Tisbury School Committee
4:30PM, Tuesday, September 15, 2026
Tisbury School Cafeteria

TSC Members Present: Chair Amy Houghton, Jen Cutrer,
Staff: John Custer – Principal, Melissa Ogden – Asst. Principal,
Jaime Curley – Superintendent,
Mark Friedman – Business Manager,
Student Support Director – Hope MacLeod,
Town: Nancy Gilfoy – FinCom,
Others: Louisa Hufstader – Vineyard Gazette, Marni Lipke – Recorder
* Late Arrivals or early departures of TSC members

The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) meeting was called to order at 4:31PM. Chair Amy Houghton declared a minute of silence for the loss of Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) liaison Louise Clough, who had contributed tremendously to the Town, including as a cheerleader for the School renovation/addition.

I. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes (July 24, 2026)

• **ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. JEN CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. AMY HOUGHTON THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 24, 2026 MEETING WERE APPROVED; 2 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.**

II. Superintendent's Report

A. All Island School Committee (AISC) Update

Superintendent Jaime Curley was happy to start the school year with the all-staff gathering for breakfast and Performing Arts Center (PAC) meeting. Now that students were in school she was able to visit many classrooms in all the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) and was particularly impressed by the kindergartens (Ks).

• It was found that due to many different and unique circumstances, a material number of MVPS staff needed to update their teaching licensure. Working with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), counsel, and human resource staff the Superintendent's Shared Services (Central) Office was promoting licensing and/or obtaining waivers, using software vector tracking for Professional Development (PD).

- Provisional or initial licenses had to be upgraded after 5 yrs of employment so the Office was tracking timing including Leaves of Absence (LOAs).
- Hardship licenses had to be renewed every year.
- Most positions in question were one-year-only (OYO).
- At the end of the meeting, Vineyard Gazette reporter Louisa Hufstader noted a similar Steamship Authority (SSA) regulatory problem.

• Supt. Curley gave a shout-out to all MVPS Principals and staff for their work in dealing with the situation. The TSC expressed their appreciation that Supt. Curley had raised awareness.

• The Transportation Dept. was updating routes and creating vehicle use and payroll procedures including on-line timesheet management.

- Fleet maintenance software was being instituted for off- and on-Island fleets.

- MVPS was still looking for bus drivers (see 12/14/21 Minutes p.2 #B).
- The Transportation Administrative Support Professional (ASP) position was being looked at for creative solutions.

B. Shared Services Update (See documents on file.)

Except for a couple positions, Shared Services was fully staffed. The year started well.

• There would be an all MVPS K through 8th grade staff, synchronous presentation on best practices for: exclusion, seclusion, time-out (although MVPS did not have time-out rooms), bullying, discipline, and maybe a little on Title 9. These practices would be part of the comprehensive policy change (see 5/12/25 Minutes p.4).
- The same presentation to Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) staff would be given next month.
- Staff was also planning for the October 9th PD day with district lead and teacher passion choices.

1. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Integrated Monitoring Review Results (See documents on file.)

This in-person DESE visit focused on Special Education—alternating with the previous Review focused on civil rights (see 9/12/23 Minutes p.3 #III B).

• There were only 2 comments.
- All Massachusetts schools were cited for an implementation lag changing the required timing from 14 to 5 days for Individual Education Plans (IEPs) after team meetings. MVPS showed some IEPs on time others at 7-8 days.
- MVPS was cited for missing the 45 day deadline to meet and complete evaluations on determining if a child had a disability.

• Shared Services was required to submit a corrective plan (already filed) and the first progress report was due October 16th.

• There were some findings in the English Language Learners (ELL) Department regarding students with both language and other disabilities. Student Support Director Hope MacLeod appreciated the level of communication between departments.

III. Tisbury School Building Project Report

A. Project Update (See 6/16/26 Minutes p. 2 #III A.)

• The parking canopy and roof solar were installed and the School was awaiting connection and start up. School Advisory Council (SAC) member and contractor John Guadagno included operational reporting, not only for financial and mechanical but also for educational purposes.

• W.T. Rich had not sent an update but they were still working in August to resolve exterior envelope leaks, which now seemed resolved despite the week's heavy rains.

B. Approval of Project Invoices (See documents on file & below: Actions.)

The bulk of the invoices pertained to the solar project.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. HOUGHTON THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AND RECOMMENDED (2 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) THE FOLLOWING JULY 1 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 2026 INVOICES TOTALING $839,131.00 TO BE SENT TO TOWN HALL FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT:

- CHA INVOICE #39235-64 FOR $2,000.00,
- EVERSOURCE INVOICE #1970975 FOR 7,661.00,
- BRIGGS INVOICE #233800 FOR 255.00, AND
- WT RICH INVOICE #46 FOR $829,215.00.

