

**Dukes County Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 3, 2020
4:30 – 6:49 PM**

REMOTE PARTICIPATION ONLY

Dukes County Commissioners Present: Tristan Israel – Chairman, Christine Todd – Vice Chair, John Cahill, Leon Brathwaite, and Keith Chatinover.

Other County Officials Present: Martina Thornton – County Manager, Ann Metcalf – Dukes County Treasurer, and Paulo DeOliveira – Register of Deeds, Connie Andrade – Assistant to County Manager, Bruce Montrose – Veterans services officer.

Others Present: Renee Lohman and Maureen Corrigan of Navigator Elder Homes of MV, Paddy Moore and Cindra Trish of Healthy Aging MV, Beka El-Deiry – Associate Commissioner for Youth, Sam Hart O The Trustees of Reservations, Karen Tewhey – Associate Commissioner on Homelessness, James Malkin – Steamship Authority representative, , Aaron Wilson – MV Gazette, Donald Leopold – candidate for County Commissioner.

Tristan Israel called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

Minutes

Minutes were not available at this meeting.

Navigator Greenhouse Development Presentation

Renee Lohman, President & CEO of Navigator Elder Homes of Martha's Vineyard, explained that the nonprofit organization will be sponsoring the Edgartown Greenhouse project. They are working in conjunction with Healthy Aging, Martha's Vineyard Hospital and Windemere Nursing Home. The five single-story skilled nursing homes would each house 14 elders, for a total of 70. The houses would form a circular cul-de-sac neighborhood. The proposed Greenhouse floor plan includes 14 private resident rooms with private baths and showers; the middle with open floor plan would have an open kitchen and dining area; easy access to outside spaces. This is a non-institutional design and layout with lots of natural light. All DPH requirements for Senior Nursing Facility have been met. There would be dementia-friendly features such as seamless continuity between interior and exterior spaces; the environment would be an integral component in cognitive and behavioral therapeutic approach; and landmarks would provide as many "hard-wired" cues that assist in navigation and orientation. All roofs will have solar panels. They are actively in development. Their site plan and architectural schematics are done. Determination of need is being launched soon. They have received approval to continue from Martha's Vineyard Hospital Board. They are currently focused on fundraising to cover the construction which could start in fall or winter of 2021 and last approximately 12-14 months. Potential grand opening is early 2022. The average daily cost for a resident is \$400 a day. They will be accepting all forms of payment for skilled nursing (Medicaid, Medicare, and private pay). Windemere and Vineyard residents will probably get first priority.

MOU regarding Norton Point Beach

Sam Hart reported that The Trustees of the Reservation have made an addition of merchandise sales (T-shirts and Sweatshirts) out of the gatehouse to their MOU with the County, which they would like to renew for one year. During Phase 1 of COVID restrictions, their revenue stream is down 40% on OSV Permit sales. They are expecting a 40-50% reduction in revenue at Norton Point. Daily passes are not being processed at this time, as they switch to an online system. They are working on a dune restoration project with a CVZ Grant and may need a letter of support from the Dukes County Commissioners.

Keith Chatinover made a motion to approve the MOU as presented. Christine Todd seconded the motion. So voted. Leon Braithwaite yes, Christine Todd aye, John Cahill aye, Keith Chatinover aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries.

Interview Candidates for County Commissioner Position

There was only one candidate who responded to the open County Commissioner position. In his interview, Donald Leopold shared that he is a 71-year-old year-round resident of Chilmark. He is a father of six and grandfather of six. He was a management consultant for both non-profit and for-profit organizations. He serves on the Human Resources Board for Chilmark, FINCOM Board, and AceMV Board. He further explained that he is interested in the position due to his appreciation of the town and the opportunity to make a contribution to the community. He also worked on the Climate Change working group with Jim Malkin. He is interested in the issues of climate change, housing, and homelessness. He has filed his papers to run in September. **Tristan Israel entertained a motion to fill the remaining term of late John Alley's position on the Dukes County Commission with Donald Leopold. Leon Braithwaite made the motion. Christine Todd and John Cahill seconded the motion. So voted. Leon Braithwaite yes, Keith Chatinover yes, John Cahill aye, Christine Todd aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries.**

Steamship Authority Update

James Malkin reported that through the end of May, passenger traffic is down 66%, cars are down 39%, and trucks are down 35%. Last 2 weeks the trend has increased a bit. On June 17, Vessel Nantucket will go into service as an additional vessel for the Island to increase capacity. There will then be 455 spaces available leaving Vineyard Haven and 329 spaces available leaving Woods Hole for Vineyard Haven. They hope to return to full capacity schedule as soon as possible. Oak Bluffs pier repairs are underway and should be finished by June 15. The Director of Marine Operations has discussed the need for increased preventative maintenance. Of the 5,000 trips that were run this year through the end of April, 8 trips were canceled for mechanical issues. Vineyard Haven transfer bridge cable froze and snapped. The issue was looked at, problem identified, and solutions are underway. There was a Gyrocompass failure recently that did not stop the vessel from completing its trip into Vineyard Haven. The broken Gyrocompass was tested in January. The new spare Gyrocompass was installed, stabilized and fixed once the vessel reached Vineyard Haven. The vessel was able to resume operations later that night. There is a mobile web ticketing and contactless payment systems being tested to reduce the need for physical contact. Woods Hole residents put together a petition for a public hearing regarding the ferry schedule to cancel the early morning ferry and reduce early morning traffic. Due to another petition made by 55 residents, there will be another public hearing regarding a transport plan to mitigate traffic issues in Falmouth, Bourne, and other southeastern communities. There was a letter from Boards of Health and Dukes County Health

Council regarding signage and announcements on ferries to ensure safety during COVID-19. Moving forward if there are specific questions for James Malkin they are to be sent in an email before the meeting in order to be best prepared to fully answer the public's concerns. There will be a letter to the editor submitted to both newspapers informing the public of this change.

