

**TISBURY BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, August 27, 2019 at 6:00 PM**  
**Emergency Services Facility, 215 Spring Street, Vineyard Haven, MA**

**Selectmen Present:** Melinda Loberg and Jeff Kristal

**School Committee Members present:** Janet Packer, Amy Houghton, Michael Watts.

**Others Present:** John Grande, Pam Bennett, Kirk Metell, John Custer, Matt Deandrea, Richard Smith

**TISBURY SCHOOL STATUS**

6:03 call to order joint meeting chaired by Amy Houghton

Member Loberg stated it is the responsibility of the Board of Selectmen to schedule a Special Town Meeting to address the needs of the school. The Board voted to set the date for Special Town meeting for September 24<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 Pm at the Tisbury school gym to see if the town will vote to transfer from eh stabilization fund one million five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,00.00) to pay for the lease and/or purchase of modular classroom and office units and site construction activity, and for environmental remediation work at the Tisbury School, including related professional OPM and consulting and design services, or take any action thereto. The wording of the article to be finalized by the Town Administrator in consultation with Town counsel. The board also voted to close the warrant on September 5, 2019 at 12:00 pm (noon).

Member Loberg turned meeting over to Tisbury School committee.

Member Houghton opened meeting at 6:04 PM.

Matt Deandrea spoke: He cannot express how challenging this situation has been over the past week. Thank you to all the people and organizations who have reached out and are helping. The Boys and girls club, YMCA, other school districts, The High school staff and administration. We have consulted with the Department of Public Health, Department of Education, Mass Assoc. of School Committees and District Attorneys. We had many evaluations done of the Tisbury school when we were accepted into MSBA. They did an evaluation of the building, of existing conditions and a hazardous materials group to assess the building. The Dept of Public Health, Town officials: The Building Inspector, Board of Health and Facilities. Never have they told us we should not be in that building. We learned last Tuesday. To suggest I knew, John Custer knew is misinformation. I had two goals. One, find safe place and two keep the kids together as much as possible. I understand the concerns of the parents. We will not put your children in an unsafe environment. After looking at all options k-4 will be in new part of building where there is no lead and no asbestos. They will have lunch at the Emergency services conference room with a commercial kitchen. The old section of the building will be sealed off. No work will be done while the kids are in the Building. The town will bring in modular classrooms.

Grades 5-8 will be at the High School in the 200 wing. The students will be isolated. They will be constantly supervised. They will have separate hours, separate bathrooms, a separate space for lunch, own nurse, secretary, custodian and will have separate buses. Orientation for 5-8 will be September 6 at 5:00 PM in the path at the high school. K-4 orientation will be the same day at 3:30 at the Tisbury School. All parents will hear from the administration.

Transportation meeting tomorrow at 1:00. Going to try and leave runs the same.

The Tisbury school is not a building it is people, it is staff, administration and students. It is one of the best schools in the state.

#### Questions and answers

Has it been considered that the modular would be used for kids through a renovation instead of spending money on remediation? Why would we remediate if doing a renovation? John Custer, I do not have the answer. I would like to acknowledge and apologize to parents and students. Last week we announced K-4 would be going to Camp Jabberwokey. Our plan was to remediate in the building while the k-4 were out. We are grateful for that option even though we could not utilize it. We are essentially buying time. This is about our people and the staff.

Member Kristal stated that -James Rogers is on the Tisbury School Building Committee and the three of us will be meeting as modular planning is considered. Jim is focused on that direction on a renovation and addition. We need trailers here planning for all classes. Where they get sited is a different story. It does not make sense to remediate, however this is for a debate. Big thing is OPM, architect and a budget. Member Watts our big dates to interview the respondents to RFQ is September 4 and 5 to interview and start negotiations September 11 to execute on September 23 for OPM.

Member Loberg stated that as soon as they were made aware the town and school began to explore getting modulars here. The kids would not be in school while Remediate or renovate. We need to let the TSCB do their job and have a good project that will get support in the end.

Thought whole school was to be tested? The lead tester did the entire bldg. Mr. Metell was with him with Dr. D'Andrea and knows it was tested. They tested new portion as well.

Can you help us understand the reports that just came out? The levels are established by Massachusetts lead child prevention program. It says that anything above 1.0 is safe and they 18% higher than levels considered dangerous? Yes, that is correct. Are you recommended all students get lead testing and will the town pay for this? Member Houghton stated if you feel you want to get your child tested then you should do so. If you want to be reimbursed by the town then we would do so.

Perhaps a letter should be drafted? Dr. Stevens said there is no push back at the hospital. There has been a system put in place and you just need to contact your doctor. The cost is \$146 without coverage. Both Member Houghton from the TSC and Member Kristal from the BOS said the cost would be covered.

If comes back high? The town health agent stated they only report under 6 years old for lead.

how do we address the Asbestos issue? Member Houghton said they are trying to get someone down as an expert. Mr. Custer stated the school made the decisions to get the kids out before the report came out based on anecdotal suggestions from the contractors who did the report.

What area in the High School will the kids occupy? The 200 wing or language and math wing. A total of 7 classrooms.

