

**UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD
6:00PM, Wednesday, March 5, 2025
West Tisbury School and/or By Zoom Cloud Conference**

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Present: Acting Chair – Alex Salop, Robert Lionette, Skipper Manter,
Others: Recorder: Marni Lipke
Supt.'s Shared Services Office: Business Administrator Mark Friedman,
Principals: Donna Lowell-Bettencourt, Kate Squire,
Chilmark Preschool: Nancy Grundman, Anne Mayhew, Deb Zetterberg,
Towns: Chilmark: Town Administrator Tim Carroll,
Michelle O'Connor – CTAC Chair & Chilm. Comm. Center
West Tisbury: Richard Andre – Energy Com, Greg Orcutt – FinCom
*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.

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

Approval of Minutes (Agenda item #II)

**A. Including But Not Limited to January 15, 2025, January 27, 2025 and
February 7, 2025**

• SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:

- JANUARY 15, 2025,
- JANUARY 27, 2025,
- FEBRUARY 7, 2025;

ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS,
ABSTENTIONS AS ABSENT: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX
SALOP—AYE.

Principal's Reports (Agenda Item #III)

A. Kate Squire– Chilmark School

- The School was busy with its annual ski trip to Sugar Loaf, Maine (see 4/22/24 Minutes p.4 #2) where they also bonded and learned computer coding to make their own games.
- Virginia Wallace won the School Spelling Bee and would compete in the March 21st All Island Bee.
- Students worked on writing workshops and were excited about the Islanders Write Student Writing Workshop coming up on March 15th.
- Mid-year progress reports were sent out.
- Principal Kate Squire created a Chilmark School Instagram account to post happenings.

**1. Gift of Two Portable Adjustable Walls to Chilmark School from Parent
Teacher Organization (PTO) – Possible Vote**

The PTO gifted 2 portable 14 ft. long sound-absorbing rolling wall partitions to create a small classroom in the foyer.

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• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ACCEPT THE PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION DONATION OF TWO PORTABLE ADJUSTABLE WALLS FOR THE CHILMARK SCHOOL; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

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

- Many students were participating in the School Play In The Woods. This year students were trying something new with dinner theater (see below: Meetings/Events).
- The 7th graders had a great time on the ski trip—all came back healthy with no casualties.
- 40 students signed up for volleyball!
- Principal Donna Lowell-Bettencourt thanked the UIRSC for their support of the very popular after school programs. Winter season was finishing up and the spring offerings would start soon.
- In conjunction with the move to Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) wide curriculums, staff was exploring the new English/Language Arts (E/LA) program Inter-Reading (vetted by Tisbury School)—the WTS vetted the new MVPS math program (see 6/17/24 Minutes p.2 #B2).

1. Donations (See documents on file.)

These grants were designated to the WTS.

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO ACCEPT:*

- *AN EXO-TERRA TANK AND ACCOMPANYING EQUIPMENT AT TOTAL VALUE \$560.99 FROM ANDREW CHASE, AND*

- *TWO CAPE COD 5¢ BANK MINI-GRANTS ON FISHING TOTALING \$1,000, AND*

- *TWELVE YOCHEE MINI-GRANTS OF TEACHER PROJECT SUPPLIES;*

ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.

• The UIRSC asked if/how the new MVPS lunch policy affected the UIRSD.

• Due to general confusion over the State vote to eliminate MCAS as a high school graduation requirement, the UIRSC asked about a letter of explanation to parents. Administrators reported:

- parents were kept informed on all MCAS testing schedules and results;
- WTS had 100% participation;
- a Social Studies test had been added to the system.

Director of Support Services – Tabled (Agenda Item #IV)

Superintendent Update – Tabled (Agenda Item #V)

Energy Committee – Richard Andre (Agenda Item #VI)

Signature of Policy (See 1/27/24 Minutes p.4 # VI.)

US Department of Energy (DOE) – School Class

West Tisbury and other Island Towns were some of the first participants in the 2009 Green Communities program, which helped increase municipal sustainability. In 2021 all Island Towns voted for a 100% fossil fuel reduction by 2040. The new Green Communities 2.0 program with larger grants constituted a push towards electrification over fossil fuels in transportation and heating. The West Tisbury Select Board (WTSB) voted to adopt the Zero Emissions Vehicle

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Policy on March 19th. The policy allowed for flexibility in requesting the least emissions available on a descending list, battery Electric Vehicle (EV), plug-in EV, hybrid, or internal combustion with the best gas mileage. The UIRSD van was in good shape but when replacement was necessary there were EV versions available at reasonable prices and the UIRSD already had charging stations.