FY2021 Budget Amendments

John Cahill, Leon Brathwaite, Ann Metcalf, and Martina Thornton met to discuss the County's budget for FY2021. Since there will be reduction in revenue sources, the County wants to ease the burden from COVID-19 on the Towns by adjusting the budget. With insurance premiums being renegotiated, travel costs being reduced due to online conference calls/meetings, and the Emergency Management Department budget being cut in half, there is now money being saved. The reduced budget with taking \$60,000 out that was originally proposed to the Towns, now has a surplus of \$1,700 without 3% step increases or 2.25% COLA for employees. Allocation of overhead is unknown, but it was expected to be about \$125,000. Step increases and COLA for employees in FY21 vary Town by Town. Budget cuts will affect about 14-15 employees. If no step increases, but the 2.25% COLA were given, the budget would increase by about \$10,163.00. If no COLA, but the 3% step increases for employees on the scale were given, the budget would increase by about \$9,213.00. Any remaining surplus other than 10% of the town assessment will go back to the Towns. **Christine Todd made a motion to approve the budget as presented with adjustments and the addition of COLA. Keith Chatinover seconded the motion. So voted. John Cahill yes, Christine Todd aye, Keith Chatinover aye, Tristan Israel aye, and Leon Braithwaite yes. Motion carries. Leon Brathwaite made a motion to ask the Towns for \$25,000. John Cahill seconded the motion. So voted. Leon Braithwaite yes, Keith Chatinover aye, Christine Todd aye, John Cahill aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries. Christine Todd made a motion to amend the revenue number reflecting the decrease in revenue from the Trustees by \$10,000. Leon Brathwaite seconded the motion. So voted. Keith Chatinover aye, Leon Braithwaite yes, Christine Todd aye, John Cahill aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries. With COLA put back into the budget, there is still \$70,000 that was cut from the County budget expenses compared to FY20.**

Allocation of Overhead

No update at this time since there was no Airport Commission meeting.

Homeless Prevention Update – Karen Tewhey

Cape & Islands homeless prevention funding gets about \$2 million a year housing for homeless individuals and families from a federal grant. Dukes County is eligible for about \$150,000 of that grant. Barnstable County is the responsible fiscal agent. Martha's Vineyard residents are eligible for the programs. Over the past year and a half, 12 homeless Vineyard residents' names have been put on the waitlist for housing. So far, only 6 homeless residents have relocated to Cape Cod in order to take advantage of the services offered. In order to be on the waitlist you must be homeless and have a disability (substance abuse, mental health issue, and/or a physical or mental disability). Barnstable is requesting a signed MOU with Dukes County as the CES. Karen Tewhey will be leaving her position as a representative. She recommends having other agencies (such as Martha's Vineyard Hospital, Martha's Vineyard Community Services, or Island Health Care) on the Island take on this dire role.

Manager's Report

- The Administrative Building is having two furnaces replaced with ducted mini splits, so heating and air conditioning will return within the next few weeks.
- The Grant for Portuguese interpreters has been granted by the Permeant Endowment Fund. The Treasurer's Office will establish a new fund for that incoming check.
- The pile of sand by Little Bridge on State Beach will be used by the Town
- The State beach rules and regulations sign is being reordered and replaced since it was stolen.

Social Justice Resolution

The Dukes County Commission released a statement regarding social justice. It reads: "The Dukes County Commission joins with Americans across the county in affirming the Black Lives Matter movement to make visible the pain of our fellow Americans as they condemn the extrajudicial killings of unarmed African Americans." **Christine Todd made a motion to approve and adopt the resolution presented. Leon Braithwaite seconded the motion. So voted. Keith Chatinover aye, Leon Braithwaite aye, Christine Todd aye, John Cahill aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries.** A memo will be sent out to the press informing them of this adopted resolution.

Appointment Process

To be discussed at the next meeting.

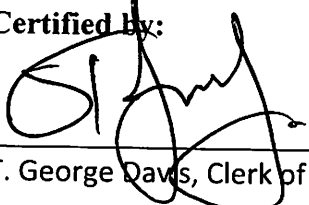
New Business

- The commissioners made a request for an update from the Martha's Vineyard Commission on the homeless study.
- The Complete Count Committee is encouraging residents to complete the 2020 Census.
- Talking points to be distributed to Commissioners for the Annual Town Meetings.

Adjournment

Christine Todd made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Keith Chatinover seconded the motion. So voted. John Cahill yes, Keith Chatinover aye, Christine Todd aye, Leon Braithwaite aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries. The Dukes County Commission meeting was adjourned at 6:49 PM. The next Dukes County Commissioners meeting is on Wednesday, June 17, 2020 at 4:30 PM.

Certified by:



T. George Davis, Clerk of Courts

Documents Discussed

- Navigator Elder Homes of MV presentation
- Dukes County MOU with The Trustees regarding Norton Point Beach
- Steamship Authority petitions
- Island Health Council letter
- Dukes County FY2021 budget summary with alternative amendment options
- Social Justice Resolution Statement