UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD
5:30PM, Monday, April 14, 2025
West Tisbury School and by Zoom Cloud Conference

Present: Acting Chair – Alex Salop, Roxanne Ackerman*, Robert Lionette, Skipper Manter,

Others: Marni Lipke – Recorder,
Supt.'s Shared Services Office: Business Administrator Mark Friedman,
Student Support Services – Hope MacLeod,
Principals: Donna Lowell-Bettencourt, Kate Squire,
Chilmark Preschool: Rebekah Thomson,
Towns: Chilmark: Town Administrator Tim Carroll, Matt Poole – BOH,
Michelle O'Connor – CTAC Chair & Chilm. Comm. Center,
Linda Coutinho – Finance Committee
Press: Louisa Hufstader – Vineyard Gazette,

*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 March 17, 2025 and March 28, 2025

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:*
- *MARCH 17, 2025,*
- *MARCH 28, 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)

* During this conversation Roxanne Ackerman entered the meeting at 5:37PM.

• West Tisbury School (WTS's) projects were well underway and Chilmark School's were basically done. Now that bids were in and costs more settled transfers would be requested, e.g. more money for the English/Language Arts (E/LA) curriculum and less for repairs.

A. Kate Squire– Chilmark School

• The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) moved MCAS testing to a new computer-based platform that reduced many previous problems.

• Principal Kate Squire was looking forward to her second May Day and Maypole dance starting at 9:00AM. (West Tisbury asked to borrow the May Pole for a celebration the following week.)

• In anticipation of the new Preschool, a storage container and shed were emptied. The shed would be moved; the container returned to the vendor. The UIRSC stated its standard practice and protocol for all surplus:

- Items are offered to the 3 Up Island Towns, then to other Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) before being put out to bid and/or disposed of as administrators see fit.

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO DECLARE SURPLUS THE LIST OF CHILMARK SCHOOL ITEMS AS PRESENTED TO BE OFFERED TO THE THREE UP ISLAND TOWNS AND THEN THE OTHER MARTHA'S VINEYARD PUBLIC SCHOOL AND THEN TO BE DISPOSED OF AS THE CHILMARK SCHOOL PRINCIPAL SEES FIT; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.* (See documents on file.)

1. Student Activities Donation

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO GRATEFULLY ACCEPT O'CONNOR STUDIOS' DONATION OF SCHOOL PICTURES VALUED AT $343.53; ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

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

• A big leak was traced under a lab table in the Science Classroom concrete floor where a pipe had been crimped instead of properly capped. All gas lines had been checked but further investigation would be expensive and damaging. The original General Contractor Scanlan would be contacted. Repair costs were not yet final but were likely to be just over the $10,000 insurance deductible. The UIRSC would be asked to decide if they wanted to make a claim or use Contingency funds or other budget residuals.

• The new MCAS platform was better than the last but still had some glitches.

• 7th and 8th grade students just completed the Youth Risk Survey.

• The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and School Advisory Council (SAC) were ready for a joint meeting on the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

• *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO ACCEPT WITH GRATITUDE $800 FROM THE MARTHA'S VINEYARD STRIPED BASS AND BLUE FISH DERBY SANCY PACHICO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP; SKIP MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.* (See documents on file.)

(See Minutes: 12/7/22 p.3 #IV, & 12/16/24 p.4, & 1/15/25 p.3, & 1/27/25 p.4-5 #VI B & VIII C.)
In view of the failed Feasibility Study vote at the West Tisbury Annual Town Meeting (ATM), UIRSC members apologized to Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt citing:

- their lack of preparedness at the Town Meeting presentation,
- failure to think through the project after the initial "wish list" (see 10/17/22 Minutes p.2-3 #III);
- objection to references to the UIRSC decision not to apply for Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) funding;
- the failed vote making building and net zero renovation more difficult.

Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt thanked the UIRSC for the apology and noted the public ignorance of "hidden" school conditions such as the lack of seating and standard court size in the gym.

• MVPS Business Administrator Mark Friedman reached out to former West Tisbury Treasurer and Capital Planning Committee member Kathy Logue, who spoke out against the Study at Town Meeting. She offered to attend a UIRSC meeting to discuss issues, however the UIRSC preferred to first resolve issues themselves with input from the PTO and SAC. Mr. Friedman also contacted an architect about a more incremental and budget-minded approach.

Chilmark Community Center (CCC)/Chilmark/UIRSD Agreement for Use of the Chilmark Community Center (See documents on file.) (Agenda Item #VII)
Addendum to Chilmark School Summer Camp Agreement – Inspection and Insurance (See documents on file.) (Agenda Item #VIII)

(See documents on file & Minutes: 12/16/24 p.4 #VII, & 1/15/25 p.1 #III, & 1/27/25 p.1-3 #VIII B&C, & 2/7/25 p.1-4 #II-III, 3/5/25 Minutes p.3 #VII, & 3/17/25 p.1 #VI.)

The UIRSC thanked Prin. Squire for her work. The documents were briefly reviewed. Attorney questions had been answered and approval was recommended.

• *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING THREE AGREEMENTS:*
- *UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE / FRIENDS OF CHILMARK PRESCHOOL FOR USE OF A CHILMARK SCHOOL CLASSROOM;*
- *UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE / TOWN OF CHILMARK FOR USE OF THE CHILMARK COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE 205-2026 SCHOOL YEAR; AND*
- *UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE / TOWN OF CHILMARK / CHILMARK TOWN AFFAIRS COUNCIL ADDENDUM TO AGREEMENT;*

SKIP MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ALEX SALOP—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE.

