

Dukes County Commissioners

Minutes

Wednesday, October 2, 2019

4:00pm

Dukes County Administration Building

9 Airport Road, Edgartown, MA

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

*Left Early

**Arrived Late

Other County Officials Present: Paulo DeOliveira – Register of Deeds, Ann Metcalf – Dukes County Treasurer, Martina Thornton – County Manager, Robert (Bob) Rosenbaum – MV Airport Commission, Richard Knabel – MV Airport Commission, Norman Werthwein – resident, Edward Christofono – Controller Martha's Vineyard Airport, Cindi Martin – Martha's Vineyard Airport Director, Liz Argo – Manager of Cape and Vineyard Electric Cooperative, Jo Ann Murphy – retired Veterans Services Officer, Bruce Montrose – Veterans Services Officer.

Others Present: Joanie Ames – MVTV and Lucas Thors – MV Times

Gretchen called the meeting to order at 4:00pm

Minutes:

Keith said there was a typo on the title of the Massachusetts state representative being mislabeled as a state census worker.

Christine/John A. made a motion to approve the minutes from June 26, 2019 as amended. So voted: John C. – yes, Keith – yes, Christine – abstains, Leon – yea, John A. – abstains. Motion carries.

John C. asked about the minutes from 9/3/19, which had not been completed in time to be approved at the current DCC meeting. Martina announced that those minutes would be ready for the next meeting.

Cape and Vineyard Electric Cooperative – presentation and possible vote:

Gretchen introduced Liz Argo, the manager of the CVEC, who represents the Cape and Vineyard Electric Cooperative (CVEC) and she reviewed what the purpose of the program is. Liz asked the Commissioners to look at the handout provided, which went over the new projects CVEC was planning for the new fiscal year. Liz also discussed the new electric car and car charging stations, of which there'd be 12, which had been recently funded by the Mass EVIP (Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program) grant fund. Liz mentioned that the CVEC has saved the community over \$13 million since 2014. The board of CVEC is asking contributing parties, such as the County, to contribute just a little bit more to get the Round One project back to where it needs to be today. Liz was happy to report that the adder request will be the same \$0.0025 as it had been last year, and to expect the same minimal addition to truly stabilize the budget this year. She asked the Commissioners to approve the extension to the adder and to help the CVEC stay afloat.

John A./Keith made a motion to approve the extension of the adder. So voted. All in favor., Motion Carries.

Airport \$2,800,000.00 Federal Funding Anticipation Note (FAN):

Bob R. said the Airport has discussed in the past about having to roll over a part of the runway project grant which was originally \$6 Million and include a Federal Anticipation Note (FAN) also \$800K for the Airport fire truck. Due to some very good work that Cindi and Ed put in, originally the Airport was thinking they would need \$2M to roll over for the runway project. Now it appears the Airport only needs \$1M for a period of 12 months. Bob referred to the memo from the Treasurer with the details (see file), he also noted the Airport would be saving about \$20K in interest payments by reducing the loan amount. A discussion was held. Leon wanted to verify that the funds would only be used for the fire truck and the runway. Bob said yes. Cindi said the \$800K is for all the 2019 grants which includes the new AARF truck as well as the traffic and obstruction studies that are underway. She said the Airport has both federal grants in place and are awaiting the state grants, once those are in place the Airport can start doing the requests for reimbursement, however there are invoices coming in for that work that needs to be addressed and this note will help them do that. The DCC agreed to meet on Tuesday, October 8th at 1:00pm to sign the notes.

Leon/Keith made a motion to approve a \$2,800,000.00 FAN for the Airport as presented (see Treasurer's memo). So voted. Christine yes, Leon yes, John A. yes, Keith yes, John C. yes. Motion carries.

**Tristan arrived at 4:19pm

Shellfish Propagation Proposal – Vote:

Martina introduced the annual proposal, which this year requests \$58,333.00 for shellfish seeding and maintenance. Keith and Christine were particularly adamant that a short presentation of the proposal be given to allow the public to become more knowledgeable with Shellfish Propagation and why it is necessary. Martina made a statement as to why it's important. Tristan recommended that a page be added on the county website regarding the Shellfish Propagation so that the general public can read about the program and learn why it is important.

Leon/John A. made a motion to approve the proposal request of \$58,333.00 for shellfish propagation. So voted. All in favor. Motion carries.

FY2019 Capital Improvement Budget:

Martina reminded the Commissioners about the pending costs of maintenance to various county-owned buildings, but she wanted to clarify that a new cost had been added for the courthouse building – a total of \$9,224.00 to re-pipe the boiler.

