

**UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD
6:30PM, Monday, June 17, 2024
Wampanoag Tribal Community Center**

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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, Susan Stevens, Mary Boyd,
Wampanoag Education – Martha Vanderhoop, Naushon Vanderhoop,
Chilmark Preschool – Deb Zetterberg,
Press: Lynn Fraker – MVTV
Recorder: Marni Lipke *Late arrivals or early departures

Call to Order (Agenda item #II)

The Up-Island Regional School Committee (UIRSC) meeting was called to order. Chair Jim Newman thanked the Wampanoag Education representatives for their hospitality.

(Recorder's note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.)

Approval of Minutes (Agenda item #II)

A. Including But Not Limited to May 20, 2024

- ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 20, 2024 MINUTES; ALEX SALOP SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

Principal's Reports (Agenda Item #III)

A. Susan Stevens – Chilmark School

1. Principal's Update

- This was Head of School Susan Stevens' last UIRSC meeting before retirement. Students and staff gave a moving celebration, wishing her well. Ms. Stevens thanked the UIRSC for their support. The UIRSC would miss her.
- She commended 5th Grade Graduation—with student introductions by Taylor Swift era.
- Nine students would attend the Chilmark Summer School 30 min/day a couple days a week, others would attend the West Tisbury School (WTS) Summer School.
- There was an issue with the Chilmark Community Center Summer Camp. Ms. Stevens had followed protocol, inquiring in writing about the Camp's intentions well in advance. Receiving no response she scheduled maintenance work on all the classroom and bathroom floors to repair damage from the heating/ ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) construction project.
- Recently the Summer Camp informed her they had over-enrolled and needed additional School space—besides the traditional preschool classroom and bathroom.
- The UIRSC noted:
 - ° the preschool space was the only School space declared surplus (see Minutes: 7/12/04 p.2-3 #B, 8/24/04 p.3 #B, 10/18/04 p.1-2 #VII A), and
 - ° there was no UIRSD/Town of Chilmark lease for the facility.

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- The Chilmark Select Board (CSB) would discuss the matter at tomorrow's meeting. The UIRSC would consider it at their July meeting.

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

1. Safe Routes to School Award (See 5/20/24 Minutes p.3 #B 1.)

Administrators attended the award ceremony at the State House in Boston and were surprised to also be chosen as the Southeastern Massachusetts *Exemplary* Safe Routes School.

2. Math Curriculum (See documents on file.)

The School's phenomenal math teachers were frustrated with the existing kindergarten through 6th Grade (K thru 6) curriculum which the State confirmed only met half its requirements. After exhaustive research, the teachers chose Reveal Math which fulfilled all requirements with wide resources, rigor, cultural responsiveness (tested during the recent Professional Development (PD) session) and inquiry based or teacher presentation formats throughout. The package would be purchased this summer followed by both self-based and trainer-led PD. Staff could also talk to other Massachusetts teachers using the same program.

- In Inquiry Based learning students worked on the problem among themselves coming up with whatever solutions they could (whether wrong or right). Teacher presentations were needed for more complex concepts.

- Other Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) were currently exploring new English/Language Arts (E/LA) curricula but the WTS math information would be shared when and as needed.

- The UIRSD used multiple indicators and assessment tools to determine student levels, skills, foundation knowledge gaps, etc.

- The current 7th/8th grade Math curriculum was adequate but might later be replaced by Reveal Math, pending release of its new unit.

Superintendent's Report (Agenda Item #IV)

A. Non-Union Salary Adjustments (See documents on file & 11/21/22 Minutes p.6 #D.)

Superintendent Richard Smith presented the proposed adjustments with market comparisons of similar schools. Increases were determined by a number of factors.

- In order to top her previous teacher's salary the new Chilmark Principal pay was \$140,000+.

- WTS Technologist David Crawford received a market correction (see Minutes: 6/20/23 p.5, & 12/20/23 p.2), although Chilmark School Technologist Rebecca Tinus did not this year.

- Pay levels were a determinant for MVPS principals and assistant principals search candidates.

- UIRSD Administrators salaries were mostly below market averages.

- A 3% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) was assumed for all positions.

• The funding pool was contained in two lines, one for COLAs and another for structural raises (see 12/20/23 Minutes p.2). Additional funds were available from the summer school grant.

• Protocol objections were reiterated from previous discussions:

- increases should be part of the budget process—otherwise it lacked transparency;

- there should be a standard matrix to make raises more predictable and budgetable;

- it was bad practice to take funds from other budget lines.

