

Dukes County Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 19, 2020
4:30 – 6:25 PM
REMOTE PARTICIPATION ONLY

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

Other County Officials Present: Martina Thornton – County Manager, Ann Metcalf – County Treasurer, and Paulo DeOliveira – Register of Deeds.

Others Present: James Malkin- Steamship representative

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

Minutes

Tristan Israel entertained a motion to approve the Dukes County Commissioner's minutes from June 3, 2020, June 17, 2020, and August 5, 2020. Keith Chatinover moved the motion to approve all three sets of minutes. Christine Todd seconded the motion. Tristan Israel requested making a correction to the correct spelling of Sam Hart's name. So voted. John Cahill aye, Christine Todd aye, Keith Chatinover aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries.

Steamship Authority Update

There have been no mechanical breakdowns so far this summer. There is increasing COVID-19 notices broadcast on each trip and a mask requirement is still in place. There have been incidents where the State Police responded to people removing masks. Announcements and instructions to crew and passengers are to bring any concerns about masks to the Purser's Office. If they are still noncompliant, the Purser will notify local and State Police to take charge of the situation. Effective August 5, guidelines were given to each vessel captain for maximum capacity in order to ensure social distancing. There are two sets for each vessel based on fair or inclement weather. When there is inclement weather, fewer people are permitted to board each vessel. When there is fair weather, more people are permitted to board, but will still be less than the vessel's rated capacity. The VTA busses are running at 50% of their rated capacity with a strict mask protocol and requirement. There have been no further incidents since May. There is still a committed group in Woods Hole residents that believe traffic needs to be limited in Woods Hole and divert trucks and commodities through any other port than Woods Hole. This method was tried for 2 years and cost the SSA about \$5 million to run truck service through New Bedford. It failed because truckers did not wish to go through New Bedford at that time. Taskforce meetings have taken place to create a solution. There have been some cost overages on projects due to preventative maintenance to keep the vessels running. There were requests made to ensure that the SSA announcement script be standardized and improved in order to clearly inform passengers that masks are mandatory on the vessel and communities on the Islands. James Malkin requested that if there are specific issues that he should address to please try to inform him of the date, time, trip, and vessel the incident occurred in order to rectify it expeditiously.

FY2021 Budget Amendments and Line Transfers

Martina explained the proposed FY21 budget amendments.

- When budgeting, it is for 26 pay periods (520 days). However, sometimes the change of the fiscal year falls in the middle of the week. In FY2020 two extra pay days were unaccounted for. In FY2021 there will be one extra pay day that needs to be accounted for in each department's budget. Some of these departments have year-round employees that would get affected – Dukes County Manager's Department – 2 employees, Treasurer's Department – 3 employees, Veteran's Agent, and Register of Deeds – 4 employees. With the extra increase of salary lines, there is also increase in retirement and Medicare lines.
- When rounding out to full dollars, there was a dollar short from individual town's payments for the assessment. \$516,632.80, so the 80 cents were taken out.
- The County received a signed contract with the Department of Health for the Shared Service Planning Grant for the Boards of Health. There is an administrative fee that was written in, so the line under Grant and Program Administration Revenue was increased by \$5,000. The revenue line went from \$3,500 to \$8,600. There will be more revenue coming into this line as there are still negotiations on 3 other grants and it will be updated accordingly. There was also a small increase for the SNAP Grant.
- In Department 1800 for retiree life and health, the number is lower at \$12,528 of expenses that were accounted for in the summary spreadsheet that are now in OPEB contribution line. When the assessment was increased by 2.5% in 2019, the agreement was that the increase would go towards OPEB. The 2019 limit amount was \$12,293. If looking at the 2.5% increase from last year to this year it would be \$12,680. The current budget number is somewhere in-between those two numbers.
- There is a Registry of Deeds transfer of \$3,000 from the Repair and Services of Office Equipment line to Copying Equipment line. This is because \$15,000 was budgeted for new wide format equipment and that cost came out higher than anticipated. Maintenance for the first year was previously budgeted. However, there will be no maintenance cost due to the warranty for the first year so the savings on maintenance will cover the costs of the equipment.
- \$390, which is 1% of the Assistant Treasurer's salary, was added to the Longevity line of the Treasurer's Office budget to mark her 10th year of employment.
- There was a decision to take the hearing officer line out and decrease the time for temporary help this year in the Parking Clerk's budget. These changes helped to ensure that the budget is now more than covered by the anticipated revenue.
- Update on the County Management Department shows that with being a month and half into the year, the budget line of Miscellaneous Contractual is halfway spent and will need funds transferred by end of September or beginning of October in order to pay for someone to take meeting minutes.

Christine Todd made a motion to approve the FY 2021 budget changes as presented by the County Manager. John Cahill seconded the motion. So voted. So voted. Christine Todd aye, Donald Leopold aye, Keith Chatinover aye, John Cahill aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries.
Amendments now go before the County Advisory Board.