Leon/John A. made a motion to approve the new addition of \$9,224.00 to the Capital Improvement Budget in order to repair the boiler at the courthouse.

There was a short explanation of the costs and why there was still another cost that need to be filled in. Martina explained that a repairman would be coming on Friday, October 4th to assess the cost of that last project, the much needed watermain replacement for the courthouse. John C. asked if the DCC should wait until all the pending costs were collected in order to approve the final budget. The DCC held a discussion regarding the costs of the needed renovations. Martina also explained that an additional cost of \$9,835.00 could be added to install 21 actuator heads and valves on the radiators in the courthouse, and that, while that cost would include all radiators in the building, not all radiators would necessarily require replacement, so the total cost of \$9,835.00 could go down considerably.

Christine/Leon amended the motion to include the additional \$9,835.00 to reflect a total of \$19,059.00 worth of repairs to the courthouse as presented. So voted. All in favor. Motion carries.

After the Commissioners voted to approve the amended funds, Tristan commented that the funds approved to replace the 21 actuators would then be rounded up to an even \$10,000.00, allowing the new approved total to become \$19,224.00.

Christine/Keith reiterated the original motion to approve the new additions to the Capital Improvement Budget. So voted. All in favor. Motion carries.

Plaque Dedication for Jo Ann Murphy:

There was a short ceremony to honor the retiring Veterans Services Officer, Jo Ann Murphy, who dedicated eighteen years of her life to serving the Island's veterans. Martina also introduced the new Veterans Services Officer, Bruce Montrose. Martina explained to the Commissioners that Jo Ann had accumulated quite a bit of sick/vacation time during her time with the County that had not been used and which was owed back to her as part of her employment agreement. She was concerned because the total hours to be reimbursed was considerably higher than was budgeted for, but luckily, the new hire, Bruce, had declined the optional health insurance he was offered through the County, so the funds saved from that could be used to help offset the cost of Jo Ann's unused sick time reimbursement. \$6,387.08 was proposed to be moved from the health insurance line to the sick/vacation time buyout.

John A. / John C. made a motion to approve the funds transfer to allow the County to reimburse Jo Ann for all the sick/vacation time she did not use. So voted. All in favor. Motion carries.

*John Alley left the meeting at 5:04pm

New Business:

- **FY2020 Revised County Budget:** Martina asked that the DCC review the general County budget, an item which did not have a previously assigned agenda topic. She discussed that she had asked the CAB to approve minor amendments to the budget to clean up the numbers. She showed that the Grant & Program Administration department had been amended to reflect a loss of about \$2,000 due to a rejection of the 5% administration fees associated with the Tisbury and West Tisbury portions of this program. She said the courthouse, which was amended to reflect the trial court lease payments. Finally, she explained that the Contributions to OPEB had been increased by \$100,000 to reflect an island-wide decision (approval from all island towns) to increase the contributions for this category. A discussion was held. Keith had concerns that the town of West Tisbury had rejected the 5% Administrative Fee and spoke at length as to why that was heavily disappointing and infuriating. The Commissioners continued to express their annoyance with the situation and argued as to how the voters should be thankful that the County was able to accomplish so much with so little funding already.
- **Dukes County Social Services Client Grievance Form:** Martina explained was a required document from the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) which was requested to be available in the Social Services offices at all times. She asked the DCC for approval of the document and wished to establish a sub-committee to draft a county-wide copy of this grievance letter, for any future County grievances from the public. A discussion was held. Gretchen recommended adding a section for a "best positive outcome," where reporters could describe what they felt the best possible outcome of their report could be. Martina agreed. Christine added that, in paragraph three of the cover page to the grievance form, the sentence, "a grievance is defined as any situation or condition that a client thinks is unfair, unjust, or inequitable" should also include the word, 'inadequate' to include any situation that a reporter deems as not sufficient to the level of service they were expecting.

Christine also requested that the form be readily available for patrons who may feel a bit timid asking management for the form; she suggested adding the form to the County website for easy access. Tristan asked if the form could be simplified a bit and didn't feel that it was that efficient in its current form. Ann said that there needed to be a privacy policy when it came to this form, to ensure the privacy of the potential reporter. Leon agreed, stating that, as part of the Social Services department, the form would fall under HIPAA privacy regulations, but that, as just a generalized form for the County, the form would require an additional privacy policy to satisfy the state. The DCC agreed that the form did need to have a more description or written out process of how the reports would be filed, how they would be dealt with, and how (as well as to whom) they would be escalated, should that event ever occur.

