

FY24 Budget Hearing #8 February 2, 2023 4:30 PM Meeting Minutes

Present: FinCom: Vicki Divoll, Marshall Carroll, Rob Hannemann, Eric Glasgow and Bruce Golden. Susan Murphy and Don Leopold were not present

Select Board: Chairperson Bill Rossi and James Malkin. Warren Doty was not present.

Others: Tim Carroll, Ellen Biskis, Diana DeBlase, Susan Coiffi, John Stevens, Hope McCloud, Sam Hart, Superintendent of Schools Richie Smith, WT School Vice-Principal Mary Boyd, WT School Principal Donna Lowell Bettencourt, Mr. Friedman, Chilmark School Principal Susan Stevens, Marie Larsen, Chilmark representative Rob Lionette MVTV videographer Lynn Fraker.

Documents where distributed

At 4:30 PM Ms. Divoll called the meeting to order in the Chilmark Community Center at 520 South Road Chilmark.

Mr. Golden moved to appoint Vicki Divoll as Acting Chairperson in Ms. Murphy's absence. Mr. Glasgow seconded the motion. **SO VOTED: 5 Ayes, 2 not present. Murphy & Leopold**

Budget # 300 – Education:

School Superintendent Richie Smith introduced the school representatives and outlined the process that brought everyone here tonight. Being in Chilmark school discussion was first.

Chilmark School:

Chilmark School Principal Susan Stevens said we now have 70 kids total from K-5th grade. Principal Stevens referred to a space needs process. Principal Stevens said we got a New England School Development Council (NESDC) projection from 2018 that predicted Chilmark getting up to 70 students by 2022. Principal Stevens said more increases are predicted for the near future. Principal Stevens said additional staff with additional classes is biggest increase of salary for FY24. Principal Stevens said we gave up as much as we could to take off what we could for this budget.

Mr. Glasgow asked what is plan with the increase of students.

Principal Stevens said we are trying to be creative: Tuesday morning to Thursday nights we are utilizing space at the Chilmark Community Center for teaching and learning spaces.

Mr. Hannemann said looking at the enrollment data only 1 member of Tribe is going to Chilmark School and asked why. Principal Stevens said this is a historical issue; (before she was Principal) when the Chilmark School was in old building (now the Police Station) 2005 or 2006 the building was to capacity. It was decided to only have Chilmark students and it was taken as discrimination by Tribe members and they have held on to that. Those kids then are now the parents.

Mark Friedman said there is a 1 Chilmark child who is school choice out of the district.

Principal Stevens said as for test scores; we are doing better than the State average.

Budget # 300 – Education – Chilmark School Continued...

Mr. Friedman said there are 16 Chilmark students at West Tisbury School (same district - UIRSD) some of the 16 are 6th, 7th and 8th graders.

Marshall Carroll said it looks like the Health insurance jumped for FY24. Mr. Friedman said that is for the 2 additional teachers. Mr. Friedman said we have a 7% place holder for the insurance line at this time.

Principal Stevens encouraged FinCom and Select Board to come visit the school if they would like. Check in with her at 8:30 AM at the School and she would be happy to bring you around for a visit.

West Tisbury School:

School Principal Donna Lowell Bettencourt distributed printed handout of presentation. Student growth from (year) 2012 to 2022 with increases. NESDC estimates in 6 to 10 years growth to 410 students. 2019 school choice Tisbury was not able to open so all schools reopened school choice as they were in a crisis situation we took on 8-9 more students that year. Yearly we receive 35 to 40 school choice requests. Principal Donna Lowell Bettencourt said we are out of space.

MVRHS Principal Sara Dingley arrived at 4:50 PM

Principal Donna Lowell Bettencourt said we house the Bride programs and Project Headway. Student population 1st language not English and low income high need students is on the rise. Principal Donna Lowell Bettencourt explained the school data that was handed out.

- Chronic Absenteeism 2022 up to 38.9% COVID related prior COVID 2019 12.5%
- Parents hesitant to send kids to school with any illness.
- We wrote a grant and received funding (\$90,000) for summer school for 2 years. We invite kids for 5 weeks, Monday through Thursday's full days. This past summer was very well attended.
- Richie Smith real issue we have to address. Emotional impact on kids from the COVID pandemic.
- Student achievement 8th grade data: ELA MCAS. The West Tisbury students higher than State average but down during COVID.
- West Tisbury School vs State for Math: again down but higher than State expectations. Science data same.
- MCAS Student growth data. WT down in 2021 compared to State. 50% is adequate growth 2022 up from 24% (2021) to 52%

Budget for West Tisbury School highlights (paper distributed at beginning of meeting):
Decrease ESP. 1 full time assistant removed as a reduction. Increased coaches in contractual obligation. Small cuts to budget wherever we could.

West Tisbury School Budget Continued...

Principal Lowell –Bettencourt said the increase to Tech is for the equipment hardware: for 5 year refresh. Change and upgrade all computer and equipment on 6th year. Heat and electricity all gone up 25%. Principal Lowell –Bettencourt Went through all increases with explanations. Dental increased 3% not the 7% that Health insurance is at.

6.42% increase overall. Union contract significant and our employees are a major part of or budget. Teacher’s pay increase 5%.

Discussion turned to Warrant articles:

Principal Lowell –Bettencourt and Mark Friedman presented these.

- WT Replacement of two circulation pumps and Electrical upgrades combined total is \$194,600. \$20,043.80 is Chilmark’s porting of the funding of the 2 projects.
- UIRSC request West Tisbury School - Space needs study for school \$120,000. Chilmark’s portion \$12,360.00
- Chilmark HVAC / Replace oil burner to heat pump system. We have been working on this for years and did not get successful bid so still working to accomplish. All of the costs have increased by about 20%. Need additional \$700,000 funding. A year ago town approved 1.2 mil, now close to 2 million dollars.

