

# Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission

MINUTES  
REGULAR SESSION  
MEETING OF MARCH 7, 2022

via remote technology

CALL TO ORDER: 3:00 pm

LAND BANK COMMISSIONERS PRESENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Steven Ewing, Pamela Goff, Wesley Mott, Kristen Reimann, Sarah Thulin, Nancy Weaver

LAND BANK COMMISSIONERS ABSENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Peter Wells

STAFF PRESENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Harrison Kisiel, Cynthia Krauss, James Lengyel, Julie Russell

OTHERS PRESENT DURING THE SESSION

Genevieve Abbott, Anne Bennett, Melissa Breese, Prudence Burt, Sharon Cooke, Philip Cordella, Anthony Cordray, Paulo DeOliveira, Celia Gillis, Ebba Hierta, Ronnie Matsil, Susan Murphy, Gary Reichart, Richard Seelig and others

PRESENTATION OF THE WARRANT

Warrant no. 2022-34 was made available for the Commission's inspection.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Hearing no proposed additions, Mrs. Goff declared the agenda approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 28, 2022

By a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to approve the minutes as written.

COUNTY AND LAND BANK COMMISSION TREASURERS' REPORTS

None

*Commissioner Peter Wells joined the meeting at this time.*

TRANSFER FEE REVENUES

Revenues for the week ending March 4, 2022: \$578,000.00

NEW BUSINESS

1. Agency Administration: Personnel and Staffing

The Commission conducted a second-reading on proposed amendments to this policy, details of which are contained in the minutes of February 28, 2022.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to approve the amendments and thus amend the policy.

2. Agency Land Management: Dogs

The Commission discussed the possibility of an agency-wide policy calling for all dogs to be leashed when on land bank lands; this subject was most recently discussed at its February 28, 2022 meeting.

Mr. Ewing noted (1.) the great increase in the number of dogs on the Vineyard; (2.) that he leashes his dog, owing to her personality ; and (3.) the he generally favors leashing.

Mrs. Reimann stated that she does not support a blanket policy; she carries a leash so that she can leash her dogs when others approach.

Ms. Weaver (1.) referenced a March 3, 2022 letter from Vasha Brunelle regarding improving behavior on the part of dog-owners; (2.) noted that the Tisbury animal control officer (ACO) favors leashing and has the power to ticket those in non-compliance; and (3.) stated that she herself sees dog excrement everywhere.

Mr. Wells stated he believes that it is time for blanket leash rule and that "there is no such thing as dogs under voice control."

Mrs. Thulin advocated for signs at kiosks and along trails educating people as to why it is important to leash dogs; rather than amend each management plan the Commission has the power to instruct its staff to erect signs encouraging greater cooperation.

Mrs. Goff recalled that, during the creation of the land bank, proponents pledged to voters that the institution would be receptive to their interests and

stated that pet exercise is part of the “healthy culture of the Vineyard” and imparts a “sense of freedom.” She could envision a sign informing visitors that some people are afraid of dogs and that others may have leashed dogs that don’t interact well with others, such that dogs should be leashed when someone approaches.

Mrs. Reimann spoke to the concept of using the website to inform visitors as to how to be a responsible dog owner, treating off-leashing as a privilege.

Mr. Ewing asked about experiences. Mr. Mott stated that he had to discontinue walking at the Trade Wind Fields Preserve, as his dogs were attacked and their owners were disagreeable. Ms. Russell stated (1.) that the land bank shorebird monitor reports that dogs are “consistently” off-leash when arriving on the beach and are only leashed when they are observed; (2.) that Massachusetts Audubon reports, generally, a 50% compliance with its leashing requirement; (3.) that the land bank goatherd reports that, despite signage, none of the dogs approaching the pastures is leashed and that he has had to intervene to avoid a goat stampede; and (4.) that the National Park Service reports that dog impacts have been detected 50 to 100 meters from trails. Mr. Kisiel stated that the land bank should be wary of instituting a rule that can’t be policed — people can be encouraged to police themselves.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to direct staff to return, a future meeting, with options for signage and education.

## PUBLIC INPUT

### 1. Agency Land Management: Dogs

The Commission received two letters on this subject: (1.) Vasha Brunelle, dated March 3, 2022 ; and (2.) Prudence Burt, dated March 6, 2022.

Melissa Breese spoke to the inability of some disabled and aged people to use leashes and hoped that there would not be a blanket policy.

Philip Cordella spoke to designating dog owners as ambassadors to educate others and that dogs on upland trails do not impact sensitive habitats.

Ebba Hierta spoke to voice control as “almost a myth” except in the case of old dogs and that it “ruins” her day to have to raise her walking stick and then end up in a confrontation with a dog owner.

Anne Bennett spoke to the Trade Wind Fields Preserve as formerly “the wild

west” and “scary” and appreciates the attempt to find a solution “for all of us.”

Gary Reichart spoke to compromise — maybe dogs would be unleashed sometimes and not others.

Ronnie Matsil spoke to how Vineyarders, as opposed to visitors, would be more apt to be consistent in their behavior and that perhaps more monitors would be needed for those who don't understand.

Anthony Cordray, the West Tisbury ACO, spoke to the town's experience at the Lamberts Cove Beach and how enforcement, via personnel, was more effective than signage.

Celia Gillis spoke to the value of having different rules for different properties.

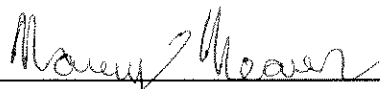
Prudence Burt spoke to “countless” examples of bad behavior and the need for signage to focus on users' doing “the right thing,” with the Commission to check in after six months or so.

#### ENDORSEMENT OF THE WARRANT

The Commission endorsed Warrant no. 2022-34.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

By a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing the purchase, lease, exchange or value of real property. Mrs. Goff stated that the subjects to be discussed are the purchase or value of real property and declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Commission. She further announced that the Commission would not reconvene in regular session after the conclusion of the executive session. The Commission entered executive session at 4:26 pm.

certification:   
Nancy Weaver, Secretary