Tisbury School Committee
4:00PM, Tuesday, February 17, 2026
Tisbury School Cafeteria

TSC Members Present: Chair Amy Houghton, Jen Cutrer, Alecia Lesnikowska,
TSAC Members Present: Chair Principal John Custer, Wiet Bacheller, John Guadagno, Catherine Mafcher, Becky Nutton, Ashley Tarter,
Staff: John Custer – Principal,
Others: Edward Pachico, Marni Lipke – Recorder

* Late Arrivals or early departures of TSC or TSAC members

The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) meeting was called to order at 4:06PM and Chair Amy Houghton welcomed the School Advisory Council.

• The Tisbury School Advisory Council (TSAC) meeting was called to order at 4:06PM.

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

I. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

A. School Committee 1/13/2026

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. JEN CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. ALECIA LESNIKOWSKA THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 13, 2026 MEETING WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED; 3 AYE, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTION.

B. School Advisory Council (12/9/2026)

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. ASHLEY TARTER AND SECONDED BY MS. CATHERINE MAFCHER THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 9, 2025 MEETING WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, ABSTENTIONS AS ABSENT.

II. Financial Report

A. Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) Budget

At the end of the meeting it was noted that Cape Cod Municipal Health Group (CCMHG) set health insurance rates at 8%.

1. Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) Feedback

The FinCom was appreciative of the efforts to keep growth at bay despite unavoidable contractual increases.

- Ms. Louise Clough, who had been liaison to the TSC, was no longer on the FinCom.

B. Fund Balances (See documents on file.)

• There were no concerns at this time.

• It was likely that most if not all of the reserves and possibly the Revolving School Choice fund would be needed to cover electricity bills since relief from the solar project was still some months away (see below: # IV A). Administration had anticipated some unfunded liabilities expecting a very tight FY26 budget. (The Manter Fund was restricted to spending for the benefit of students.)

• The Owners Project Manager (OPM) and the Town Administrator submitted an Annual Town Meeting (ATM) warrant article for $400,000 for completion of the solar project which allowed the Town access to a $790,000 Federal/State rebate—available to government and non-profits at 30% of total project cost (~ $2,300,000). Rough projections was that roof and parking lot solar would cover 70+% of the school's $20,000 per month electricity costs—for a project payback period of 3.5 to 5 years.
- The TSC expressed some misgiving about Federal grants reliability.

C. Grants – Nothing to report

III. Superintendent's Report

A. All Island School Committee (AISC)

1. Superintendent Search Update (See documents on file.)

• Three candidates spent a day on the Island visiting 3 schools and meeting with education leaders. The position was offered to Ms. Jaime Curley, currently Assistant Superintendent in Old Rochester, with a focus on special education and engagement with families, a humble, easy-going person. Once the contract was signed the search for an Asst. Superintendent would start. Housing would not be a problem since Ms. Curley had family on the Island and housing available—she would commute the first year spending 5 days a week here.

• There were 2 high quality finalists for the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) Principalship, one from Connecticut and the other from the Plymouth area.
• The excellent and numerous candidate pools (10 for Superintendent) were attributed to early advertising, e.g. before November.

B. Shared Services Update - Nothing to Report

IV. Tisbury School Building Project Report

B. Project Update

• Administration still met every Tuesday with the construction team, and Principal John Custer again praised W.T. Rich Construction for their flexibility and courtesy.
• The solar panels were still stacked on the snow-covered roof, awaiting better weather for installation. The Parking Lot canopy work would begin during April break and be finished in summer 2026, along with some other contract work that could not be done when students were in the building.

A. Approval of Project Invoices

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. LESNIKOWSKA THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AND RECOMMENDED (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) THE FOLLOWING JANUARY 1 THROUGH 31, 2026 INVOICES TOTALING $87,780.00 TO BE SENT TO TOWN HALL FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT:
- CHA INVOICE # 39235-58 FOR $5,500.00,
- W.T. RICH REQ # 41 FOR $82,280.00.

V. Principal's Report

A. School Events (See documents on file & below: Actions.)

• This was Random Acts of Kindness week.
• The Junior High ran the Community Assembly 4 times a year when the entire school assembled in the gym.
• February break was next week and the rescheduled 6th grade field trip to the Museum of Science would be March 6th.
• A shout out went to staff for supervising the many after-school activities some suggested by staff others requested by students today for example: chess club, Dungeons and Dragons club, volley ball, drum club and the All Island Youth Chorus.
• Having heard great things, TSC requested a report from the Student Council.

B. School Improvement Plan (SIP) (See documents on file.)

The TSAC was considering how to amend the current multi-year 2025-27 SIP.

Chair Amy Houghton announced the change from Medicare funds into a Medicare Rural Health Transformation Grant that awarded Massachusetts $160,000,000 every year for the next 5 years. A group was working on a robust application focusing on: socio-emotional education, health/access to primary care, mental health, substance use, technology infrastructure and work-force development (see below: Actions).

VI. Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) Building Project Update

A. June 2nd Vote

• Tonight's MVRHS Building Committee meeting would address the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) comments on various modest issues, some of which would be resolved and others accepted as non-reimbursable, after which the MSBA would set the funding level. The Committee would then focus on how this transformative project was important to the Island in preparation for the Islandwide vote from 11:00AM to 7:00PM, Tuesday, June 2nd. This would be an Islandwide simple majority. The following questions were raised:
- The majority would be irrespective of town residence.
- Did individual Towns have recourse to a vote they might oppose?
- Would there be a discussion at Annual Town Meeting(s)?
- Was absentee voting available?

Tisbury School Advisory Council (TSAC)

With 2 snow days, the final day of the 2025-26 School would be Wednesday June 24th. And as Labor Day fell on Monday September 7, 2026, the final day of the 2026-27 School year would be June 23rd—such late closings were difficult for staff and students. A suggestion to start before Labor Day was not well received. The matter would be put before the AISC.

Adjournment

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. LESNIKOWSKA THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) ADJOURNED AT 4:42PM.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. TARTER AND SECONDED BY MS. MAFCHER THE TISBURY SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED AT 4:42PM: 6 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

Appendix A: Meetings/Events:
• AISC – 5:30PM, Thursday, February 19, 2026 – Hybrid/MVRHS
• TSC – 4:00PM, Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at the Tisbury School
• TSC – 4:00PM, Tuesdays, April 14, 2026 May 12, 2026 June TBD
• ATM/STM – 7:00PM, Tuesday, April 28, 2026 – Tis. School Gym
• Town Election – 12:00N-8:00PM, Tuesday, May 12, 2026
• MVRHS Vote – 11:00AM-7:00PM, Tuesday, June 2, 2026

Appendix B: Actions
• Prin. Custer – ask Student Council representatives to report to the TSC.
• All – anyone interested in working on the Rural Health Transformation grant contact Ms. Houghton.
• Ms. Houghton – ask about absentee ballots for MVRHS Project 6/2/26 vote.
• Ms. Houghton – put School Calendars on AISC agenda.

Appendix C: Documents on File:
• TSC Agenda 2/17/26
- Tisbury School Fund Balances Fiscal Year, 2025-2026 2/13/26
- Tisbury School Events
- Tisbury School Improvement Plan 2025-26
• Tiger Tales February 2026 (6 p.)
• Tisbury School Site Budget Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (4 p.) 2/13/26
• Tisbury School Addition and Renovations Project Invoice Summary Sheet, For Period: January 01, 2026 – January 31, 2026.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Office On Call/Marni Lipke.

Marni Lipke – Recorder Date

Amy Houghton – TSC Chair Date

Minutes approved 3/10/26