

**UP-ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OF MARTHA'S VINEYARD
Monday, January 22, 2008
West Tisbury School, 5:00 PM**

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Present: Chair - Marshall Segall, Roxanne Ackerman,
Dan Cabot, Skipper J. Manter, Susan Parker
Others: Superintendent's Office: Jim Weiss, Laurie Halt,
Amy Tierney
Principals: Michael Halt, Bob Lane, Diane Gandy
Auditor – Chris Rogers
Staff: Teri Mello, Victoria Phillips,
Chilmark Selectmen: Warren Doty, Rigs Parker,
Frank Fenner,
WTSAC/PTO: Chantale Legaré, Tina Miller
Community: Kate Athearn, Elaine Barnett,
Cynthia Bermudes, Jill Bernstein, Nicole Cabot,
Karen McDonald, Elizabeth Straton, Rose Willett,
Press – Robert Potts – The Broadside
Recorder: Marni Lipke

*Late arrivals or early departures

Call to Order (Agenda Item # I.)

The meeting was called to order at 5:008PM.

Review of FY07 Audit with Chris Rogers of *Rogers and Sullivan*

(Agenda Item # II.) (See documents on file.)

Chris Rogers reviewed the structure of the audit and the financial status of the Up-Island Regional School District (UIRSD).

- The Audit was unqualified – the best possible status.
- Excess and Deficiency (E & D) was estimated at \$266,000. Mr. Rogers again explained that a 5% E & D reserve was considered about the minimum needed for emergencies especially for an entity the size of the UIRSD.
- Private purpose trust funds such as the Scholarship Fund from the Ala Carte residual were noted.
- If the buses were purchased outright the vote to bond should be rescinded.
- The Charter School charges could not be more accurately projected as even the Charter School did not know it's income until late in the fiscal year.
- This year the auditors had initiated 'significant' findings which were defined as more than inconsequential but less than material (material was anything about or over \$100,000). Significant finding thresholds were at the discretion of the auditor and had been set by Sullivan & Rogers at about \$5,000-\$10,000.

The Management Letter detailed five findings.

- (Repeat) The purchase and expenditure process did not move items through the accountant in a timely manner making the process susceptible to non-compliance. The Audit identified three instances where quotes should have been obtained for substantial expenditures.
 - A long discussion followed over the parameters of a project requiring three bids. A project qualified if it was over \$5,000 and under \$25,000 including such situations as: time lapses, discovery of problems that increased the work, same contractor / different project, work was a regularly budgeted item.
- (Repeat) The capital assets inventory had not been updated. This required further training by staff in use of the current software.
- (Repeat) To further strengthen the district the auditors again recommended the UIRSD perform a risk assessment to identify areas susceptible to misappropriation.
- (New) – The auditors recommended the UIRSD develop a disaster recovery plan in case the office and/or server were destroyed. Data was backed up regularly to a remote server and student records were kept in fire proof cabinets. A location should be identified for a temporary office.
- (Repeat) • (Repeat) – Starting in Fiscal Year 2009 (FY09) the General Accounting Standards Board (GASB) would require bi-annual actuarial evaluation of post retirement health insurance liability on the full accrual statement. This was an unfunded liability around retiree health benefits (currently paid as it occurred) that was projected to increase sharply. At the moment there was no mechanism to deposit funds in anticipation of the crisis however special legislation was being drafted to allow a dedicated fund. The school districts were working with Dukes County to address the situation Islandwide.
- The UIRSC thanked Chris Rogers.

Minutes Read and Approved – December 20, 2007 and January 22, 2008

- There was a brief discussion on consistent reporting of members concerns: i.e. one member requesting more detailed quoting of their remarks. It was agreed that the member could compose a document about their remarks at the meeting that could be filed with the minutes.
- *DAN CABOT MOVED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 20, 2007 MINUTES AS AMENDED; SKIP MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*
- *DAN CABOT MOVED TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 2, 2008 MINUTES; SKIP MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*
- Draft minutes would be posted on the school bulletin boards.

Financial Report (Agenda Item # III.)

A. Expenditure Report (See documents on file.)

The FY08 budget was in good shape, both revenue and expenditure.

