School) to fill 2 of the 3 Education Support Professional (ESP) vacancies.

2. Resignations (See documents on file.)

These three staff had resigned from Tisbury but would remain in the MVPS system. With thanks to all, and noting that all would be missed:

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGED (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) THE RESIGNATIONS OF THE FOLLOWING EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS AS OF THE END OF THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR:

- MS. JENNIFER FRIEDMAN,
- DIANNE BOOTH, AND
- LUCIANA COUTINHO.

3. Child-Rearing Leave Request (See documents on file.)

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) CHILD REARING LEAVE FOR FIFTH GRADE MATH/SCIENCE TEACHER EMILY CROSLAND FOR THE 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR.

IV. Financial Report

A. Request to Approve Donation to Student Activities Account

(See documents on file.)

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) ACCEPTED WITH GRATITUDE THE \$700 GIFT FROM THE MARTHA'S VINEYARD STRIPED BASS AND BLUEFISH DERBY SANCY PACHICO YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP TO THE STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNT, DISTRIBUTION OVERSEEN BY THE GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT.

The TSC thanked Prin. Custer for all he did for the School.

B. Fund Balances (See documents on file.)

Manter Fund interest/investment revenue would be available in July/August (see 12/12/23 Minutes p.4 #V A).

C. Vote to Approve Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) General Budget Transfers

(See documents on file.)

Thanks went to School Administrative Support Professional (ASP) Rachel Hickey and MVPS Business Administrator Mark Friedman for finding funds within the FY24 budget. Ms. Hickey reconciled figures with the Town. The largest transfers were highlighted.

- \$141,482 in Teachers Salaries overage was the result of new staff at higher step/grade/lane status.
- English Language Learner (ELL) Translations had been growing steadily over a number of years and would be monitored for future budgeting.
- It was not yet clear whether Refuse costs would continue with the new facility, be reduced by Project budget or if it was a function of the additional dumpster at the temporary cafeteria location—to be continued until August 1st for summer school.

- The largest residual was Fuel. The modulars were entirely electric, and accounting was waiting to see electricity cost for the new building
- The Superintendent's Shared Services residual covered the gap in the transfer margin.
- **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) \$343,897.53 TOTAL END OF FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET TRANSFERS AS PRESENTED.**

D. Vote to to Use School Choice Funds to Cover General Budget Transfers

- Not needed

E. Grants – None

V. Tisbury School Building Project Report

B. Project Update

- Although Construction Manager (CMR) W.T. Rich continued to move forward at a great pace, some work on the gym might continue into September due to increasingly difficult workforce access. Despite bonuses and incentives, laborers were reluctant to suffer the long commute and unreliable ferries. Difficult spring weather was a delaying factor for freight deliveries.
- The east side grading, drainage landscaping would continue into October/November as originally planned and in keeping with the removal of the modulars.
- The modulars had been decommissioned as required and were wrapped for transport. Barges were scheduled at 3 units per barge.
- A third party commissioning agent confirmed all equipment and supplies were to spec.
- Eversource would complete final power in early July. Once the building was live, inspectors could start signing off on systems, e.g. the elevator. Both the Tisbury Building and Fire Inspectors had been on continual walk-thru's so that a temporary Certificate of Occupancy (CO) covering the major part of the facility should not be a problem.
- The Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU) had lifted some grant restrictions on generators (see below: Actions).
- As contracted, the roof was solar ready and the Town was progressing to install solar panels, adding design money to the Tappé Architect contract and using some of the carefully protected contingency funds, thus saving time and money by using the Project Professional Team (see 5/14/24 Minutes p.2).
- It was good to be able to restore some nice-to-haves that had been value engineered out during the pandemic crisis.
- The TSC toured the building and commended the new classrooms with sinks and storage space, the colors on the walls and new Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FFE).
- Those FFE in storage that were in good shape but not needed were donated to a school in Randolph, MA. Other items would be sorted for salvage, give-away or waste.
- The TSAC suggested that those materials coming into the refurbished building after 2 year or 2 month in storage (even if climate-controlled) be checked for mold, lead and fatigue issues (see below: Actions).

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Smith expressed his gratitude and congratulations to Ms. Houghton for running and winning in the Town election. He praised the hard, often misunderstood and under-appreciated work of school committee members, emphasizing the TSC legacy of the new facility.