II. Financial Report

A. Fund Balances (See documents on file & below: Actions.)

• The funds were in good shape, although still being balanced with the Town, e.g. there were no Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) interest figures.
• The TSC suggested a Facilities Rental discussion and fund.

B. Grants (See documents on file.)

1. Title One Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27)
2. Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) FY27

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. HOUGHTON THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY ACCEPTED (2 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) THE FOLLOWING GRANTS:
- $79,195 FROM TITLE ONE (directly to the Town), **AND**
- $**33,435 FROM THE RURAL EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM (REAP)** (a flexible grant to all elementary schools)**.**

C. Receipt of Donation – Island Grown Initiative (IGI) (Food Waste Recycler)
(See documents on file.)

IGI received funds for a long-planned for food waste recycler. Due diligence outlined all costs and logistics—the Tisbury School cafeteria/loading dock proximity were an advantage. Cafeteria staff and custodians would be trained.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. HOUGHTON THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY AND GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED THE ISLAND GROWN INITIATIVE PURCHASE, SHIPPING, INSTALLATION AND SITE PREPARATION COSTS OF A FOOD WASTE RECYCLER.

C. Community Preservation Act (CPA); Application for Funding

In view of the new building and grounds there was no need for any open space, housing, or historic applications this year.

In the usual housekeeping measure:

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. HOUGHTON THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED (2 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) THE TRANSFER OF $8,335.28 BALANCE FROM THE CLASS OF 2026 STUDENT ACTIVITIES FUND TO THE CLASS OF 2027 STUDENT ACTIVITIES FUND. Some fundraising continued.

V. Principal's Report

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

• Events included, last Friday's Cookout, Back to School Night, School Photo Day and the Tiger Trot.

• An all elementary/middle school MVPS Soccer Jamboree was postponed from October 4th as too soon in the school year.

B. Personnel

1. Staffing Update (See documents on file.)

A list showed what positions were filled and which were vacant. The School happily welcomed back 3 staff returning from LOAs.

2. Retirement Intent Notification (See documents on file.)

These staff were retiring after a total of 84 years of MVPS service—20 to 30+ years each. Principal John Custer greatly appreciated the early notification. The TSC and Administration expressed gratitude for their service and wished them well.

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. HOUGHTON THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY (2 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) ACKNOWLEDGED THE FOLLOWING RETIREMENTS AS OF THE END OF THE 2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR:
- ELL TEACHER LIZ BRADLEY,
- COMPUTER TEACHER DEBRA CONROY,
- TECHNOLOGIST SUE LEONARD.

• Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) Chair Nancy Gilfoy was glad to attend the meeting and TSC Chair Amy Houghton thanked her for all she and the FinCom did for the schools.

• Budget season was starting soon. The TSC would review the status of the OYO Kindergarten teacher (see 7/24/26 Minutes p.2-3 #III A).

Adjournment

• ON A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CUTRER AND SECONDED BY MS. HOUGHTON THE TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING UNANIMOUSLY ADJOURNED (2 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS) AT 5:08PM.

Appendix A: Meetings/Events:
• TSC– 4:30PM, Tuesday, October 13, 2026 – Tisbury School
• TSC – 4:30PM, Tuesdays,

November 10, 2026	**February 9, 2027**	**May 11, 2027** (w/SAC)
December 8, 2026 (w/SAC)	**March 9, 2027**	**June TBD, 2027**
January 12, 2027	**April 13, 2027**	

Appendix B: Actions
• Ms. Houghton/Ms. Gilfoy - remind Town Administrator re: Solar rebate application.
• Ms. MacLeod – send Integrated Review first page and Tisbury documents.
• Future Agendas
- September 15, 2026 Minutes
- Facilities Rental Policy/Procedure/Practice/Fund

continued

Appendix C: Documents on File:

- TSC Agenda 9/15/26
- Special Education Policy Memo SY2025-2026 – 1, Amendments to DESE's regulation and 603 CMR 46.00 and 603 CMR 18.00 Use of Town-Out Practices)
- Tisbury School Fund Balances Fiscal Year, 2026-2027 9/10/26
- Tisbury School Addition and Renovations Project Invoice Summary Sheet, For Period: July 01, 2026 – August 31, 2026
- Martha's Vineyard Public School, Office of Public School Monitoring Integrated Monitoring Review: Group A, Date of Onsite Visit – May 26th, 2026, Date of Report – July 16th, 2026 (2 p.)
- Tisbury School Events
- Tisbury School Personnel – staffing update (as of September 15, 2026)
- Bradley retirement letter 9/8/26
- Conroy retirement letter 9/10/26
- Leonard retirement letter 8/31/26

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 10/13/26