

**Tisbury School Committee/Tisbury Board of Selectmen**  
**8:30AM, Tuesday, August 14, 2018**  
**Tisbury School**

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**TSC Members Present:** Chair Amy Houghton, Colleen McAndrews,  
**Selectmen Present:** Chair Tristan Israel, Melinda Loberg, Jimmy Rogers,  
**Others:** Marni Lipke – Recorder  
**School Staff:** John Custer – Principal, Sean Mulvey – Assoc. Principal;  
Richie Smith – Asst. Superintendent,  
Amy Tierney – Business Administrator,  
Teachers: Emily Levett, Melissa Ogden, Rita Jeffers  
**Town Staff:** Town Administrator – John (Jay) Grande,  
Planning Board – Chair Ben Robinson, Elaine Mitchell,  
Police: Chief Dan Hanavan, Lt. Eerik Meisner,  
Facilities Manager – Kirk Mettell, DPW – Ray Tattersol,  
Bd. of Health – Maura Valley, Wastewater – Paul Ernst,  
**Public:** Anna Edey, Paul Lares, Tim Sylvia, Michael Watts,  
**Press:** MV Times – George Brennan, Gabrielle Mannino,  
Vineyard Gazette – Holly Pretsky,

The Tisbury School Committee (TSC) and Board of Selectmen were called to order. Town Administrator Jay Grande explained that governmental bodies were not allowed to deliberate on site visits and therefore could not take questions or comments. This working session was a tour of the exterior and the interior of the School facility. Preliminary costs estimates (see documents on file) were pulled from the Daedalus Feasibility Study. The tour was led by Principal John Custer and Facilities Director Kirk Mettell. Other Department Heads contributed relevant information—Police on security, Board of Health on septic/sewer, etc.) (*Recorder's notes:*

- attendance varied as the tour proceeded, many being present for only part of the time;  
- discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.)

I. Working Session/Site Visit of School Facility and Campus

- The east side parking lot was the largest, but had to accommodate both the Superintendent's Shared Services Office and Tisbury School staff and visitors. The playground served grades 3 through 8 and Prin. Custer acknowledged the generous donations of volunteers and the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Selectman Jim Rogers stated the playgrounds had to be renovated.
- Two vertical leaching field wicks were seen along Williams St. with mention of other areas reserved for possible future wicks—a continuing unknown.
- Sidewalks and pavement around the building were showing cracks and unevenness presenting trip hazards. Community use of the building was also hampered by lack of lighting, parking, accessibility and space.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) restricted the Dept. of Public Works (DPW) parking lot September through June use to School staff (avoiding student safety problems with the steep entrance and Spring St. crossing). However lack of signage in all parking lots curtailed enforcement.

- The back courtyard facing north was a busy industrial space providing:
  - access to the dual heating/hot water boiler room with three boilers (two fairly new)—sufficient for some parts of the building but not all;
  - below ground oil tanks—with regular oil deliveries,
  - trash dumpsters and pick up;
  - the fire suppression system reserves;
  - the emergency generator for School use as an emergency shelter—complete hook up was never finished;
  - all cafeteria deliveries.
- One of the two Kindergarten (K) classrooms windows faced this courtyard, resulting in serious problems with noise and exhaust fumes. Its air vents had to be blocked to shut out the fumes, which caused mold problems in the room (see below: p. 4).
  - School bus drop off around the corner added to both the noise and the exhaust.
- Some of the School's air exchange vents did not have automatic shut off and consequently were unreliable, drawing cold winter air and presenting freezing hazards—one of the causes of uneven heating from classroom to classroom.
- The seam between the 1928 original structure and 1995 addition could be seen on the west side of the building. The 1995 addition was built with expansion joints to ease masonry damage from freezing and heat expansion/contraction, as well as settling.
  - It was probable that parts of the brick façade had pulled away from the framing but this still had to be investigated.
- Almost all windows around the building (including those recently replaced) had broken seals due to rusting or settling problems with sills and lintels.
  - Mr. Mettall emphasized that this tour and initial repairs was focused on safety and security. Windows were more aesthetic problems, and of lesser priority.
  - Exterior/envelope repairs were very roughly estimated at ~ \$5,000,000.
- The majority of the School was hooked up to the Town sewer (the empty septic tank and leaching field were on the west side).
- A temporary trailer (titled The White House) was leased in 2002 (after it was no longer needed by Edgartown) and housed four classrooms but no plumbing or bathrooms. It currently served some of the School's English Language Learners (ELL) and Special Education (SpEd) students. The arrangement was against Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regulations in terms of equitability, accessibility, civil rights, safety and security for some of the school's neediest students.
- The west playground was used by grades K, 1 and 2, as well as gym classes.
  - The Town Emergency Services Building (fire and ambulance) was across the street.
- Facing south, most parent drop-off as well as United Parcel Service (UPS) and FedEx office supplies deliveries were on the single lane front loop adding to traffic on W. Williams and surrounding streets—crossing guards only supervised students (not traffic). 50% of Tisbury students were driven to School, 25% bused, and ~14% walked or biked.
  - The front steps were cracked, separating and in need of replacement. American Disability Act (ADA) accessibility was not code around the building.
- The south facing third floor classroom windows lacked adequate shading or shutters resulting in hot interiors during June.
- The gym locker rooms and a few classrooms in that wing were still on a small separate septic system under the eastside parking lot—the hookup was planned but

never carried out—another expensive project. The Wastewater Dept. changed the pumps annually.

