

## **Chilmark FY25 Budget Hearing February 1, 2024 4:00 PM Meeting Minutes**

Present: FinCom: Chairperson Susan Murphy, Deb Hancock, Vicki Divoll and Marshall Carroll. Linda Coutinho, Don Leopold and Bruce Golden were not present. Select Board: Chairperson Bill Rossi, Marie Larsen and James Malkin. Others: Tim Carroll, Sarah Smith, D. Barnes, Diana DeBlase, Sam Hart, Susan Coiffi, Jim Newman, Skipper Manter, Michael Watts, Hope McCloud, Sarah Dingley, Richie Smith, Donna Lowell-Bettencourt, Susan Stevens, Mark Friedman and videographer Lynn Christoffers. Robert Lionette was present on Zoom

### **WT School Up Island School budget:**

West Tisbury School Principal Donna Lowell-Bettencourt presented this budget.

*Materials were distributed* Ms. Lowell- Bettencourt gave outline of increases:

- Custodian needs increased additional help for middle of the day.
- Water testing was added to this budget as WT Health department is no longer able to do it.
- Health and dental insurance for additional positions.

Principal Lowell-Bettencourt said she would email data to town with 11 years of data on population and services. Marshall Carroll asked if West Tisbury School was at capacity level. Principal Lowell-Bettencourt said we have capacity for more but pending on the needs of applicant we don't have additional room space.

### **Superintendent's office and shared program Services:**

*Superintendent of Schools Richie Smith passed out documents to support his budget*

Richie Smith presented this shared services budget.

*At 4:17 Roxanne Ackerman arrived*

Highlight summary 3 sections

- 1.183 million dollar increase over this year, 14.5% increase.
- OPEB added for new staffing

Staffing for the Shared programs – Hope McCloud is director of student support shared services

- IEP drives this budget. ESP teacher assistants to project headway 2.9 years of age to 5 years old. We now have 3 Project Headways now full time WT, OB and MVRHS.
- Child study process helps us find the children in need of services.
- Review our programs as a 1.8 mil increase is not sustainable.

Looking to in future having an HR position. For now have review of our hire process.

Budget for non-union salary adjustments.

- Our department has no contingency or a E & D fund.
- Social work therapist, SEL grant was funding this position and we may get it again but wanted to add into budget as they serve over 60 children.
- ASP position secretarial for the English Language Learning population. ½ of salary was grant but we have exhausted that and we still need that person so bringing this into the budget.

- Move software to a web base with a cost to that.

Ms. Divoll said this budget has big increase and next year it becomes new normal. Ms. McCloud said next year will probably increase a bit more. But expect to level out in a couple of years.

*Chris Obrien joined the meeting at 4:39 PM*

- Mark Friedman explained the OPEB payment plan.

### **Chilmark School Budget**

Chilmark School Principal Susan Stevens presented this budget. Principal Stevens said she is retiring at the end of the school year. New Principal search is already underway.

- New HVAC system fuel line will go down and the electricity will be rising the figures are an estimate as we don't have a year of use yet.
- Special education co-teacher ½ funded this year for ½ time but could not fill position so added another half to get a full position and hopefully will get applicant to answer.

Marie Larsen asked if school has answered the problem with cleaning the CCC after school use weekly. Principal Stevens said she hired a cleaner.

- 35 students when started now have 75 students so really grew the school. We have maximized our capacity. NASDEC has predicted 80 students for Chilmark.
- Principal Stevens gave outlined student of choice priority
- All windows of the school are now completed so all 99 windows are all new.
- HVAC is almost completed we will be first school to have both air and heat with heat pumps.
- 5 year capital plan.

*Principal Stevens distributed documents for the 5 year plan*

- Gutter replacement \$6,200 hope to do this year; fix and straighten existing copper
- Exterior doors will be replaced from wood to fiberglass.
- Bell tower replaced twice and needs again and we are considering using AZEK

MCAS results we are making targets so no intervention by State needed. One 4<sup>th</sup> grader got a certificate of excellence from the State as very high scores in all the tests

Applause for Susan Stevens thank you for your service to the community and students of Chilmark.

Mark Friedman gave information on the UIRSD's OPEB.

Increase for the debt school HVAC

Contingency went down

### **MVRHS:**

Principal Sarah Dingley distributed documents and introduced members of the school committee who were present.

- 3.28 % increase to Chilmark assessment
- ELL (English Language Learners) student numbers have increase substantially

- \$580, 000 increased funding from the state for a new positions: adjustment counselor, ESL teacher, new science teacher doubled biology for ESL students, computer science and an additional position the school had years ago and would like to bring back.
- Increase of title money and rural aid grants.
- Population of MVRHS Students 757 but might be 751
- 30 % of students English is not first language. MCAS 2022 60% met or exceeded 73% 2023, 58% is state level. Graduation rate will dip as it will take longer for these kids to graduate. 78 students over 2 years enrolled / churn rate is increasing heading back to Brazil

Robert Lionette on Zoom said thank you for accommodating me to attend. 12 years on the school committee. This is first legitimate education plan, really inspiring. Very excited to support this budget.

Mr. Friedman still working on getting final assessments to you. It is still being worked on with the State. Some of the State numbers may be adjusted down.

Mr. Malkin said it is a pleasure to have report about education, Thank you all.

FinCom Chairperson Susan Murphy discussed when the next Budget Hearing will be as we still need figures from the Accountant. FinCom members present along with Select Board settled on February 21, 2024 to be the next and possibly final wrap-up meeting for budget review and votes.

Chairperson Rossi moved to adjourn the Select Board portion of the meeting. Ms. Larsen seconded the motion. **SO VOTED: 3 Ayes**

Chairperson Murphy asked that the FinCom members take this time to review draft minutes. FinCom members present reviewed the minutes from Budget hearings held: 1/23, 1/24, 1/25, 1/29 and 1/30. Corrections were made to some. Chairperson Murphy asked to vote to approve draft minutes. Minutes were approved by FinCom members present.

With no further items for discussion. Chairperson Murphy asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Hancock moved to adjourn, Ms. Divoll seconded the motion. **SO VOTED: 4 Ayes 3, not present**  
*Meeting was adjourned*

Minutes respectfully submitted by Diana DeBlase.

**Approved 03/05/2024**

Document list:

- Draft minutes from 1/23,1/24,1/25/1/29 and 1/30
- Handouts from Superintendents office
- Handouts from Chilmark School principal Stevens
- Handouts from MVRHS principal Dingley
- Handouts from West Tisbury School Principal Lowell-Bettencourt