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

- Administration and MVPS Cabinet would respond to this year's Education School Climate Survey (EDSCLS).
- The Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC) would report on the MVPS equity audit done by small groups and forums.
- There was interest in the Assistant Superintendent search now that Mr. John Stevens would be interim Edgartown School Principal.
- Mr. Jim Hardy of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) would start the comprehensive MVPS policy and handbooks review/update, to keep them in compliance with current law and practice. This would be a long process eventually assigned to a subcommittee.

B. Shared Services Update – Tabled

Adjournment

The next TSAC meeting would probably be in September.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. LISA PHALEN AND SECONDED BY MR. GUADAGNO THE TISBURY SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 4:52PM: 7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

C. Executive Session – G.L. c30A To conduct Strategy Sessions in Preparation for Negotiations with Nonunion Personnel or to Conduct Collective Bargaining Sessions or Contract Negotiations with Nonunion Personnel

1. FY2025 Non-Union Salary Adjustments (See documents on file.)

- IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE THAT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION WAS NOT NEEDED.
- The TSC expressed their appreciation of Prin. Custer (who chose to leave the meeting at this point) and Assistant Principal Melissa Ogden.
- New Chilmark, Edgartown, and Oak Bluffs Principal and Assistant Principal hires (see 4/9/24 Minutes p.3 #III) indicated the MVPS had fallen below the market median pay scale. In addition increases needed to close the gap with the teachers union pay—those working 180 days versus administrators working 260 days per year.
- Before budget season Dr. Smith had proposed bringing technologist pay in line with non-education Island rates as well as those of sister districts across Cape Cod and Nantucket.
- Consequently, in consultation with the AISC Personnel Subcommittee, the following structural market corrections were proposed followed by a 3% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA):
 - Prin. Custer - \$11,000 to bring him within \$800 of other MVPS Principals;
 - Asst. Prin. Ogden - \$6,500;
 - Technologist Sue Leonard - \$10,000.
- Ms. Houghton remarked that in her professional position she had found housing for new hires from off-Island an insurmountable problem, and spoke of the necessity to build infrastructure and succession planning.
- **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 FISCAL YEAR 2025 SALARY ADJUSTMENTS FOR NON-UNION PERSONNEL AS PRESENTED:**

- PRINCIPAL JOHN CUSTER \$167,884,
- ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL MELISSA OGDEN \$137,823, AND
- TECHNOLOGIST SUSAN LEONARD \$108,125.

Chair Amy Houghton expressed her appreciation of this second joint meeting with TSAC.

- MVPS Principals and School Committees would set up a task force to introduce Brazilian into the world language curriculum while still providing Spanish to those who wanted it.

Adjournment

- ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MR. WATTS THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 5:09PM: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS

Appendix A: Meetings/Events

- TSC – 5:00PM, Tuesday, July 9, 2024 – Zoom
- AISC – 5:30PM, Tuesday, July 9, 2024 – Zoom
- AISC MASC/Negotiations – Tuesday, July 9, 2024 – Zoom
- AISC MASC School Committee Training – Saturday, July 20, 2024
- Project Status & Planning – 1:00PM Tuesdays,

Appendix B: Actions

Mr. Watts/Mr. Owen/W.T. Rich – check stored items for mold, lead, etc. before returning to refurbished School.

Mr. Watts/Mr. Owen/Mr. Blessen/Mr. Guadagno – submit generator application to Mass. DPU.

July Agenda

- Minutes 6/25/24
- Project Invoices

Appendix C: Documents on File

- Agenda 6/25/24
- Tisbury School, Staffing – update (as of June 25, 2024)
- Friedman email re: Resignation 6/19/24
- Booth resignation letter 6/1/24
- Coutinho email re: letter of resignation 6/10/24
- Crossland letter re: child rearing leave 6/25/24
- Custer letter re: Martha’s Vineyard Striped Bass and Bluefish Derby donation 5/17/24
- Tisbury School Fund Balances Fiscal Year, 2023-2024 6/24/24
- Tisbury School Fund Balances Fiscal Year, 2023-2024 6/25/24
- Tisbury School FY24 Year End, Requested Year-End Budget Transfers & Actual Cafeteria Transfer, June 25, 2024

continued >

Appendix C: Documents on File (cont.)

- Martha's Vineyard Public Schools, Office of Superintendent of Schools memo re:
Non-Union Salary Adjustments, 6/25/24
- Salary Comparison Chart
- Account/Finance Manager....chart
- Tiger Tales, June 2024 (8 p.)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Office On Call/Marni Lipke.

Marni Lipke – Recorder

Date

Amy Houghton – TSC Chair

Date

Minutes approved 7/9/24