School Superintendent Office & Shared Services:

Mr. Malkin said during the time he spent working on the School funding agreement there was desire to have a one-time presentation by school representatives to the towns rather than school departments going to the 6 different budget hearings. Superintendent Smith said he had already gone to Tisbury, Oak Bluffs and West Tisbury and no one had mentioned that yet. Superintendent Smith said they would love that consideration for next year. Superintendent Smith said this might be specific for the High School as it is uniquely regional.

Superintendent of Schools Richie Smith invited Hope McCloud (in charge of student support services) to help present the shared programs. Superintendent of Schools Richie Smith introduced all of the school representatives that were present and their rolls for the school system on Martha’s Vineyard.

Ms. McCloud presented the shared services programs and handed out printed materials:

- Bridge program and Project Headway are 2 up Island shared services programs.
- Our responsibility to serve children who are pre-school age that have intensive special needs. This is done through the headway program in West Tisbury. There is also pre-school support programs at Oak Bluffs, MVRHS and 2 ½ day programs at the Grace Church in Tisbury.
- WT School housed program meets needs of children with most intensive needs.
- Edgartown Bridge program is geared to kids on the autism spectrum.
- Oak bluffs houses the Compass Program offering therapy for emotional disabilities.

Shared Services Continued (presented by Hope McCloud) ...

- And out of the Shared Services office in Tisbury we have the speech & Language pathologist, occupational therapist, PT & school psychologist. These specialists go to each of the schools to provide services as needed. Inclusion specialist to support teachers of the students with extra needs. There is also a Early Childhood coordinator and a Behavioral analyst that work out of the Superintendent's office to each of the island schools.

Ms. McCloud explained the budget for these for FY24. Increases are contractual and the 1 increase is in Project Headway.

Superintendent Smith also handed out a printed budget summary sheet for the Shared Services. This showed the increases and decreases to this budget. Superintendent Smith showed how the shared services budget effects the Chilmark budget.

- Collective bargaining for teacher contracts. Have a ratified agreement. Illustrating the increases to the budgets.
- Growth explanation on the impact on budget.
- Increase to ESP hours
- Special Education differentials
- Reviewed the Living Wage for ESP contract we found the first 4 steps were below living wage so we dropped them from the pay scale. Essentially starting salary at what was our step 5.
- Project Headway needed an additional teacher to cover the additional students with needs at an additional cost of \$82,940.00
- This budget is driven by the IEP requirements

Superintendent Smith outlined the decreases they made to the budget as well. Superintendent Smith said they drove down the operational side of things to try to keep budget as small an increase as possible. Superintendent Smith said they dropped workshops and supplies. Decreased budget from last year by \$144,000 to offset increase of \$604,000 with total budget of Shared services for FY24 of \$8,165,532.00.

Superintendent Smith said he has been in the school office for over 21 years but he is new to the position of Superintended and tried to keep all of the schools budget increases to 2.5 % but could not. The bargaining units for the teachers and aids are all increased to 5+% increase but believe that the following year we will see it closer to our goal.

Mr. Friedman said the overall line items are up 5.9% the amount allocated to the UIRSD is about 4.2% increase.

Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS):

MVRHS School Principal Sara Dingle presented this budget. Principal Dingle explained that the complete data for this report was only sent to Chilmark today so the attachment in the software budget system now has it as an attachment;

MVRHS Continued... PowerPoint slides and highlights of changes to budget to keep increases down. Principal Dingley said the total operating expenses have a 2.11% increase after the E&D funds were used to offset and reduce. Worked hard to keep under 2.5 % increase to budget

The assessed expenses (Island Wide assessment) is 3.46%. Last year we used more E&D for a greater decrease. Mr. Freedman said we don't have the required data from the State until March 1, 2023 and will have certified figures then. Principal Dingley said the student enrollment at MVRHS is about 760 pupils. Last year we were 706 and year before that was 682. MVRHS has seen a significant rise in population this year, and within 4 years expect over 800 students.

Principal Dingley gave a lot of data on what seems to work for students to complete collage or career training and what support the MVRHS contributes to this. There was also MCAS data shared.

Superintendent Smith discussed the contingency and E & D funds and the differences. Ms. Divoll said remember we are the watchdog on that.

Mr. Glasgow asked for a short update on the MVRHS building project. Sam Hart said we are in the middle of eligibility to gain the feasibility study funding of 2 million and all 6 towns need to approve the regional formula agreement. May 29, 2023 is the deadline to complete the 9 deliverables for the funding. Mr. Hart said we have completed 5 of these. Mr. Hart said the MVRHS Building working group meet every Friday keep on top of the deadline requirements for the State funding. Mr. Glasgow asked if it is accepted by the MSVA for this funding what is the timeline. Mr. Hart said it is years away. Mr. Freidman estimated about 2 years after ATM support this spring.

Mr. Lionette said he is so supportive of the hard work that the MVRHS has put into not only the budget but the programs. Mr. Hannemann said thank you for your hard work on these numbers.

At 7:12 PM Ms. Divoll moved to adjourn. Mr. Glasgow seconded the motion. SO VOTED: FinCom 5 Ayes 2 not present Select Board 2 Ayes 1 not present Meeting was adjourned.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Diana DeBlase. **FinCom Approved 03/16/2023**

Document list:

- Handouts from school principals of West Tisbury, Chilmark & MVRHS schools and Superintendent shared services documents to support budget requests for FY24