**Dukes County Commissioners**

**Minutes**

**Wednesday, January 15, 2020**

**4:00pm**

Dukes County Administration Building

9 Airport Road, Edgartown, MA

**Dukes County Commissioners Present:** Tristan Israel – Vice Chair, John Cahill (John C.), Christine Todd, Leon Brathwaite and \*\*Keith Chatinover

\*\*Remote participation via telephone

**Other County Officials Present:**  Martina Thornton – County Manager

**Others Present:** Bob Rosenbaum- Martha’s Vineyard Airport Commission (MVAC), Joanie Ames-MVTV, Richard Knabel-MVAC, Matt Pelikan-Trustees of Reservations, Joanie Ames - MVTV

**Tristan called the meeting to order at 4:00pm**

**MINUTES:**

**Christine/John C. made a motion to approve the Minutes of November 13, 2019 as presented. So voted. Tristan- Yes, John C- Yes, Christine- Yes, Keith- Yes, Leon- Abstains. Motion carries.**

**Christine/John C. made a motion to approve the Minutes of December 4, 2019 as presented. So voted. Tristan- Yes, John C- Yes, Christine- Yes, Keith- Yes, Leon- Yes. Motion carries.**

**Dukes County Commissioner Chair and Vice Chair – Vote**

**Christine made a motion to nominate Tristan Israel for the position of Chair for the Dukes County Commission. John C. seconds the motion. So voted. Christine-Yes, John C.- Yes, Tristan- Yes, Leon- Yes, Keith- Yes. Motion carries.**

**John C. made a motion to nominate Christine Todd for the position of Vice- Chair for the Dukes County Commission. Keith seconds the motion. So voted. Leon- Abstains, Keith-Yes, Tristan- Yes, John C.- Yes, Christine- Yes. Motion carries.**

Leon requests that a note of thanks be sent to Gretchen for her service to the DCC. Tristan asked Martina to draft a letter that can be signed by the DCC members.

**Appointment Process - Discussion**

Tristan said the cut off for applications is January 31, 2020. The next meeting for the DCC is February 5th, 2020. The DCC decided to start the interviews on Feb. 5th Tristan said that is not enough time to go through the applicant pool. The following meeting is February 19, 2020. The vote will occur at the DCC meeting on March 4, 2020. The DCC agreed to have the Airport and Steamship Authority interviews done first. Tristan would like to do all the remaining appointments on February 19th except for the Airport and Steamship. Tristan said if more time is needed then another meeting date could be set. Martina said the official end of term for the current Airport and Steamship appointees ends February 28, 2020, but the members can be held over until the new appointment is in place. Martina is willing to ask everyone who applied to come on February 5th meeting. Those who are unavailable on that day can do their interview at the February 19th DCC meeting. The DCC requested that all applications be emailed to them as they are received.

**John C./Christine made a motion to start at the next meeting on February 5th, 2020 with interviews for the Airport Commission as well as the Steamship Authority appointments. For those who cannot make that date, then the secondary date will be on February 19, 2020 when the other appointments will be made. So voted. Christine- Yes, John C.- Yes, Leon- Yes, Keith-Yes, Tristan- Yes. Motion carries.**

**Norton Point – Trustees of the Reservation (TTOR) Piping Plover Management Plan**

Matt Pelikan from The Trustees of reservations gave a brief presentation regarding Piping Plovers. He noted that the Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) has developed a program with a lot of stakeholders including the Trustees to give some additional flexibility for managers of beaches where you have both recreational use and shore birds. Piping Plover nests can shut down parts of beaches. The Piping Plover Habitat Conservation Program (PPHCP) is a program whereby beach managers can apply for and get a little bit of added flexibility in how they manage the birds with respect to conflicts with other kinds of usage. Under the new program, they could have preapproved ways to manage the vehicular traffic. DFW would agree to what is safe and manageable given the situation, which would allow some access. The main covered activity is the use of over sand vehicle (OSV) in the proximity of Plover chicks. In the program, one staff member would always oversee Plover chicks at all times keeping them in direct visual contact. That staff member would be in radio contact with a second staff member. The second staff member would be on foot or on an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and oversees escorting OSV across the vehicle corridor. If the chicks approached the vehicle corridor, the escort could be alerted and everyone would stop in their tracks until the chick is located. This program began in 2016. It was implemented for the first-time last June. It is labor intensive but works extremely well. This allowed TTOR tour vehicles to proceed and the birds never came near them. Matt is asking the DCC Board for help with receiving a certificate of inclusion. One of the requirements in this program is if the beach manager is not the owner of the beach, then they must have written permission from the owner which in this case is the County.

Martina has the proper wording and will draft the letter. Marina also stated that the DCC is happy with the Memorandum sent to the Trustees and it is now up to Sam and the Trustees to send some sort of proposal with possible changes. Matt said he would work on that in the next few weeks.

**Leon/Christine made a motion to provide a letter providing permission. So voted. Christine- Yes, John C.- Yes, Leon- Yes, Keith- Yes, Tristan- Yes, Motion carries**

**Climate Change Resolution**

Martina discussed the Climate Change documents with the DCC. The DCC decided to draft their own resolution that would be pertinent to DCC business and how they address the issues as well has how to be supportive of the initiatives. Tristan gave a brief history of the Martha’s Vineyard Commission and their climate change goals. Tristan asked Christine to meet with Martina to take the language in the documents and draft a resolution for the DCC. Christine thinks that the County can play an integral role in communicating to the Island regarding the different initiatives underway from the MVC and other agencies. The DCC agreed when interviewing candidates for the Steamship and the Airport, that the we should be asking questions that deal with green subjects and their outlook for these issues. A document will be drafted by Martina and Christine in the next few weeks.