2020 Census Update

The unadjusted response rates for Massachusetts are north of 80% at this time. There was a spike in responses after twist tie bags were left on doors. There are Mobile Questionnaire Assistance Centers stationed at Cronig's and soon to be at a Brazilian supermarket with a Portuguese-speaking representative to educate and assist the public with completing their census. The new deadline for 2020 Census completion was changed to September 30, 2020.

State Beach Updates

There have been updates on the Phase 3 Reopening effective August 18, 2020. The 32nd Annual Oar & Paddle Regatta that was approved at the last meeting falls into low-risk sports category but now has limitations on spectators and participants. The new regulations will be sent to the Friends of Sengekontacket in order to ensure that they fully comply with all the requirements. The beach event guidelines proposed by John Cahill and Donald Leopold specify that events must (1) meet the Governor's safety requirements at the time of application and time of event; (2) no food; (3) have a plan developed by qualified Island event planner to enforce state regulations; (4) only have recognized Island events/organizations; and (5) have a qualitative assessment. **Tristan Israel appointed John Cahill, Donald Leopold, and Martina Thornton to the Event Subcommittee to evaluate upcoming event proposals and event guidelines.** County Commissioners expressed concern for lack of mask-wearing and social distancing on the beaches and bridges. An email was sent on July 24th to Edgartown Board of Health agents asking them to address the issue as Dukes County does not have jurisdiction over the Big Bridge to do so. There was a response that they received the message. County Commissioner have requested a follow up on this. **Christine Todd made a motion to contact the Edgartown officials, Governor's Office, DPH, DOT, and any other related agency to encourage stricter enforcement of social distancing and masks. Keith Chatinover seconded the motion. So voted. So voted. John Cahill aye, Donald Leopold aye, Christine Todd aye, Keith Chatinover aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries.**

Gosnold Updates

Keith Chatinover reported emailing the Town Clerk inviting Gosnold Board of Selectmen to the Dukes County Commission meeting. They declined the offer but said they might consider attending meetings in the fall. There was a spike in Gosnold COVID-19 cases but have since been okay. Their meeting invitation was extended to the middle of September or beginning of October.

Surplus Property

The budget was previously approved to purchase and replace the Xerox 510 wide format printer and scanner for the Registry of Deeds. Paulo is in the process of offering the two machines and computer to the Municipalities for acquisition. Edgartown and West Tisbury reported not having enough space for it. Oak Bluffs is looking into whether they have enough space for it. **Christine Todd made a motion to declare it a surplus. John Cahill seconded the motion. So voted. So voted. John Cahill yes, Donald Leopold aye, Keith Chatinover aye, Christine Todd yes, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries.**

Manager's Report

- Legislation was approved by the state to put the question on the ballot for changing the Treasurer's position from elected to appointed. Due to the Senate making technical amendments, it now needs to go back to the House. These include a section being wrongly referred to, and that the question will be put on the ballot by the Secretary of State, clarifying Senate's question, and changing the period by which the explanation has to be submitted to the Secretary of State from 90 days to 60 days because legislation must be passed before

explanation can be sent out. Martina is in contact with State Representative Dylan Fernandes' office which reached out to the Committee to see if it can be fast-tracked in order to appear on the ballots. **Tristan Israel made a motion to send a letter on behalf of the County Commissioners to the State Representative expressing frustration over the length of time it has taken to get the legislature through and inquiring about ways to help expedite it. John Cahill seconded the motion. So voted. So voted. Christine Todd aye, Keith Chatinover aye, John Cahill aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries.** Keith Chatinover will write the letter to be sent out.

Appointment Process

Keith Chatinover explained rank choice voting and the possibility of language that would require the advertise the appointment opportunity in a letter to the editor. **Christine Todd made a motion to codify the language that all appointments to Boards, unless internal, will be advertised and added into the Administrative Code. John Cahill seconded the motion. So voted. Christine Todd aye, Keith Chatinover aye, Donald Leopold aye, John Cahill aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries.** Christine Todd made a motion to adopt the procedure of rank choice voting for County Commissioner appointments with four or more applicants for a position. Keith Chatinover seconded the motion. So voted. Christine Todd aye, Keith Chatinover aye, Donald Leopold aye, John Cahill aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries.

Old Business

There are no updates at this time regarding allocation of overhead plan. John Cahill nominated Donald Leopold to the Courthouse Sub-committee.

New Business

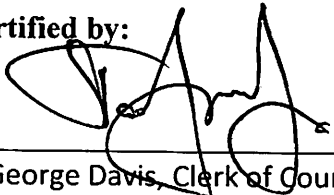
Tristan Israel suggested live streaming the Dukes County Commissioners meetings on Facebook for the public to watch in real-time.

Adjournment

Christine Todd made a motion to adjourn the meeting. John Cahill seconded the motion. So voted. John Cahill aye, Keith Chatinover aye, Christine Todd aye, Donald Leopold aye, and Tristan Israel aye. Motion carries. The Dukes County Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 6:25 PM.

The next Dukes County Commissioners meeting is on Wednesday, September 2, 2020 at 4:30 PM.

Certified by:



T. George Davis, Clerk of Courts

Documents Discussed

- Dukes County budget amendments
- Legislative update
- State Beach event regulations
- Rank choice voting video