

Chilmark Budget Hearing #10 February 9, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Remotely present: FinCom: Chairperson Susan Murphy, Rob Hannemann, Bruce Golden, Vicki Divoll, Marshall Carroll and Eric Glasgow. *Don Leopold was not present* Select Board: Chairperson James Malkin, Warren Doty and Bill Rossi. Others: Town Administrator Tim Carroll, Diana DeBlase, School Superintendent Matt D' Andrea, Mark Freidman, Richie Smith, Chilmark School Principal Susan Stevens, Holly Bellebouno, Treasurer D. Barnes, Accountant Ellen Biskis, Norman Werthwein, WT School Principal Donna Lowell Bettencourt, Roxanne Akerman and Robert Lionette.

At 4:30 PM Chairperson Murphy called the meeting to order on the Zoom platform.

ACE MV (Adult & Community Education):

Richie Smith of the MV Regional High School spoke in support of ACE MV and said they have been very responsive in responding to our needs. Career readiness and finance classes. Goals for coming year mental health and early childhood courses for students from MVRHS to stay on MV for courses. ACE MV Director Holly Bellebouno thanked Mr. Smith. Holly Bellebouno said ACE MV would be asking for same amount as last year from the island towns. ACE MV will be offering in FY23 workforce and enrichment. Nurse and electrical Cape Cod Tech. Chairperson Murphy asked why the Electrician course is not offered in the MVRHS curriculum. Holly Bellebouno said have to be 18 and an apprentice at an electrical company already. Chairperson Murphy said she is enrolled now at ACE MV and enjoying the Brazilian-Portuguese language course.

Superintendent D'Andrea Shared Services:

Superintendent D'Andrea said this budget encompasses the: Central office personnel, Bridge program, Compass and Project headway program, ELL administration and Strings program. \$258,000 with step & COLA placeholder because we are still in the process of bargaining / negotiations. Superintendent D'Andrea said we went through all lines reduced where we could. Added where we needed: Policy review for School district see if we have any gaps Addition of a school phycologist we had 3 to serve all 6 schools. This will help Special Education assistants. Pre-school age schoolchildren, identifying more children with more needs. Superintendent D'Andrea pointed out where grants covered existing lines and reductions. Budget Increased by \$293,593 for FY23, a 3.96% increase. However, this is about 6% increase for up island due to numbers served.

Ms. Divoll asked for Robert Lionette's views on this budget and why he voted the way he did. Robert Lionette concern in the rise here that we will see in the two (UIRSD & MVRHS) regional budgets. Additional position that is not a student contact / administrative position being added was a concern. Funding of equity audit and where would lead for additional positions added. Long-term goals for staffing.

Richie Smith addressed comments Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) position/ Kim Garrison. There is student contact; creating trained student mental health first aid teams. The kids feel her impact. We will use grant monies that will expire if we do not use it. Mr. Smith said it is appropriate use of temporary \$ for the assessment. Ms. Divoll said she is disappointed that is the line you reduced. Ms. Divoll said she likes aggressive action and \$ spent in DEI.

Don Leopold joined meeting. Skipper Manter joined meeting

UIRS Budget:

School Superintendent Matt D'Andrea said budget for FY22 was \$13,074,430.00.

Superintendent D'Andrea spoke to items that caused changes in the coming FY23 budget for both schools:

West Tisbury School site:

- Step & Lanes contractual increases \$111,509.45 or increase of 0.85%
- Substitute teachers - we were paying \$90.00 a day but often unable to fill gaps. We looked to the Cape Schools to compare pay. We were the lowest so we increased to \$125.00 a day.
- Increase to network security

Principal Donna Lowel-Bettencourt (zooming from the school ski trip)

- ESP s one on ones offset with E & D
- Health Insurance

Mr. Hannemann said the positions added in FY22 how did you pay for them. Superintendent D'Andrea said grants. Principal Donna Lowel-Bettencourt explained, not all positions were filled at the time school started. We have a contingency line and might use.

Chilmark School Site:

Mark Friedman said Chilmark school grants to pay added costs for positions this year. Positions needed that were not in FY22 budget planning. Student population increase caused the need for additional position at this time.

Once enrollment numbers have dropped, we will do away with extra position, but 5 permanent now though. School Principal Stevens said we have added a full time nurse. Principal Stevens said we have an IEP that calls for one on one. Growth has continued. We are returning .8 position as a reading teacher, because during COVID that became a real need.

