

Dukes County Commission (DCC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 19, 2022
4:00 PM

REMOTE PARTICIPATION ONLY

Dukes County Commissioners Present: Christine Todd, Tristan Israel, Leon Brathwaite, Peter Wharton, Keith Chatinover

Other County Officials Present: Martina Thornton – Dukes County Manager, Paulo DeOliveira – Register of Deeds

Others Present: Abigail Rosen – MV Times, Aidan Pollard – Vineyard Gazette, Bob Johnson, James Klingensmith

Christine called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM

Minutes – 10-5-2022

Tristan/Keith moved to approve minutes of 10-5-2022. So voted. Tristan- yes, Leon – yes, Keith – yes, Christine Todd - abstained – yes. Motion carries.

Eversource working group appointment – request from Kate Warner
Peter Wharton is not interested as he has many commitments already. Tristan is willing to do it. Leon as well but he will not be a commissioner come January.

Keith/Leon moved to appoint Tristan Israel as Dukes County representative. So voted. Leon – yes, Keith – yes, Tristan – yes and Christine – yes. Motion carries.

Appointment of Marina Lent to the Health Council

Omar Johnson, Board of Health Agent from West Tisbury resigned, and the Health Council coordinating committee is recommending appointing Marina Lent the Chilmark BOH Agent to replace him.

Tristan/Leon moved to appoint Marina Lent to the Health Council. So voted. Leon – yes, Tristan – yes, Keith – yes, Christine – yes. Motion carries.

Christine said that Marina is very knowledgeable
Tristan asked for report from the Health Council. We will invite the chair of the Health Council to come give the County an update.

Discussion followed about remote meetings versus hybrid, and we will put it up the next agenda to discuss the options.

*Peter Wharton joined the meeting.

FY2024 Budget

Martina is still working on it and needs numbers from the Treasurer's Office before she can finalize it. She would also like to meet with the Finance Committee to discuss the way the budget is shaping. The Finance Committee will meet on Tuesday October 25th at 4pm.

American Rescue Plan Act

The Advisory Committee for the ARPA septic project met last week and there were a couple of changes and a couple of questions about the flow of money that needs to be vetted with the Working Group.

Airport and County legal team are working to finalize the agreement. They are very close.

Tristan asked that we communicate the impact of the program.

Manager's Report (see on file)

Meeting of County officials in Plymouth County was proposed for November 16th which is our mandatory meeting so I have requested if they can accommodate us for remote participation and they are looking into it.

Commissioners expressed interested to call another meeting between the Boards of Selectmen of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard as it was very informative.

Old Business

County commissioners meeting schedule: Christine proposed to start meeting once per month unless there is a need to meet in between. Keith said that it used to take so long if the meetings were only once per month, but he will not be serving come January. Tristan said that there are many updates that we could be getting, and we are still dealing with ARPA so the twice per month meeting might still be needed. The agreement was to wait until January so the new commissioners can make the decision. Dough asked to have written reports from sub-committees prior to the meeting so Commissioners can digest the information and not spend time dealing with it in the meeting.

Proposed legislation relative to the Treasurer position – we had very few responses to the advertising for a new treasurer and it would benefit us if we could go outside of Dukes County and to change the position from elected to appointed. Leon asked to separate the two questions.

Tristan/Keith moved to explore legislative options, so that the County Treasurer does not have to live in Dukes County. So voted. Leon – yes, Tristan – yes, Peter – yes, Keith – yes, Christine -yes.

Tristan/Keith moved to explore legislative changes needed to change the County Treasurer from elected to appointed by the County Commissioners. So voted. Leon – yes, Tristan – yes, Peter – yes, Keith – yes, Christine -yes.

Peter made a comment that in 2010 when there was finance review done by Department of Revenue, they did make a recommendation to at an opportune time file legislation to change the Treasurer from elected to appointed. The reasons were to:

1. Get the most qualified candidate versus someone who wins elections,

2. Conduct extensive interview and vet the candidates based on qualifications.
3. Access broader pool of candidates and attract someone with strong credentials ... by being able to look outside of Dukes County.

Keith commended that if the legislature will approve it, it will still be on the ballot for the 2024 elections for the voters to make the final vote and we are looking forward to better explain why this change is needed to gain the votes support for it. The situation the County is in currently strongly supports the need.

County Commissioners asked to find out what happened with the legislation that would allow the Manager of State Forrest to occupy the house in the State Forrest so we can have resident manager again. They would also like to invite someone from State Forrest to talk about the current conditions. Senator Cyr will be on island next Monday and Doug suggested to try to get some time with him.

New Business

Tristan is concerned about the price increases by the Steamship. Christine said that the presentation at the meeting yesterday was that excursion rates are not going up. They are also trying to accommodate more islanders and will increase the number of excursion slots in the morning boats and again later in the evening. They are also opening the excursion reservation not only day before and week before but also 30 days before.

Tristan mentioned that there will be a study of carrying capacity and what would be a tipping point of how much traffic can the island handle. There was discussion about some issues surrounding the short-term rentals as it was discussed at the meeting with Nantucket Board of Selectmen.

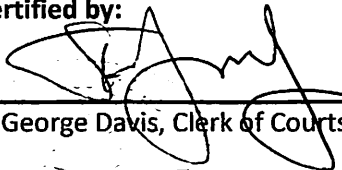
Dough Ruskin asked if there is any interested in the seventh County Commissioners seat as write in candidate. There are no known candidates. The early voting starts Saturday. Tristan commenced that to vote for all seven commissioners every two years there was only one contested raise since it was instituted. He is proposing to go back to four-year term and staggered terms.

Public Comment - none

Calendar: Dukes County Commissioners Meeting 11-2-2022 at 4:00PM

Leon/Tristan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:27PM. So voted. Tristan Israel – yes, Keith Chatinover – yes, Peter Wharton – yes, Leon Brathwaite – yes, Christine Todd - yes. Motion carries. The Dukes County Commission meeting was adjourned at 5:27PM.

Certified by:



T. George Davis, Clerk of Courts

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

- Meeting Agenda
- Manager's Report
- Marina Lent Application to the Health Council