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- The All Island School Committee (AISC) Personnel Subcommittee (UIRSD Representative: Alex Salop) was consulted at length and debated, researched and supported the proposals.
- Dr. Smith responded the process was transparent. Timing and salary changes were dictated by the new Principal salary negotiations—a national trend for high starting salaries.
 - Budgets were not static documents but rather projections that had to adapt to realities as they occurred—as was the practice with school districts everywhere.
 - Both he and former Superintendent James Weiss proposed administrative salary matrixes (see Minutes: 7/15/13 p.1 #V B, & 12/15/14 p.4, & 11/21/22 p.6-7 #D) which had been rejected.
 - Although the current process was not objective, it was decidedly thoughtful.
- The UIRSC acknowledged and commended their Administrators, especially saluting Principal Donna Lowell-Bettencourt's and Assistant Principal Mary Boyd's veteran status. It was emphasized the a year's delay until the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) budget process, even if compensated with larger raises, could be interpreted as disrespectful.
 - It was also argued that a matrix might sound rational but would not eliminate problems or unforeseen changes.
- *ALEX SALOP MOVED TO APPROVE THE NON-UNION SALARY ADJUSTMENTS AS PROPOSED; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 3 AYES, 2 NAYS: ROBERT LIONETTE, SKIPPER MANTER, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*
- To match the Island factor *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO RAISE THE COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT ANOTHER 1.5%; ALEX SALOP SECONDED FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES; MOTION FAILED; 1 AYE—SKIPPER MANTER, 4 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Finance (Agenda item #V)

A. Expense and Revenue Report (See documents on file.)

D. Budget Transfers (See documents on file.)

There were no cross-site transfers and the total came to ~ \$413,000. Deficits/variance highlights were in keeping with the monthly FY24 budget reporting.

- Almost \$14,000 in **WTS** Custodial Contracted Services should be reduced in FY25 when custodians were fully staffed.
- About \$87,000 in Health Insurance came from unpredictable staffing and individual to family plan changes. As above, the FY25 line was increased to match and account for a large rate change (see Minutes: 2/12/24 p.2-3 #IV A&D, & 10/16/24).
- The largest **Chilmark** site transfer (\$76,700) was to staff the growing kindergarten (see 4/13/23 Minutes p.2-3 #III B2).
- Transfers were in keeping with State reporting which required separate reporting for kindergarten, special education, etc.
- In the **District** site, the audit overage was less than expected, but prices were rising across all the Island municipalities.
- Other overages were driven by inflation and salaries: Medicare Employee Expenses, Dukes County Assessment, and building insurance rates continued to rise 10-13% nationally.

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- Transportation residuals showed the continuance of consolidated routes due to insufficient drivers (a pandemic after-effect). The MVPS needed about 6-7 additional drivers.
- Insurance residuals (Workmans Compensation, Unemployment, District Health, etc.) were the result of somewhat arbitrary good luck.
- *ROXANNE ACKERMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE END-OF-YEAR FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET TRANSFERS AS PROPOSED: ROBERT LIONETTE AND SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYE, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

B. Grants/Donations – Nothing to report.

C. Clean School Bus Grant Update

(See Minutes: 1/10/24 p.3 #IV B, & 2/12/24 p.3 #E.)

The UIRSD was put on the waiting list with no information on decision timeframe, an uncomfortable position, given the aging status of 2 Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) diesel buses that needed replacing. In the meantime MVPS administration was exploring possible State Clean Energy Center (CEC) grants, however the maximum award was \$280,000 ~ \$70,000 less than high e-bus prices (~ \$350,000), which were offset by substantial fuel and maintenance savings.

F. Chilmark School Heating Ventilation/Air Conditioning (HVAC) Project – Debt

Service Schedule (See documents on file & Minutes: 3/9/23, & 3/13/23 p.3-4 #IV & V.)

The final bill (without landscaping) came to \$2,500,000 which was borrowed by the Town of Chilmark (because they were going out to bid for other buildings and had a better bond rating). Due to timing issues the UIRSD FY24 and FY25 principal/interest budgeting was slightly off.

- The recommended option was to pay Chilmark both FY24 and FY25 as budgeted, which totaled slightly more than was needed, but which would bring payments in line for FY26.

- The other option was to pay Chilmark only what was necessary and then readjust budgets requiring: additional State reports, budget recertification at Special Town Meetings, auditing, etc.

• *ALEX SALOP MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRST OPTION AS RECOMMENDED FOR UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT PAYMENT OF ITS CHILMARK SCHOOL HEATING/VENTILATION/AIR CONDITIONING PROJECT DEBT; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYE, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

The Town of Chilmark had over-borrowed and requested the UIRSD include the generator costs in the bond, essentially re-attributing them to the HVAC project—both the Town and Financial advisors agreed this was appropriate related funding use of the debt. The funds the UIRSD had appropriated through warrant articles would be returned to the Towns.

