

Dukes County Commission (DCC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 15, 2021
4:30 PM

REMOTE PARTICIPATION ONLY

Dukes County Commissioners Present: Christine Todd – Chair; John Cahill – Vice Chair; R. Peter Wharton; Tristan Israel, Leon Brathwaite, Keith Chatinover

Other County Officials Present: Martina Thornton – Dukes County Manager and Paulo DeOliveira – Register of Deeds, Bruce Montrose – Veterans Services Officer, Suzanne Jakel – Assistant to County Manager (left at 4:45pm), Ann Metcalf – County Treasurer, Martha Kane – Registry of Deeds

Others Present: Jim Malkin, Sean Driscoll – Steamship Authority, Emma Green Beach – MV Shellfish Group, Lucas Thors – MV Times, Louisa Hufstader – MV Gazette
Christine Todd called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

Minutes

Peter/Tristan made a motion to approve DCC Minutes of 9-1-2021 meetings as amended by Peter. So voted. John Cahill aye, R. Peter Wharton aye, Tristan Israel aye, Keith Chatinover aye, Leon Brathwaite aye and Christine Todd aye. Motion carries.

DC Regional Housing Authority Board – appointment of Associate member to represent the tenants – Arrielle Reid Faria

This appointment is at recommendation of the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority Board. She is a tenant.

..... appointment of Arrielle Reid Faria as Associate member to represent the tenants on the DC Regional Housing Authority Board. Leon Brathwaite aye John Cahill aye, Keith Chatinover aye, Tristan Israel aye, R. Peter Wharton aye, and Christine Todd aye.

(Note: motion was not moved or seconded – DCC will retake the vote on Set

DC Contributory Retirement System Board – appointment – James Hegarty

James Hegarty was the only candidate who applied. We also received letter of recommendation for James from Executive Director of the Retirement board (on file)

Leon/John moved to appoint James Hegarty to the Dukes County Contributory Retirement System board to fill an open seat. So voted. R. Peter Wharton aye, Tristan Israel aye, Keith Chatinover aye, John Cahill aye, Leon Brathwaite aye, and Christine Todd aye. Motion carries.

Martina introduced her new assistant Suzanne Jakel. Commissioner welcomed Suzanne.
MV Shellfish Group – proposal for FY2022 (see on file)

State has approved funding for FY2022 for shellfish propagation for Dukes County in the amount of \$50K. Emma Green Beach gave a quick review of the operations of the MV Shellfish Group. The proposal is specifically for shellfish propagation. Discussion followed.

Leon/Tristan moved to approve the proposal from MV Shellfish Group. So voted. John Cahill aye, R. Peter Wharton aye, Tristan Israel aye, Keith Chatinover aye, Leon Brathwaite aye, and Christine Todd aye, Motion carries.

ARPA Steering Committee – appointment of DCC member – was postponed until next meeting.

Steamship Authority Update – Jim Malkin

The SSA did not miss any trips this summer due to lack of staffing and managed to keep the boats running. Jim is working closely with Tisbury rep. John Cahill and Oak Bluffs rep. Joseph Sollitto. Summer and fall operating schedule will be on Thursday's Port Council agenda on Thursday looking to get proposals for other freight operators from off Cape locations to help ease the situation with trucks in Falmouth and Woods Hole. Jim updated DCC on various capital project the SSA is currently involved in, including various green energy improvements. There should not be a rate increase in next year. The building in Woods Hole must be replaced, this current building is only constructed under temporary permit. The new building needs to be higher due to flooding. This summer compared to 2019 the walk on passengers are down and the vehicle traffic is up.

There are 120 spaces that are held every day for preferred customers (often seasonal residents that can produce tree bills to a residence with their name on it) and excursion customers (year-round resident with a profile number that have related tax bills on MV) of which 90 days open up 7 days and additional 30 spaces open up 1 day before the date of travel at 7:30am when the office opens – both through on-line reservation system and ticket office. The "blue line" means on reservation only days (no "stand-bys") that there are 20-25 spaces that are held for Vineyard excursion customers only, who show up at the Woods Hole terminal and need to get home but also get off island.

There is no vaccination mandate for SSA employees, it would involve union negotiations before it can be implemented. The masks are required on the boat, but some passengers are not following the policy. The staff should be wearing masks, and it is being enforced.

DC Vaccination Policy

Martina introduces the proposed policy as discussed with the department heads (on file). She said that she was told from department heads that most employees are reporting that they are vaccinated already. There is one employee we know about that the policy would affect if we were to mandate vaccinations. Discussion followed. Martha Kane, employee at the Registry of Deeds requested DCC mandate vaccinations for all employees. Further discussion followed and options were clarified, including regular testing for non-vaccinated employees.

John/Tristan moved to ask Martina to draft a policy of mandating vaccinations by all employees under Dukes County jurisdiction similar to the West Tisbury policy that was circulated. John withdraws a motion. Tristan withdraws his second.

The board agreed to meet for a special meeting on Monday September 20th at 4pm to discuss this further and asked Martina to prepare a draft policy of mandating vaccinations for all county staff, which would include option to apply for legitimate exemptions (medical and religions) and to set the dates of compliance out far enough so people can get vaccinated with two shots in that timeframe.

Manager's Report (on file)

Martina went over the topics as stated in her report. The County Commissioners thanked Martina for her initiative in establishing the position of emergency management coordinator as it is important steps towards the towns working together. They want her to continue this work, are agreeing that a proposal is developed for the county to host the position and are supporting of Martina helping the emergency managers to formulate an application for ARPA funding to be submitted to the Steering Committee for this position to be increased from part-time to full-time with benefits for the next three years.

The board also agreed with Martina continuing her involvement in looking into brining a municipal fiber cable to MV and helping the group formulate ARPA application to support this initiative.

County Advisory Board will meet on Friday September 17th at 2:30pm via zoom. Agenda with topics to be discussed is already posted on the county website.

Public Comment - There were no public or press comments.

Keith/Tristan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. So voted. John Cahill aye, R. Peter Wharton aye, Tristan Israel aye, Keith Chatinover aye and Christine Todd aye. Motion carries.

The Dukes County Commission meeting was adjourned at 6:08 PM.

The next Dukes County Commissioners Meeting is on Monday September 20th at 4pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, September 15, 2021 at 4:30 PM.

Certified by:



T. George Davis, Clerk of Courts

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

- Meeting Agenda
- Manager's Report 9-15-2021

- James Hegarty Resume
- Letter from Kelly McCracken regarding Retirement Board appointment
- Letter from employee with concerns relative to mandating vaccinations
- Arrielle Reid Faria Application
- E-mail info from David Vigneault, Exec. Director of DC Regional Housing Authority
- MV Shellfish Group proposal
- Vaccination Policy draft