- The Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources rejected the UIRSC policy modification.
- The UIRSC discussed at some length:
 - policy protocol (including whether to delay further),
 - previous directives (see 10/21/19 Minutes p.3) which were more severe than the current policy,
 - and Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) status (see 12/13/21 Minutes p.2).
- *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO ADOPT THE ZERO EMISSIONS VEHICLE POLICY AND TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO SIGN THE LETTER TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES; SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*
- The West Tisbury Energy Committee requested the UIRSC appoint a representative to the Green Communities Committee.

Chilmark Community Center (CCC) Use Agreement 2025-25 School Year

(See documents on file.)

(Agenda Item #VIII)

In order for the Preschool to remain in Room 131, the proposed agreement had the understanding and support of the Town of Chilmark and the CCC. (Growing enrollment meant the School would be cramped even with the use of Room 131.) As all aspects had been collaboratively considered including pitfalls and obstacles, the Chilmark Select Board (CSB) waived consulting Town Counsel and approved the agreement. The Agreement occasioned no expense to the UIRSD (all supplies would be School property) and Prin. Squire was confident in her ability to coordinate and communicate scheduling and weekends with the CCC Facilities Manager.

- This Agreement differed from the previous by:
 - increasing Chilmark School CCC use from 3 to 4 days/week, and
 - School supplies, equipment, etc. storage in an adjoining room, to be shifted for CCC events.
- The UIRSC requested a clause requiring inspection of Room 131 and the CCC before and after tenure by the School and Preschool. In addition, in accordance with Preschool suggestion, they requested an addendum to the Agreement with the Summer Camp requiring inspection of Room 131 before and after the Summer Camp tenancy. All in time for the UIRSC March 17th meeting.
- The UIRSC requested the UIRSD/CCC Agreement be vetted by MVPS Counsel.

Finance

(Agenda item #VII)

A. Recertify Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Budget – Shared Services Health Insurance

Budget certification required a quorum of 4 or 5 so the vote was tabled. Although all UIRSD Towns were sent accurate Budget numbers, some warrant deadlines might mean changes would have to be announced on Town Meeting floor.

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C. FY25 Certified Excess and Deficiency (E & D) (See documents on file.)

The Massachusetts Dept. of Revenue/Division of Local Services (DOR/DLS) certified Excess & Deficiency (E & D) at \$463,068. A timing discrepancy had already been rectified. The FY26 Budget committed \$134,972 of E & D to lower assessments (see 1/15/25 Minutes p.1 #II A).

B. FY26 Capital Projects – Update and Approvals

(See documents on file & 1/27/25 Minutes p.5 #VII C.)

A placeholder for a UIRSC bond was on all 3 Town Meeting Warrants for the following projects:

- \$700,000 for the WTS feasibility study;
- \$71,760 for WTS heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) repair;
- \$128,000 for Chilmark School bell tower renovation.
- After receiving significant parent and community feedback, Prin. Squire recommended hiring a detailed estimate on bell tower repair in order that voters be informed on all the options.
- *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT TO HIRE TAPPÉ ARCHITECTS TO PRESENT A MORE DETAILED ESTIMATE ON RENOVATING THE CHILMARK SCHOOL BELL TOWER IN PLACE; SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*
- The 2 options to remove the Tower, were: 1) the school bell hung inside the School below the roof, and 2) ground-mounting the bell outside (less expensive). It was a Chilmark decision but;
- *IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO RECOMMEND OPTION 2 THE GROUND-MOUNTED CHILMARK SCHOOL BELL.*
- Chilmark School external door updating (including hardware and software) was still being estimated—with the expectation of being in the \$70,000 range. Funding options were: increase the bond, amend the operating Budget with an E & D offset or use Rural School grant residuals.
- Skipper Manter objected to using E & D. Chilmark Town Administrator Tim Carroll pointed out that Chilmark was diligent about reasonable distribution of E & D, suggesting perhaps, a WTS project one year and a Chilmark School project the next.
- An official bonding vote at the March 17th meeting would allow all UIRSD Town Meetings to fall within the 60 day approval period. Like Budget Certification it would require a 2/3 UIRSC majority. Acting Chair Alex Salop would request 2 meetings be posted.
- Given the changing expenditure totals and a possible federal tariff war, the UIRSC discussed and rejected reducing the bond amount.
- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO:*
 - *INCREASE THE BORROWING UP TO THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE AMOUNT,*
 - *INCLUDE THE CHILMARK SCHOOL EXTERIOR DOOR UPGRADE, AND*
 - *AUTHORIZE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR MARK FRIEDMAN TO MAKE THE FINAL DETERMINATION;*
- ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