- The generator was on site and functioning.

- Further protocol such as rescinding votes, would be presented as needed.

• *ALEX SALOP MOVED TO APPROVE THE INCLUSION OF THE CHILMARK SCHOOL GENERATOR COSTS IN THE HEATING/VENTILATION/AIR CONDITIONING PROJECT DEBT; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYE, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

E. Chilmark School Lease Discussion

- The Chilmark Preschool would present preliminary plans first to the CSB and then to the UIRSC at their July meeting.

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Student Support Services Update (Agenda Item #VI)

The Department was winding up the year, hiring new staff, etc. A shout out went to teachers for their dedication, wonderful service and commitment—witness the extraordinary number who volunteered for extra project work.

Personnel (See documents on file.) (Agenda Item #VII)

A. Leaves of Absence (LOA)

- SKIP MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE MATERNITY LEAVES OF ABSENCE FOR:
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN TEACHER KELLIE DAVIES FROM OCTOBER 21, 2024 TO MARCH 31, 2025,
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHER LUCY LEOPOLD AS OF APRIL 19, 2024 TO THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR,
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION – EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL CAITLIN RIORDAN FROM MAY 29, 2024 TO SEPTEMBER 3, 2024; ALEX SALOP SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

- SKIP MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE LEAVES OF ABSENCE FOR:
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL LYDIA FISCHER FROM MAY 15, 2024 TO THE END OF THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR,
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHER LUCY LEOPOLD 0.2 FULL TIME EQUIVALENT CHILD REARING LEAVE FOR THE 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR,
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL ELEMENTARY INTERVENTION TEACHER ANNA MARKWICA-OWEN 0.5 FULL TIME EQUIVALENT LEAVE FOR THE 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR; ALEX SALOP SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

B. Resignations

- SKIP MANTER MOVED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RESIGNATIONS OF:
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL SEVENTH/EIGHTH GRADE TEACHER DAN COONEY AS OF JUNE 30, 2024,
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL MUSIC TEACHER MARY ALICE MCCANN AS OF THE END OF THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR,
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL JESSE SEWARD AS OF MAY 17, 2024,
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL AVA THORS AS OF JUNE 30, 2024,
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL CUSTODIAN ROBERT VANDELOO AS OF JULY 1, 2024,
 - WEST TISBURY SCHOOL ASSISTANT COOK SEAN YANCEY AS OF THE END OF THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR; ALEX SALOP SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

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C. Retirements

- *SKIP MANTER MOVED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RETIREMENTS OF:*
 - *WEST TISBURY SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR MOLLY CABRAL AS OF JULY 15, 2025,*
 - *WEST TISBURY SCHOOL ART TEACHER LISA MAGNARELLI AS OF THE END OF THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR,*
 - *WEST TISBURY SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER KIM PATTERSON CHANGING HER DATE TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2024 (see 10/16/23 Minutes p.5 #IV B);*
- ALEX SALOP SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair – None (Agenda Item #VIII)

Meetings/Events

- AISC – 5:30PM, Tuesday, July 9, 2024 – MVRHS / Zoom
- UIRSC – TBD – 5:30PM, Monday, July 15, 2024

Adjournment

Chair Jim Newman thanked the Wampanoag Tribe for providing the space for the meeting.

- *ALEX SALOP MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:29PM; ROXANNE ACKERMAN SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

Documents on File:

- Agenda/Revised Agendas (3 p.) 6/17/24
- Reveal Math, 2022 Reveal Math, Report Overview (5 p.) 6/17/24
- Martha's Vineyard Public Schools, Office of Superintendent of Schools memo re: Non-Union Salaries and Adjustments, 6/17/24
- Salary Comparison Chart
- Account/Finance Manager...chart
- All Expenditure Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (15 p.) 6/17/24
- Revenue Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2023-2024 6/17/24
- UIRSD FY23 Year End, Proposed Year-End Budget Transfers June 17, 2024
- Carroll email re: Chilmark & UIRSDC 8 State Road HVAC (2 p.) 6/13/24
- Owen email re: Child Rearing Leave Request 4/22/24
- Fischer email re: Leave of absence request 5/15/24
- Riordan email re: Maternity Leave Request 3/4/24
- Leopold email re: Anticipated Maternity Leave 1/30/24
- Seward emails re: The Seward Family's Next Chapter (2 p.) 5/9/24
- Thors email re: Resignation 5/29/24
- McCann email re: Resignation Letter 5/28/24
- Magnarelli email re: Thank you! 5/28/24
- Cabral retirement letter (correction) 1/2/24
- Cabral email re: Retirement 1/12/24

Minutes approved 7/15/24