B. FY09 Budget Discussion and Certification

- Previously all UIRSD school choice income had been spent in the W. Tisbury Site (WTS) budget as most school choice students went to that site, however a “fairer” solution was proposed: to receive the money as a Region and divide the revenue between all three town assessments by the WTS formula – West Tisbury 81.7%, Chilmark 12.06%, Aquinnah 2.63%. This would alleviate a steep rise in the FY09 Chilmark assessment due to increased enrollment and the change in the capital cost formula. An alternate formula of receiving school choice revenues by enrollment was also suggested.
- *DAN CABOT PROPOSED TO REMOVE SCHOOL CHOICE REVENUE FROM PART C THE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL SITE BUDGET AND DISTRIBUTE IT AS PROPOSED BY THE DRAFT FIRST PAGE (see documents on file) FOR ONE YEAR ONLY; SKIP MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*
- Skip Manter proposed that in assessing the Supt. Shared Serviced Office Budget school choice students be assessed by their town of residence and not their school of choice.
- Due to some objections from members of the UIRSC and the Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School Committee (MVRHSC) the Facilities Manager had been removed from all school district budgets (sometimes with regret), and the UIRSC had restored the half time Industrial Arts position (see 1/2/08 Minutes)—the position cost was corrected.
- Roxanne Ackerman again objected to administrative salary levels at the cost of school programs and suggested the administration was losing sight of its educational goals.
 - She considered that regionalization need not mean centralization.
 - She again stressed the need to re-organize the Supt. Shared Services Office.
- Supt. Jim Weiss strongly disagreed emphasizing the focus on providing all 2,100 Island students with a fair and appropriate education and again reviewing the administrative versus direct services configuration of the Supt. Shared Serviced Office budget.
 - Principals and assistant principles working year round were often paid at a lower rate than teachers.
 - He could not justify giving all school employees from teachers to custodians Cost of Living (COL) or higher raises and no raises at all to administrators.
 - However he did offer to forego his own negotiated FY09 raise.
 - Cutting the central administrative budget would require more local staff and would shift momentum away from regional cooperation among the Island schools.

- Dan Cabot as head of the All Island School Committee (AISC) Personnel Subcommittee strongly protested the foregoing of Supt. Weiss' raise. Marshall Segall agreed stating that if such were the case he would not vote to certify the budget.
- WTS Prin. Michael Halt stated categorically that there had been no reductions to student programs and the WTS FY09 budget had cut administration by a secretarial position.
- It was further suggested these objections should have been raised at the beginning of budget season (not the end) and/or with the AISC Personnel Subcommittee.
- *DAN CABOT MOVED TO APPROVE THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT FISCAL YEAR 2009 BUDGET AS PROPOSED BOTH THE ASSESSMENT (THROUGH THE REGIONAL FORMULA) AND THE BOTTOM LINE AT \$8,351,135.05; SKIP MANTER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED: 4 AYES; 1 NAY SKIP MANTER; 0 ABSTENTIONS.*
- Prin. Halt thanked the WTS School Advisory Council (SAC) and all parents and teachers who had attending he meeting(s) for their advocacy. In addition all three Chilmark Selectmen were present at both meetings. Warren Doty thanked Roxanne Ackerman for her struggles with the budget and advocated for local control which promoted participatory democracy and strong healthy schools.

Principal's Report (Agenda item # V.)

A. Diane Gandy – Chilmark (See documents on file.)

- Chilmark School Prin. Diane Gandy outlined the water treatment system proposal to bring the School into compliance by February 2008 (see 8/20/07 Minutes p.2 #IV) – The current tanks were usable but would need new gauges. Water Operator Deacon Perrotta and Chilmark Town Administrator Tim Carroll plan had approved the plan.
- *SKIP MANTER MOVED TO AUTHORIZE CHILMARK PRINCIPAL DIANE GANDY TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE WATER PROPOSAL WITH THE OVERSIGHT OF THE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR; DAN CABOT SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*

B. Michael Halt – West Tisbury (See documents on file.)

- Prin. Michael Halt reviewed the All Island Professional Development day activities which had all gone well.
- In keeping with the Honors Algebra program and raising the Math bar a section of 8th grade Algebra was being coordinated with WTS, Honors and MVRHS staff.
- In addition he hoped to use Circuit Breaker funds to hire a part time Math specialist without benefits to work with at risk students, particularly those on Individual Education Plans (IEP's). The current teacher was trained in Special Education but not 'Highly Qualified' in Math. An earlier similar programs brought excellent results.
- Some members protested that the Circuit Breaker revenues were intended to reimburse the UIRSD for large residential and Special Needs expenses and consequently should be used to reduce the assessment. Also it was an addition to the staff while enrollment declined.
- Pin. Halt would look for creative ways to fund the position and not to increase staff for FY09 and after. He expressed some concern over the falling numbers for "Highly Qualified" WTS staff. He reminded the UIRSC that they had cut a position against he advice for FY07.