- The main section black rubber roof was replaced in 2014 which greatly reduced the number of leaks, although there were still problems due to the amount of equipment, chimney's, etc. on the roof. The white rubber replacement helped cool the building in the summer but was a brightness hazard to maintenance staff in the winter.

- Although many citizens liked the idea of a neighborhood school, the School itself found it a cause for concern regarding: foot and vehicle traffic, safety issues, and interference with outdoor programs. Police Lieutenant Eerik Meisner pointed out the need for exterior and interior security measures such as:

- traffic stops,
- increased camera coverage,
- increased lighting,
- fencing,
- automatic exterior door locking,
- interior automatic door locks;
- stairwell/hallway safety doors to isolate areas if needed; e.g. separately locked interior areas for community use and events.

- The front lobby had been secured with glass locking doors, and the School office provided with locks, cameras and intercom. A small conference room off the lobby provided excellent meeting space for non-student conferences.

- The second floor on the same level as the front lobby contained grades 2-4, the school library, main offices, and small service rooms.

- A third grade classroom demonstrated some typical features of the old building:

- hardwood floors now too thin to refinish and severely buckled from settling anomalies;
- reasonably sized rooms (800 sq. ft.) for the average class size (16 students)—but not for primary grades or enrollment fluctuations (e.g. 20-22 students);
- inefficient/unregulated heating/ventilation/air conditioning (HVAC) resulting in high costs and increased moisture/facility problems;
- dropped ceilings interfering with natural light.

- A small air-conditioned room (previously the computer lab—see below: library) served SpEd two teachers and two SpEd programs for grades k through 4. It had been moved from the gym wing in keeping with DESE mandates banning SpEd program isolation from the general education population.

- Because Chapter 70 reimbursement was only ~10% of Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVPS) revenues financial penalties for non-compliance were minimal but Prin. Custer emphasized ethical obligations and best practices.

- The Library/Media Center (now also a partial computer lab) met 1995 education standards. However, as part of the newer wing, it had the greatest number of roof leaks, including damage from a pipe freeze last winter that was still being remediated. This was the busiest room in the School, and as both computer lab and library often presented scheduling problems.

- The campus and building did not allow stable wifi coverage despite air-ports throughout the building—an increasing educational liability as technology became more and more vital.

- The third floor housed the middle school (grades 5 through 8). The group toured the room for special education and reading mediation programs, noting the slightly larger but still inadequate space for larger students.
- The number of students needing remediation programs continued to grow. Tisbury School had 77 ELL students employing 3 full time teachers, as well as 4 full time SpEd teachers to cover early intervention and more challenged populations. Scheduling made it very difficult to share staff with other schools, although the Shared Services Programs (housed in the Edgartown, Oak Bluffs and West Tisbury Schools) addressed many Islandwide challenges. (Early childhood daycare programs were also struggling with increased ELL and Sped enrollment pointing to a continuing future needs.)
- Insufficient space for the most challenged students also signified lack of space for enrichment opportunities.
- Each year two bathrooms' were refurbished with drywall and paint.
- A computer lab serving grades 3 through 8, showed one of the new laminate floors over new subflooring (the old floor being too buckled). By contractor's advice laminate lifespan was 15-20 years in the home—school use was likely to be shorter.
- Carpets reduced noise but were a maintenance nightmare. Some rooms were tiled.
- The math/science room was standard sized.
- The east facing stairwell roof had been repaired 3 or 4 times over the course of the last 10-12 years, but continued to leak in east winds and heavy rains, indicative of poor design and the difficulty of flashing a round roof.
- On the ground floor the cafeteria housed all food preparation equipment (there was no separate kitchen) and 5 tables seating 16 students each, forcing 5 lunch periods from 11:05AM to 1:15PM. The presence of stoves and ovens regularly overheated the room.
- The Kindergarten classrooms (1100 sq. ft. with small bathrooms) were being remediated for mold (supervised by Dr. William Vaughn of Servepro). The building age and design would continue to generate similar moisture problems.
- The 1938 gym now presented a number of space and safety issues:
  - playing courts were substandard;
  - bleachers had to be inspected and could not be extended during games;
  - 240-250 seats could not always accommodate Town Meeting and overflow locations were needed;
  - Vocal music, band and Spanish classrooms were behind or under the stage, some in what used to be locker rooms;
  - the older, un-insulated roof leaked and made for inefficient heating and cooling.
- The 180 day school year was extended through July by Tisbury Summer School and well into August by MPVS ELL school, so construction/repair timeframes were tight.
- The tour ended and the site visit adjourned about 10:30

#### **Documents on File:**

- Agenda 8/14/18
- Town of Tisbury Selected Costs, Base Renovation, Extracted from Cost Report  
Prepared by Daedalus

Minutes respectfully submitted by Office On Call/Marni Lipke.

*Minutes approved by the TSC 9/11/18*