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D. Administrative Capacity for Feasibility Study

Mr. Friedman again reminded the UIRSC that the Superintendent's Shared Services (or Central) Office did not have the capacity to oversee a WTS feasibility study and that the bond specifically prohibited paying for personnel/professional services.

- He advised that the position be an employee (and not a contractor) so they would be able to oversee and authorize procurement, schedule, post, attend and record meetings, etc. However the UIRSC was reluctant to add staff with benefits etc. The FY26 Budget could be amended on Town Meeting floors along with an offset from E & D so the assessment remained unchanged. The UIRSC requested he present specific expenses at the March 17th Meeting.

Discussion and Possible Vote to Declare Room Chilmark Preschool Uses to No Longer Be Surplus Space Beginning July 1, 2026 (Agenda item #IX)

Skipper Manter recommended sending a clear message to the Friends of Chilmark Preschool. The discussion covered:

- unforeseen circumstances;
 - Friends of Preschool plea to the UIRSC to sign the lease so they could break ground;
 - whether the CCC would be available for part of the 2026-27 school year;
 - preschool regulations as restrictive/inconvenient to CCC use—School use as more flexible;
 - Town attitude as extremely unfortunate for the Preschool to be without space;
 - ability to rescind the motion.
- *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO REVOKE THE DECLARATION OF CHILMARK SCHOOL SURPLUS SPACE AS OF SEPTEMBER 2026; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*
- The UIRSC requested the Preschool lease be on the March 17th agenda.

Personnel – Tabled (Agenda Item #IX)

A. Leave of Absence (LA)

B. Resignation

C. Retirement

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

Meetings/Events

- WTS In The Woods: 7:00PM March 6-8, & 2:00PM March 9, 2025 – WTS

- **UIRSC – 5:30PM, Monday, March 17, 2025 - TBD**

- **UIRSC – 5:30PM, Mondays – Location TBD:**

April 21, 2025 May 19, 2025 June 16, 2025

- AISC – 5:30PM, Thursday, March 20, 2025 – MVRHS Hybrid

- **Annual Town Meetings**

- West Tisbury, 6:00PM, Tuesday, April 8, 2025 – WTS

- Chilmark – TBD, Monday, April 28, 2025 – CCC

- Aquinnah – TBD, Tuesday, May 13, 2021 – Town Hall

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Adjournment

• *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 7:48PM; SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

Documents on File:

- Agenda (2 p.) 3/5/25
 - February 2025, The Up Island Regional School District and the Friends of the Chilmark...(2 p.)
 - February 2025, The Up Island Regional School District and Town of Chilmark through...(3 p.)
 - Friedman cover email re: Materials for UIRSD School Committee Meeting – 3/05/25 3/4/25
 - Up-Island Regional School District, FY26 General Fund Budget, Version #6, Recertified 2-20/2025 (9 p.)
 - UIRSD, FY2026 Assessment – V#6 Proposed 3/05/2025
 - UIRSD, Capital/Repair Projects, 3/05/2025 Draft (2 p.)
 - Excess and Deficiency Calculation, Fiscal Year 2025, 2/27/25
 - Chilmark School – Bell Tower, Tappé Architects Inc. Feb. 10th, 2025 (6 p.)
 - Letter for School Donations, (42 p.) 3/5/25
 - https://mvyys.zoom.us/rec/share/8-Y4qX-UEIYySpcZHDWRT7Pd4-Q-sWqpQQoh7Dev4yXQ2bBZ_rzDPGJaCBrOo0U8.9dTvzp4w9l4CS6nN?StartTime=1741215622000
- Passcode: i2EC11R%

Minutes approved 3/17/25