

TISBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, September 4, 2019, 8:30AM
Tisbury Emergency Services Building
Conference Room

Present: Chair: Amy Houghton, Janet Packer, Mike Watts
Staff: John Custer – Principal, Melissa Ogden – Assistant Principal, Matt D’Andrea – Superintendent, Richie Smith – Assistant Superintendent, Amy Tierney – Business Administrator
Town of Tisbury James Rodgers (Board of Selectmen) Jay Grande (Town Administrator), Kirk Metell (Facilities), Maura Valley (Health Agent), Ben Robinson (Planning Bd.)
Staff: Emily Levitt, Rita Jeffers, Anne Williamson, Natalie Krauthamer, Alice Robinson, Melinda Maveety
Visitors: Jen Cutrer, Adam Cummings, Siobhan Mullin, John Mode, Jasmine Godek, Lisa Nickowal, Heidi Larsen-Arroyo, Signe Benjamin, Storm Sulain, Kellis Assis, Denise Da Rosha Jesie Merriam, Chip Merriam, Keith Fullin, Stephen Kelly, Jason O’Donnell, Jennifer Bettencourt, Lindsay Famariss, Julia Stunkel
Recorder Richie Smith
Press Vineyard Gazette, Holly Pretsky, Mark Lovewell,

Call to Order

The meeting of the Tisbury School Committee was called to order by Chair Amy Houghton, 8:38AM.

- (*Recorder’s Note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity*).

Chair Amy Houghton – summarized by expressing gratitude to the Tisbury Administration and staff.

Issues have been discussed in the press. Reminder that school committee is limited in role and as the process moves forward, we want the public to know that we are working within those constraints.

Currently special town meeting is set for October 15, 2019, which was originally scheduled for September 24, 2019. The delay is to ensure the warrant articles are well-prepared in concert with town officials.

John Custer – draft emails prepared for today’s dissemination (9/4/19). Things are coming together but there have been many challenges. We will be ready. Grateful for the high school’s welcoming hospitality. One of the things on our community’s minds is how long will this last. This seems to John to be the most unsettling for our community. This arrangement and these conditions cannot be too long in duration.

Mike Watts – will you give us a sense of the day for students?

MO – Plans created to reduce the amount of Tisbury students and high school students

crossing: Separate drop-off, culinary arts dining room will house the lunch space. Teachers are moving in fully today.

JC – Moving has been difficult for staff but they are working hard through the relocation. Email correspondence will contain the necessary information. The emphasis is on moving in the context of taking care and setting up for children. The staff has worked far and above.

Siobhan Mullin – thanks to the hard work of the high school teachers as well.

Reid Milne – can older students have some sort of celebration of the building for the children who did not know that they would not return to the building?

AH –
Parent and Student Orientation
@ Tisbury 2:30PM for Kindergarten
@ Tisbury 3:30 for grades 1-4
@ MVRHS 5:00PM for grades 5-8

Nevette Previd – may the League of Women Voters support getting out the vote for special town meeting?

AH and JR – warrant article for STM will be \$1.5 million.

AH – timing statutes and regulations must be followed. The amount is at the limit without it becoming a ballot measure to allow for override. In 4/19 ATM an OPM was approved for an overall project – we are looking into if an OPM can help with this current project.

Jay Grande – waiting to hear from town counsel. We are optimistic that the funds for OPM will be available.

James Rodgers – specific questions regarding the current issues will be part of the OPM interviews

AH – siting the modular buildings – the town is advising school committee, in the context of a long-term project. An OPM will be helpful with the siting of modular.

SM – we need a temporary school – the scope of the work has to consider a full temporary school for as long as we need.

JR – never anticipated phasing the long-term project.

SM – I reference the need to phase during the project itself not completing the project in phases.

MW – need Vanguard modular to have input on configuration to get together rough numbers. We are looking into space for creating a modular school with all the necessary functions over 2-4 years. When we are considering space, we need to think a

modular school over a significant period of time. This is a very large task that is different in scope from simply having modular classrooms. In working with potential vendors, options are too numerous to move forward without an OPM.

Janet Packer – I believe this will exceed \$1.5 million. I believe we need the LWV. I personally wish for the siting to be at the Tisbury School as everything that is needed can be tied into. OPM coming on board now does not allow for adequate time for the OPM to gather necessary information.

AH – what are selectmen thinking at this point for potential sites, current school site, DPW site, other land that town owns that will be considered. Can SC and town work together to determine the site as his may determine the footprint and compel 1 or 2 story. I am trying to open the conversation so that we are sharing the information. We need the town to inform the sites.

Ben Robinson – do we want to rush now creating this school. Take the time to properly vet the modular project. John Custer will know in three weeks if the split school can sustain over the entire year so that we need not rush.

JC – it needs to be clarified – what is the purpose of the modular. Move kids out so remediation work can be done and move them back ASAP or is it to move children into a temporary school to take on the long-term project. I prefer the long-term project but it is sobering to thing that we will be in modular for no less that time through Christmas. The Tisbury School continues to have high expectations, good enough is embarrassing. The duration needs to be factored in. We have lost 13 children to school-choice as a result of these conditions. Many parents are staying with Tisbury School – but we need to inform parents what is the scope of this work. Families are waiting to see what happens. They are watching. It is disheartening to sense that folks feel we can just suck it up. At some point – it becomes too much to expect families to absorb a long duration.

Ange – at BOS meeting sites were discussed, we need that information shared including private property being considered.

AH – it is clear we need an OPM to be on board. Jay – please give us the latest possible date to submit articles for 10/15 STM before considering pushing this date out a week further. There have been multiple costs as a result of the conditions that compel two campuses. We need to consider how we come together as an island community to address the need?

AH – what other costs need to be considered for the warrant article for STM?

JC – staffing is not simply a matter of redistribution. The split campus compels some additions to staffing, nurse, custodians. Additional restroom facilities are recommended by the health agent. The initial numbers to December – is close to \$40K. I don't want anyone to be surprised that the relocation will be expensive.

Nurse \$36K

Bus \$10K

AH – These are some examples that have to be considered using current and additional funds. Can the stabilization fund be accessed?

JG – the fund can be accessed with 2/3 vote of town meeting.

SM – what we decide as a school will have a serious impact on our enrollment and possible further cost or lost funds.

JC – is there an anticipation of the BOS if modular won't be available until after Christmas – would the board consider remediation?

JR – I want to avoid moving the children. My hope is to conduct an STM after January to vote the long-term renovation/addition project. Also – will parents be comfortable returning after remediation.

JC – Norton is an example of remediation occurring in parts of the building when children are occupying it. Would parents be comfortable with this.

AH – considerations:

How long are we welcome at MVRHS?

What level of lead abatement?

When can we get the OPM on board?

What are the timelines to inform parents the duration of a split campus?

MVRHS SC meeting this Monday, OPM decision on Tuesday but will still need to execute a contract.

JP – what is the typical time to get a contract?

JG – we will utilize an existing base document – we should be able to execute a contract in ten days.

Motion to adjourn JP, 2nd MW, Unanimous 9:44AM

Amy Houghton – TSC Chair

Date

Minutes approved by the Tisbury School Committee 11/12/19