District Site:

Superintendent D'Andrea spoke to items that caused changes:

- Technician's responsibilities increases, salaries in line for what they are doing and what other districts are paying.
- Transportation bus drivers needed. Putting some incentives in cost of training and holidays
- Debt Service for West Tisbury School exterior renovation is completed FY23
- Chilmark adding new \$95,000 a year for HVAC renovation project.

The UIRSD FY23 total \$13,902,739.93

Superintendent D'Andrea spoke about talk of E&D to pay this down:

1. Chilmark said no
2. Edgartown & West Tisbury said use all of the E&D
3. Aquinnah said use some.

Superintendent D'Andrea said so we are using some E & D.

Mark Friedman said there is \$500,000 to remain and \$360,000 to apply (spend out of E & D) to offset the budget

Mr. Hannemann asked for Robert Lionette's comments about budgets, without comment about the E&D Mr. Lionette said majority of increases is due to population. We own that and the effect it has on the budgets. Have not objected to any of that. Mr. Hannemann said now back to the E&D. Going forward real concern we are just kicking the can down the road. Mr. Friedman said point is noted. We recommended to the school committee when the use E&D funds to use as a mitigating tool to lessen the spike for next year. Next year we could reduce again and after the 3rd year not use E&D.

Mr. Hannemann offered a simple plan that could be initiated: use 3 year rolling averages to populations so would not see the spikes in population to help smooth budgets for towns.

Ms. Divoll asked if E&D reduce budget or assessment. Mr. Freidman said E&D used as revenue source so reduces the assessments. Budget up 6.34%.

Mr. Leopold asked if anything Mr. Lionette would like to add. Mr. Lionette said keeping \$500,000 in E&D he thought was to support our bond rating for the building project. The whittling away of that E&D to soften the blow of increases is not what he expected to hear.

Marshall Carroll said money aside how are the MV education rates compared to others in Mass? Superintendent D'Andrea said the latest MCAS testing was right out of the pandemic. They did well though. However, MCAS good tool to help us see what students need now. We are using Benchmark assessments with reading especially. Principals are closely monitoring what the students need.

Chairperson Malkin said he has been following the schools & education here on MV for many years. Great to hear about the programs not just \$ background to make informed judgements. Superintendent D'Andrea said that would be great not to talk money but programs and education.

Principal Stevens said Chilmark School is utilizing the Pollyanna curriculum - diversity program grant for books topic of diversity. Ms. Divoll said thank you!

Schools left

There was discussion about respectful manners during Zoom meetings.

Ms. Biskis noted the change in population, her son attended Chilmark 6 years ago and he was 1 of 4 students in the class. Now there are 18 in Kindergarten and 16 in 1st grade.

Mr. Leopold said that is positive sign for the school many kids are coming from down island. Mr. Leopold said we should be careful not to send mixed signals; we want and then now we do not have capacity.

Mr. Leopold said we owe kids if they are here for Kindergarten, they be allowed to continue through grade 5. Chairperson Malkin said he is not sure he agrees. Chilmark kids should have priority. Need to let families know if come to preschool and Kindergarten is at capacity needs to be transparent.

Mr. Doty said preschool starts at age 2.9 to kindergarten age. As a town, we have sponsored the preschool, we encouraged it. Limit enrollment to 20. Real service to the island. 20 kids 60 in regular school we have 80 kids, which is successful. There is a space crunch but we are dedicated keeping 20 kids in preschool. There was some discussion of possible locations for preschool, not action was taken.

Mr. Glasgow requested to discuss health benefits for Board and Committee members (Select Board, Assessors and Board of Health). Mr. Glasgow suggested existing ones (persons who receive health benefits) would not be taken away but to do away with the benefits for future board and committee members. Important symbolic gesture maybe we could put to the voters. Chairperson Murphy said the legal response is: we may do it (offer health benefits) but do not have to. Mr. Hannemann said the role of fincom is not to minimize spending or tax rate but rather support things that are beneficial to the town. Getting people to serve on the high mileage jobs (seat on board & committees), Mr. Hannemann said he would continue to support benefits for existing positions.

At 5:57 PM with no further items for discussion Chairperson Murphy asked for motion to adjourn. Mr.

Golden moved to adjourn. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. **SO VOTED: 7 Ayes adjourned**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Diana DeBlase.

Approved 02/16/2022