- *SKIP MANTER MOVED TO AUTHORIZE THE WEST TISBURY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION TO HIRE A PART-TIME HIGHLY QUALIFIED MATH POSITION WITH FUNDING SOURCE TO BE DETERMINED IN JUNE 2008, HOPEFULLY FROM BUDGET RESIDUALS; SUSAN PARKER SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.*
- Chair Marshall Segall saluted Lieutenant Colonel Michael Halt on the award of a Bronze Star for his service in Iraq; there was a round of applause.

Superintendent's Report (Agenda Item # VI.)

A. Wind Turbine

- The UIRSD Energy Subcommittee (see 11/13/07 Minutes p. 3) have placed non-binding articles on all three UIRSD Town warrants, to get a sense of the communities on the installation of a wind turbine on WTS property.
- The Energy Subcommittee will meet 3:30PM Wednesday March 12th at Howes House.
- There will be a meeting with the Boards of Selectmen, Finance Committee, Zoning Boards of Appeal, Planning Committees and abutters at 7:00PM, Wednesday, March 19, 2008 at the WTS. The UIRSC suggested that the abutters be invited early.
- In recognition of the voted compensation in Prin. Michael Halt's salary (see 1/8/07 Minutes p. 2) the National Committee for Employer Support gave the UIRSD a Patriotic Community Award. The award would be announce at all three UIRSD Town Meetings.

Old / New / Other Business (Agenda Item # VII.)

A. Annual Town Report

- IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE DRAFT FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN REPORT AND TO PASS ALL COMMENTS TO SUSAN PARKER AND THAT THE FINAL REPORT BE SUBMITTED WITH ALL DUE HASTE.

The UIRSC thanked Former Chair Susan Parker for the draft.

- A request was received from Parks and Recreation to extend the electricity from the meter in the back bus parking lot to the tennis courts.
IT WAS THE CONSENSUS OF THE UP ISLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO ALLOW THE BACK PARKING LOT ELECTRICITY TO BE EXTENDED TO THE TENNIS COURTS PROVIDED ALL INSTALLATION COSTS WERE BORN BY THE RECREATION COMMITTEE AND THAT THEY PAY FOR THEIR USAGE.

- The Chilmark Flea Market was looking to relocate and had requested the use of the WTS back bus lot and/or front triangle – with rental proceeds dedicated to the 8th Grade trip to England. Although the buses could be stored elsewhere, the rental would involve a twice weekly event, significant traffic and use impacts. The matter was tabled for discussion at the next meeting.

The UIRSC would not meet in February due to inability to find a mutually convenient time. The next UIRSC meeting was scheduled for 5:00PM Monday, March 10, 2008 at the WTS.

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Other relevant meetings were:

AISC - 7:00PM, Wednesday, January 30th at the MVRHS.

MVRHS Assessment Committee – 4:30 PM Tuesday, February 11th.

UIRSD Budget Review by the W. Tisbury FinCom - 5:15PM Tuesday March 4th,
- MVRHSD Budget Review at 4:30PM

Adjournment

THE MEETING ADJOURNED BY CONSENSUS AT 7:31PM.

Documents on File:

Agenda 1/22/08

UIRSC *Sign In Sheet* 1/22/08

UIRSD Independent Auditor's Report on Basic Financial Statements and Required
Supplementary Information for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2007,
(37 p. & covers) 1/3/08

UIRSD Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and
And on Compliance and Other Matters for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2007,
(3 p. & covers) 1/3/08

UIRSD Management Letter June 30, 2007, (7 p. & covers) 1/3/08

UIRSD FY2009 Assessment – Proposed Draft (2 p.) 12/20/07

UIRSD Expenditures July 1, 2007 to January 22, 2008

Chilmark School Principal's Report 1/22/08

Island Water Systems letter re: Chilmark School Water Treatment (3 p.) 1/16/08

W. Tisb. School Principal's Report 1/22/08

Dear Up Island Citizens Draft