Member Houghton stated there has been lead in the building since 1929 and there are no regulations for elementary school regarding lead. There is a regulatory process and it was followed. Deterioration is faster now and that was why they wanted a new building. The Bigger issue is the state has no regulations regarding lead in elementary schools. Main Issue is the chipping paint so it became a concern.

How did we get here? Mr. Custer received a request to do indoor air quality assessments by DPH by Mass Teacher Union, Super intendent and School Committee chair. The Assessment was done on April 11 and report in June. Lead and asbestos testing were requested along with radon once the heating system is turned on. Radon has not been testing. Member Houghton said the chipping paint is a sanitary issue if contains lead or not. They took abundance of caution to make sure since we know lead is in the bldg. Some Chipping paint had lead some not.

Why didn't Board of Selectmen do something? Member Loberg said there is a misunderstanding in the town of authority in relation to the school. the Tisbury School Committee and Board of Selectmen are elected officials with certain responsibilities. The Tisbury School Committee is solely responsible for the school, the educational program and the building. The Board of Selectmen supervise the Town Hall, budget and warrants for town meeting for the town to approve. We solicit all articles from all departments. The Tisbury School Committee and the school population are supposed to ask the town to approve the budget for that, we have told the school they need to address issues and asked don't you think you want more money for that? And repair and address this? The Health Agent told them repeatedly to address chipping paint. We do feel a sense of responsibility. We have stated don't you think you should put in an article for certain items. We have been told No, we don't want to do that yet. We cannot impose on the school. We are trying very hard to assist and participate in solution and helping. As far as owning it as fact the building is deteriorating, and monies have not been asked for? The town did not vote to support that project.

They said you sabotaged it be no one supported it. member Loberg stated she was sorry there is resentment for the process. We are frustrated too. We felt we were representing the whole town. There is a democratic system and the town votes.

Mr. Custer stated he feels responsible for everything that happens with the school. A lot of shared responsibilities.

Member Houghton stated there is a Tisbury School Building committee so get involved. Member Kristal stated that there is not a day I don't think about the failed vote. There was sabotaged before this project 2 yrs ago but we worked through that and I was on Fincom. I failed to lead the Selectmen to believe that we could afford it. We worked with the Numbers and it will cost more money. We need to work on the residents who were against it to get them on board.

Mold issue in the new area? All issues have been remedied in the areas professionally. When we know about it, we take care of it.

What about ventilation? How are kids getting fresh air? Mini splits with air. Has quality been tested? The school was open during testing.

What about the OB modular- Mr. Custer stated they are office space not set up for classrooms. We need modular that are appropriate. How long In would they be in Modulars? Between 2-4 years.

Are you going to pull the kids in the High school out mid-season? Mr. Custer stated he wants them back. What they come back to must be appropriate not temporary. TSBC said they need the budget first before project? How can you assure us the budget will get project support from Selectmen this time around? Member Kristal stated that Member Rogers is the person. He is keeping the Selectmen informed. Member Kristal stated they have his commitment for whatever the cost and yeah it's going to increase the tax rate. We need an OPM first and the budget. Member Loberg stated member Rogers has experience with buildings. In terms of budget people complain about tax rate. It would be irresponsible to not consider taxes but will support whole heartedly a project that is safe for the kids and without breaking bank.

1.5 million is that number to change? Member Kristal stated they did a cost of site, trailers and where they will be sited. We got the numbers from Town Administrator and Facilities who received pricing from the Superintendent and schools. We understand with Modulars there is a 12-month minimum requirement. Talking to Mr. Packer about barging. Need competitive prices and did not want to get caught short for money. The article we drafted was made broad, so we have flexibility since we had yet to meet with TSC for final numbers. Member Loberg stated that Yes the amount can be changed or a different /another article put in once we know the number of trailers, Utilities, :water, wastewater and power.

Have to keep coming to the TSCB meetings and push the town. Is the cost of YMCA covered by the town? Yes

Can we see photos of the modulars? Member Houghton said that once they know what they are getting, yes. Will get a link. It was Suggested TSC send out updates as information becomes available.

We need assurance you will support? Member Loberg stated they have not seen project yet, no one has. It will require the entire town vote. It is irresponsible to write a blank check. We will do the best project we can do for the kids within the ability of Town to pay it.

With the trailers. Will there be a library? A gym? Mr. Custer stated they will not compromise since the kids will be in the modular for a while.

There are 3 viable bathrooms at the school? In addition to the 2 baths in the Kindergarten rooms. Front entrance bathroom and looking to get portable bathrooms.

Richie Smith was principle before Mr. Custer for 4 yrs. He stated that he too feels responsible for the condition of the building. I advocated for John to b principal of school. He has a great staff, ranked 14 in state of Massachusetts. It is not the building but who is inside it. As a community there are things that make Tisbury school special.

Advise the parents, to be seen and to attend the meetings. Need to come up with a project so need to be involved so that all support it. We have to be mindful about price without compromising what is needed. We need to talk to the people who did not support the project last time and find out why, so we can get them on board to support. All the elected officials have a duty to come up with a project they can all support.

Meeting adjourns

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Amy Houghton – TSC Chair

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Date

*Minutes approved by the Tisbury School Committee 10/2/19*