Tisbury School Committee
4:00PM, Tuesday, April 14, 2026
Tisbury School Cafeteria

TSC Members Present: Chair Amy Houghton*, Jen Cutrer, Alecia Lesnikowska,
Staff: Superintendent Richard Smith,
Business Administrator Mark Friedman,
John Custer – Principal, Asst. Principal Melissa Ogden,
Others: Edward Pachico,
Marni Lipke – Recorder

* Late Arrivals or early departures of TSC members

The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) meeting was called to order at 4:05PM.
(Recorder's note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.)

I. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. ALECIA LESNIKOWSKA AND SECONDED BY MS. JEN CUTRER THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 10, 2026 MEETING WERE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED; 2 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

II. Superintendent's Report

• Superintendent Richard Smith was happy to report that the new Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) Principal had secured housing as of July 1st.
• Annual Town Meetings (ATMs) were as follows: Edgartown, Oak Bluffs and West Tisbury – April 14th, Chilmark April 27th, Tisbury – April 28th, Aquinnah – May 12th.

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

B. Shared Services Update – Tabled

* Amy Houghton entered the meeting at 4:07PM.

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

A. June 2nd Vote (See below: Actions.)

• There would be flyers available at all ATMs with QR codes for the Project Website and a refined and user-friendly tax calculator. There were no Project discussions posted in any of the warrants, although Building Committee representatives would be present to answer questions. The TSC again reviewed the strict regulations on elected official comments and referred everyone to legal counsel advice.
- The TSC discussed how to reach families of 5th grade and below students, who would benefit most from the Project.
• The Attorney General's Office approved a Political Action Committee (PAC) headed by Michael Watts to help disseminate information.
• Jason O'Donnell, Chair of the MVRHS Facilities Subcommittee made it clear that if the vote failed, a number of repairs would have to be immediately implemented, including and especially heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) requiring steep MVRHS budget increases for tens of millions of dollars.

IV. Financial Report

A. Fund Balances (See documents on file.)

• The Manter Fund showed a healthy balance and the School Choice fund was stable.

• In view of the much delayed solar installation and consequent un-budgeted electricity expenses, and an unanticipated teachers salary, the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) budget was facing a $40-60,000 deficit. Possible sources were to shift a second food service worker from the budget into the Revolving Lunch fund and the School Choice Fund.

B. Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) Budget

The FY27 Budget was re-approved April 6th at a reduced 5.24% increase. All Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) were expected to have tight budgets next year.

1. Annual Town Meeting (ATM) Preparation

In a meeting with Tisbury Town Administrator and Finance Director, MVPS Business Administrator reported that although the bottom line was satisfactory, the Tisbury School FY27 Budget was too high and the Superintendent's Shared Services Office's Budget too low.

C. Grants – Nothing to report

III. Tisbury School Building Project Report (See documents on file.)

A. Project Update

• W.T. Rich completed the loading dock wood facade.

• Parking lot solar canopy installation had begun and Principal John Custer, students and staff enjoyed watching the machinery at work.

• Roof solar panels were projected for May with a new vendor and a new schedule.

B. Approval of Project Invoices

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. LESNIKOWSKA AND SECONDED BY MS. CUTRER THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AND RECOMMENDED (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) THE FOLLOWING MARCH 1 THROUGH 31, 2026 INVOICES TOTALING $88,804.00TO BE SENT TO TOWN HALL FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT:

- CHA INVOICE # 39235-60 FOR $5,500.00,

- WT RICH INVOICE # 42 FOR $83,304.00.

V. Principal's Report

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

• A lot was happening in May and early June, including the 8th Grade trip to Washington, D.C., and the Memorial Day March to the Sea.

• Implementing an idea from the Oak Bluffs School, Prin. Custer invited TSC members to the quarterly Community Meetings when the whole school gathered in the gym for about 20 minutes on the theme of the student chosen school pillars: respect responsibility, community and compassion.

B. Enrollment Projections: Kindergarten

(See documents on file & 3/10/26 Minutes p. 3)

• As Kindergarten (K) enrollment remained in the high 40s Administration was working with teachers and the union in compliance with the union contract.

Article XVII: Class Size
"The Committee and the Association recognize the desirability of achieving optimum teaching/learning conditions by assuring workable class size, within the maximum of 25 students. In the event that class size in K-3 exceeds twenty (20) and in grades 4-12 exceeds twenty two (22) whether it be before the school year begins or during the school year, the building principal, school committee, the staff affected, and union representation of the individual school shall meet to address the needs of those students affected and discuss possible options within budgetary and space restraints."

• The TSC discussed shifting meeting times to better accommodate some members' work hours and agreed to 4:30 rather than 4:00PM.
• The TSC requested that May be a joint meeting with the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) which would include a MVRHS Building Project presentation (see below: Meetings/Events, & Actions).

• A $50,000 grant to every municipality in the Commonwealth for climate resiliency, highlighted a communication and resource gap when the Tisbury School was presumed to be the Town shelter during the February blizzard.
- Prin. Custer was present but there had been no prior communication so preparations had not been properly made.
- The backup generator from the pre-renovation/addition heated the School but could not run kitchen equipment particularly stoves. Possible solutions were explored including an additional generator to run the kitchen.
- Chair Amy Houghton was working with Fire, Ambulance, and Emergency Management Departments and Tisbury Town Administrator on the grant application.

Adjournment

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. LESNIKOWSKA AND SECONDED BY MS. CUTRER THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED (3 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) AT 4:54PM.

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

Appendix B: Actions
• Ms. Houghton – contact Mark F. about putting the tax calculator in the press.
• Prin. Custer/Ms. Houghton – arrange a Zoom recording and attendance at the 5/5/meeting (Ms. Lipke cannot attend).

continued >

Appendix C: Documents on File:

• TSC Agenda 4/14/26
- Tisbury School Fund Balances Fiscal Year, 2025-2026 4/13/26
- Tisbury School Events
• Smith email re: Tisbury Parking Lot 4/3/26
• Friedman cover email re: Tisbury School FY27 Budget – (Version #3) 3/18/26
- Tisbury School Budget Fiscal Year 2026-2027, Version #3 – March 19, 2026 (8 p.)
• Friedman cover email re: Tisbury School FY27 Budget – Revised Version #4, 4/5/26
- Tisbury School Budget Fiscal Year 2026-2027, Version #4 – April 6, 2026 (8 p.)
• Tisbury School Site Budget Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (4 p.) 4/13/26
• Anjo email re: Tisbury School WTR Project Updates 4/14/26
• Tisbury School Addition and Renovations Project Invoice Summary Sheet, For Period: March 01, 2026 – March 30, 2026
• Tiger Tales April 2026 (9 p.)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Office On Call/Marni Lipke.

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Marni Lipke – Recorder Date

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Amy Houghton – TSC Chair Date

Minutes approved 5/5/26