**Administrative Code Revisions**

Keith said he would update the Word Document after the meeting. New changes will be in red. The following items were discussed:

* Governance (a) on page 5- Commissioners are expected to attend each meeting of the Commission fully prepared to vote on all items on any agenda matter which properly is the business of the Commissioners and lawfully may come before them. Commissioners may abstain from any vote upon prior admission of obvious conflict of interest and are expected to recuse themselves from deliberation.

Martina clarified that after each one of these Administrative Code item is addressed, then there will be a final version which will be published and presented at a public hearing and a final vote will be taken before it is in effect.

**Christine/Keith made a motion to adopt Governance (a) into the DCC code. So voted. Christine- Yes, John C.- Yes, Tristan- No, Leon- No, Keith- Yes. Motion carries.**

**Manager’s Report:**

* **Homelessness Prevention - Update:**  The state of Massachusetts will be giving the County $50,000.00 earmarked for Homelessness Prevention. This is a reimbursement grant which means the money needs to be spent by June 30, 2020. Martina and Karen are drafting a scope, budget and a plan of action. There is a request from Karen to earmark $10k from the $50k coming from the state to help purchase the house and help with closing costs for the first home being purchased by Harbor Homes Initiative, which was created as their own nonprofit group and purchased a home with CPC funding. Martina will verify if that is possible with the state money and she wants the DCC to be okay with this request because it is the County receiving the funding. Martina thinks it is a really good way of showing support to Harbor Homes to help them get to the next stage. Martina said this request would not go before the CAB because this is grant funding and it is not a County Budget item. Martina will inform the CAB. Martina stated that half of the funding will go to Karen’s hours to keep doing what she is doing because the County was running out of funds. Some of the funds are earmarked to help with motel vouchers. A small amount is for bus passes and supplies that can be given to the homeless and a small amount will help the warming center. Martina stated that there are several guarantees in place to ensure the success of Harbor Homes. They are a nonprofit and their mission statement clearly defines their work is for homelessness prevention. Most of the towns have pledged money through their Community Preservation Act so the towns are invested. The purchaser of the home is the Island Housing Trust. There will be a permanent restriction on the Deed that it is for affordable housing and specifically homelessness prevention.

**Christine/John C. made a motion to approve $10,000.00 of the $50,000.00 that the DCC will be receiving to address the crisis of homelessness on the Island to go towards the purchase of the Harbor Homes property, subject to the approval of the state of Massachusetts. So voted. Leon- Yes, Keith- Yes, Tristan- Yes, John C.- Yes, Christine- Yes. All in favor. Motion carries.**

* **Airport and Emergency Management:** Martina sent out some emails to the DCC. At the next meeting there will be an update and discussion. Christine will attend the meeting and report back.
* **Financial Committee update-** Martina has been meeting with some of the towns regarding the warrant articles. Martina is working to schedule meetings to meet with each of the towns. All the towns except Tisbury have approved the contract for this year which includes the 5% administrative fee. Moving forward, another issue is that only some of the towns have approved the contracts to automatically renew it. Oak Bluffs and Aquinnah have only approved the contract for this year. At the CAB meeting before Christmas, Martina was instructed to change the warrant articles. Instead of asking for the $63,000.00 which is the 5% administrative fee, Martina was instructed to ask for $60,000.00 which is a shortfall of the County Budget. The case needs to be made that the County does many more things for the towns and that a 5% administrative fee has not been charged for those things. The County wants to show the towns the value that the towns are getting from the County Administration. Martina wants to ask the towns to support the County in a way to be able to balance the budget because the County cannot ask for an override. Ultimately, the towns will receive money back which is approximately $250,000.00 in May 2020. The towns will be in a better position to receive the money back even with helping the County balance the budget. Martina is still waiting for the final language to use and is awaiting legal opinions.

Tristan wants to get the word out in the next month, before the town meetings cycle, through a letter or social media, to share the information of what the County Administration does and the value of the services that the County provides. John C. and Christine represent the Communications Committee and will work on this positive outreach.

* **The Friends of Sengekontacket-** submitted a grant proposal to the Eddy Foundation to refurbish the two kiosks that are by the inlets to State Beach. The proposal is to get this done over the next few months so it will be in place and ready for summer.
* **New Case Worker for Social Services-** There is a new case worker and her name is Melissa St John. She is already very busy with people coming in for services and the County welcomes our new staff member.

 **Old Business-**

John C. asked Martina about the Airport and the Memorandum of Understanding and the County regarding the distribution of funds. Martina does not have an update currently. Martina is awaiting Ann’s information when she returns from vacation. There may be an update at the next meeting, February 5th, 2020.

Christine asked about the topic of the Legislative change of our Treasurer. Martina said that it moved out of the Committee for regional government and has moved to the next stage. Martina was told that it is looking good and in the next month or two this will get to the floor and be voted on.

**Leon/Christine moved to adjourn. So voted. Christine- Yes, John C.- Yes, Leon- Yes, Tristan- Yes, Keith- Yes. All in favor. Motion carries.**

**The DCC meeting was adjourned at 5:24 pm.**

**Certified by:**

T. George Davis, Clerk of Courts

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

* Agenda
* 100% Renewable Martha’s Vineyard Community Resolution
* Martha’s Vineyard Commission 2019 Climate Emergency Resolution