Tristan/Keith made a motion to approve the Social Services Grievance form, with amendments, with the stipulation that Martina meet with the Personnel Board to hash out a more user-friendly form for future County use. So voted. All in favor. Motion carries.

Keith asked why these documents were being discussed as they had not been reflected in the printed agenda. Martina explained that they had just come up. Christine also expressed confusion and asked if these presented topics fell under "New Business." The DCC agreed and decided to go back to the Agenda list starting with the next proceeding item, number six, Bathrooms on Beaches.

Bathrooms on Beaches:

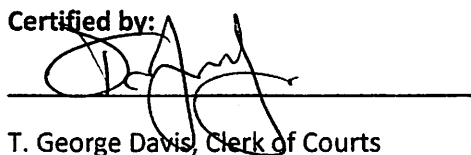
Gretchen started out by saying that she was going to limit the conversation on this topic, as it had been discussed, and she would only be listening to new information that the Commissioners might present. A discussion was held. Christine spoke about a recent meeting she had had with Amy Billings, one of the Parks Commissioners of Oak Bluffs. She mentioned that the Parks Commissioners had had trouble in the past with this same issue at town selectmen meetings, and that they had tried to gauge the interest in beach facilities by adding a port-o-potty in Waban Park (across the street from Inkwell Beach) for a day. The trial had proven difficult to determine who was a patron of the beach per say, and who was merely a passerby on a bike. Christine explained what Amy had told her about their trial and went on to say that the port-o-potty would be under heavy usage and would need to be emptied potentially multiple times a day, and not surprisingly, when polled, the residents surrounding Waban Park and Inkwell Beach had no interest in a facility being built and did not want to have a facility anywhere within sight lines of their homes. She mentioned that there was lobbying on both sides of this issue. Christine also said Amy had said that the Parks Department was still attempting to pursue a facility on Inkwell Beach, but that they just didn't know how this will be accomplished yet. Christine expressed her interest in revisiting this issue as well, stating that there needed to be public facilities on both Eastville Beach as well as State Beach and that she had a plan to get the funding for these projects: charging visitors to park at State Beach. She explained that the County was one of the few remaining Massachusetts towns that did not currently charge for parking for a state beach and that it would be easy to implement the change. Gretchen asked about parking permits or passes and Christine explained how she felt that it would be easy to issue stickers to residents who would be charged either nothing or a base minimum for the year to ensure that the locals are happy. Then, the vast remainder of the funding would come from parking meters and weekly beach parking passes. Tristan mentioned that Eastville Beach may be a bit more difficult to add parking because the lot at that beach is owned by the Town of Oak Bluffs, but on the same ticket, Eastville Beach desperately needs a facility, or at least a port-o-potty somewhere. Keith agreed with adding facilities to the beaches but felt very strongly that local islanders should not have to pay to use the beaches. Martina said that State Beach is technically only managed by the County and is in fact owned by the State, so the Commissioners would need to find the appropriate people to contact in the State's Parks Department in order to add the proposed meters. Gretchen asked what the next steps should be, including when the Commissioners needed to hold a public forum, which would be legally required if a proposed new fee for parking should be agreed upon. Martina explained that a public forum must be

held in order to approve that fee, but that a proposed fee amount must already be determined in order to hold that forum. Tristan proposed contacting the state before starting this whole process, in order to be best prepared to discuss this further. Ann asked to be involved in the process as the costs of this decision would one day come to her as the Treasurer. Gretchen said that the issue would be put on the next agenda for the upcoming meeting on October 16th to include an update on the progress on the matter.

Christine/John C. made a motion to adjourn the DCC meeting. So voted. All in favor. Motion carries.

The DCC meeting was adjourned at 6:11pm.

Certified by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "T. George Davis", is written over a horizontal line.

T. George Davis, Clerk of Courts

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

- Agenda
- Meeting Minutes 6-26-19
- Memos from Ann Metcalf, Treasurer Regarding Airport Borrowings
- County Commissioners Meeting Calendar for Remainder of the Year
- FY2020 Dukes County Capital Improvements Budget
- Shellfish Propagation Proposed Funding
- FY2020 Amended Budget
- FY2020 Veterans' Agent Amended Budget
- Dukes County Social Services – Client Grievance Reporting and Procedure Form
- Memo to Senator Julian Cyr from Homeless Prevention
- Information from Liz Argo and CVEC