

Dukes County Commission (DCC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 17, 2024
4:00 PM
Remote Participation Only

Dukes County Commissioners Present in person: Christine Todd, Peter Wharton, Doug Ruskin, Jim Klingensmith, Tristan Israel

Other County Officials: Martina Thornton – County Manager

Others Present: Ethan Genter – Vineyard Gazette, Samuel Houghton – MV Times, Andrew Kelly – Edgartown Parks and Recreation Department

Christine called the meeting to order at 4:02PM

Norton Point Beach updates – Andrew Kelly

After a couple winter storms most of the dune that was rebuilt in last couple of years is gone and access to NPB is compromised. Town of Edgartown declared state of emergency and they are planning to apply for funding for mitigation of the damage on south shore and making the “left fork” a priority. They will be dredging and rebuilding the dunes under the current permits for Phase I and Phase II. Andy thought that they could be able to open access, but it will depend on the weather and the birds. His best estimate is \$200K in revenue for the next fiscal year (the county would receive 20%). Edgartown is reaching out to MEMA or FEMA requesting funding, but that might not cover restoring the vegetation.

Tristan/Jim moved to support the town in the efforts to rebuild Norton Point and to ask for funding to do so. So voted. Peter- yes, Christine-yes, Doug-yes, Jim- yes, Tristan - yes

Approval of minutes – deferred to next meeting.

Legislation to change the Dukes County Treasurer an appointed treasurer and not necessarily a resident of Dukes County (proposed legislation on file – was read into the record.

Tristia/Jim made a motion to file the legislation as presented. So voted. Peter- yes, Christine-yes, Doug-yes, Jim- yes, Tristan- yes

Doug says we must have the support of Dylan Fernandes. Martina has reached out but has not had any feedback. Christine suggested to have all Commissioners reach out to him.

FY2024 Budget Amendments – Martina introduced the amendments (document on file)

- Adding 10 hours to Asst Treasurers position- \$8,488
- Adding ½ year of health insurance for Asst Treasurer \$14,191
- Adding salary for Director of Health & Human Services as of June 1st- \$7,033.60, plus health insurance & payroll taxes- \$4,525.70

Majority of the needed funds would be taken from surplus leaving a deficit of \$3,100 to be transferred from unreserved fund balance.

Doug/Jim moved to approve the amendments as presented. So voted. Peter- yes, Christine-yes, Doug-yes, Jim- yes, Tristen- yes.

FY25 Amendments – Martina introduced the amendments (document on file) per recommendation of the Finance Committee: Asking towns for \$147,000 instead of \$57,000 to cover health insurance costs for a new Treasurer and assistant treasurer and to cover loss from Norton Point beach revenue.

Doug suggested decreasing Norton Point revenue line to zero, since we do not know for sure if it will be open. That would increase the ask to the towns. Discussion followed.

Peter/Doug moved to approve the amendments as presented reducing the projected revenue from Norton Point beach to zero, thereby increasing the request to the towns to \$172,000. So voted. Peter- yes, Christine-yes, Doug-yes, Jim- yes, Tristen- no. Motion carried.

Doug and the communication committee will write up messaging on the increased ask to the towns.

Testimony letters in support of the Affordable Housing Act

Tristan/Peter moved to send a letter in support as recommended. So voted. Peter- yes, Christine-yes, Doug-yes, Jim-yes, Tristen- yes.

Doug/Tristan moved to authorize the County Manager to send the letter that we will support the Affordable Homes Act as it will be going through the legislative process over the next 6 months.

Peter- yes, Christine-yes, Doug-yes, Jim- yes, Tristen- yes.

Committee Updates:

The Finance Committee – budget amendments have already been discussed.

The Land Use Committee – Doug said the committee was looking into the lease situation on the NY Ave location and more will be reported in executive session at the end of the meeting.

Legislative Committee – updates already discussed.

Communication Committee – Doug sent written report (document on file). They are looking at changes on the county website. It can be either a government only, full service regional website with non-government services listed or a government site with link to additional non-government services. Discussion followed.

Improvements Committee – no update.

Manager's Report (document on file)

Support letter to MVC for NOAA grant

Tristan/Doug moved to authorize County Manager to write the letter that County will support and collaborate on the grant. Peter- yes, Christine-yes, Doug-yes, Jim- yes, Tristen- yes.

County Treasurer search –...it is being advertised in both papers and on the website. So far, we have one application. Doug asked the papers and everyone interested to look at the website for the job parameters and consider an application. The county will arrange for training for the new treasurer.

Veteran's services- Bruce Montrose our prior veteran's agent has been brought in to cover the FMLA of the veteran's services officer.

Appointments are advertised in paper and on the website.

New business –

Doug shared the introductory presentation that is being shared with the town finance committees – organizational chart and how it will look like with the new Director of Health and Human Services starting with FY2025.

He would like to put the chart on the website and possibly create a show on MV TV to explain it.

ARPA updates – Report was sent with what was spent by the towns so far. BOH will start talking about what other uses of the funding they would support. All the funds need to be obligated by December 2024. ARPA funds can be used for revenue replacement or public health related activities of the County as well. The communications committee will create ads for papers and ad on MV Radio, which we can pay for from the ARPA funds as well.

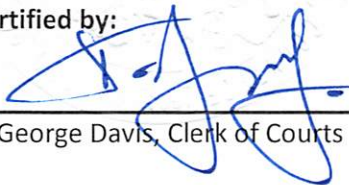
Tisbury Select board voted today to support legislation to the change to an appointed county Treasurer.

Public Comment – none

Doug/Tristan moved to go into executive session to consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property as the chair declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body, and to invite the County Manager into the executive session and not to reconvene in open session. So voted. Peter- yes, Christine-yes, Doug-yes, Jim- yes, Tristen- yes.

Public portion of the meeting ended at 5:38pm

Certified by:



T. George Davis, Clerk of Courts

Documents presented at the meeting and part of the official record:

- Manager's Report
- FY2024 Budget Amendment
- FY2025 Budget Amendment
- Letter of support for NOAA grant
- Letter of support for housing legislation and supporting documentation
- ARPA progress report
- Communications Committee report