• *SKIPPER MANTER MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIR, ACTING CHAIR OR VICE CHAIR TO SIGN ALL AGREEMENTS: ROBERT LIONETTE SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

Chilmark/Preschool Lease and/or UIRSD Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – Vote (Agenda Item #IX)

Counsels were negotiating cost sharing language, (having finished the 3 UIRSC requested items). The Town was not currently involved. The UIRSC asked that work be completed soon.

• *ROBERT LIONETTE MOVED TO CONTINUE TO ENGAGE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE COUNSEL MURPHY LAMERE & MURPHY, P.C. (PETER SUMNERS) TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE FRIENDS OF CHILMARK PRESCHOOL COUNSEL CONCERNING SHARED COSTS; SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

Director of Support Services Update (Agenda Item #IV)
(See documents on file & Minutes: 1/16/23 p. #C, & 10/25/23 p.2)

Student Support Director Hope MacLeod had kept School Committees informed of increased shared services autism spectrum challenges and enrollments moving up from Project Headway. After several consultations including with Special Education Consultant Mark Palmieri who helped establish MVPS Shared Services (see 3/12/09 AISC Minutes p.1 #III) a more sustainable and comprehensive path forward was decided. To minimize student disruption and prepare for the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) budgeting, changes would start in the 2025-26 School Year. The update would also be presented at the All Island School Committee (AISC).

- The new Tisbury School would host the Kindergarten through 4th grade (K – 4) Compass class while the Oak Bluffs School (OBS) would retain Compass grades 5 – 8.
- The current WTS Bridge class would widen its enrollment parameters to include more global disabilities including students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), decreasing some pressure on the Edgartown School Bridge classrooms.

• The ensuing discussion covered several issues.

- Prin. Lowell-Bettencourt was excited by this change which allowed families with ASD issues who previously refused to use Shared Services due to reluctance to change schools, to continue attending their home-town school.
- In keeping with past practice, classrooms could be shifted to accommodate the changing Shared Services student numbers.
- Principals insisted on expanded Professional Development (PD) to properly instruct staff and manage the increased population.
- Age and needs discrepancies could be handled through different classrooms and waivers.
- There were some indications that the special needs population increase might be easing.

Superintendent's Update – Tabled (Agenda Item #V)

Skipper Manter objected to Superintendent Richard Smith's absence, noting the UIRSD paid him to attend meetings. The other UIRSC members, while understanding his request, thanked Dr. Smith for his past attention, especially as Assistant Superintendent and understood the difficulties of too many proliferating meetings.

Appoint Representative to Green Communities Committee (Agenda Item #VI)
(See documents on file.)

• *ROBERT LIONETTE NOMINATED ALEX SALOP AS THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE GREEN COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE; SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSTENTION: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—ABSTAIN*. The Committee met on the first Wednesday of the month.

Finance (Agenda Item #X)

A. Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) Expense and Revenue Report (See documents on file.)

• State revenues were double checked regarding rolling dates for Charter school costs/ reimbursements, but as of now there were no concerns.

• The WTS negative salary variances reflected positions versus actual hires. Expenses should end the year slightly under-budget, including the Maintenance line and broken pipe expenses.
• Chilmark School site was also in good shape, residuals covering any variances. Maintenance was expended but sufficient moneys were available to deal with recent septic issues.
• Some assessments in the Districtwide site were higher than budgeted. Mr. Friedman would report on School Lunch Revolving Fund versus General Fund expenditures.

Personnel – Nothing to Report (Agenda Item #IX)
A. Leave of Absence (LOA)
B. Resignation
C. Retirement

Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair (Agenda Item #XII)
The UIRSC asked about protocol on replacing former member and Chair Jim Newman (see 3/17/25 Minutes p.5 #VIII).

Meetings/Events
• UIRSC – 5:30PM, Mondays – Location TBD: May 19, 2025 June 16, 2025
• AISC – 5:30PM, Thursday, April 17, 2025 – MVRHS Hybrid
• Annual Town Meetings
- Chilmark – TBD, Monday, April 28, 2025 – CCC
- Aquinnah – TBD, Tuesday, May 13, 2021 – Town Hall

Adjournment
• *ROXANNE ACKERMAN MOVED TO ADJOURN; SKIPPER MANTER SECONDED AT 6:37PM; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 4 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: ROXANNE ACKERMAN—AYE, ROBERT LIONETTE—AYE, SKIPPER MANTER—AYE, ALEX SALOP—AYE.*

Documents on File:
• Agenda (2 p.) 4/14/25
• Container, maroon chair…
• Bettencourt/Andre emails re: West Tisbury School and the WT Energy Committee 4/8/25
• Custer letter re: Martha's Vineyard Striped Bass and Bluefish Derby, Inc. 3/31/25
• February 2025, The Up Island Regional School District and the Friends of the Chilmark Preschool… (2 p.)
• February 2025, The Up Island Regional School District and the Town of Chilmark through Its Select Board… (3 p.)
• Addendum to Agreement
• All Expenditure Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (15 p.) 4/14/25
• Revenue Report – General Fund Fiscal Year 2024-2025 4/14/25
• Shared Services Changes for 2025-2026 School Year (2 p.)

Minutes approved 5/28/25