



Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission

MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
MEETING OF MARCH 27, 2023

via remote technology

CALL TO ORDER: 3:00 pm

LAND BANK COMMISSIONERS PRESENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Steven Ewing, Pamela Goff, Sarah Thulin, Nancy Weaver, Peter Wells

LAND BANK COMMISSIONERS ABSENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Wesley Mott, Kristen Reimann

STAFF PRESENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Harrison Kisiel, James Lengyel, Julie Russell

OTHERS PRESENT DURING THE SESSION

Sharon Cooke, Philip Cordella, Thomas Humphrey (*Vineyard Gazette*), Eunki Seonwoo (*Martha's Vineyard Times*)

PRESENTATION OF THE WARRANT

Warrant no. 2023-42 was made available for the Commission's inspection.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MARCH 6, 2023

By a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted in a roll call vote four in favor, none opposed and Mr. Ewing abstaining to approve the minutes as written.

COUNTY AND LAND BANK COMMISSION TREASURERS' REPORTS

None

TRANSFER FEE REVENUES

Revenues for the week ending March 10, 2023: \$273,811.00

Revenues for the week ending March 17, 2023: \$674,960.00

Revenues for the week ending March 24, 2023: \$431,519.51

NEW BUSINESS

1. Agency Land Management: Farmland Leases

The Commission discussed the requests-for-proposals for farm leases at various properties — Featherstone Farm; John Presbury Norton Farm; Quenonica Preserve North; Tea Lane Farm; and Wapatequa Woods Reservation — that Commissioners approved at their February 27, 2023 meeting. Mr. Kisiel reported that no bids were received for Featherstone Farm or John Presbury Norton Farm. Bids for the others follow.

2. Quenonica Preserve (Town of Edgartown)

The Commission reviewed the sole bid received for an agricultural lease, comprising 5.0 acres, at Quenonica North: (1.) Johanna Douglas, March 23, 2023. She proposes to graze beef cattle there; the pasture is partially fenced and she asks whether the land bank would be willing to complete the fencing. Mr. Kisiel noted that the preserve contains multiple pastures; only one is not fully enclosed (viz., 75%) — he stated that it would be inexpensive for the land bank to complete the task and that doing so would also have a land bank benefit if, for instance, the land bank ever wished to use it for its own livestock. He recommended approval of the lease and the completion of the fencing.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to accept the staff recommendation.

Commissioner Pamela Goff exited the video portion of the meeting at this time, in order to avoid any possible appearance of conflict-of-interest.

3. Tea Lane Farm (Town of Chilmark)

The Commission reviewed the three bids received for an agricultural lease here, comprising 1.0 acre: (1.) Max Eagan and John Thurgood, March 21, 2023; (2.) Danielle Whiting, March 23, 2023; and (3.) Maggie Craig, March 24, 2023.

Messrs. Eagan and Thurgood propose using the leasehold for cropland, poultry pasturing and composting. Ms. Whiting proposes to use it for cropland. Ms. Craig proposes to use it for the production of biochar. Mr. Kisiel recommended approval of Messrs. Eagan and Thurgood's proposal. After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to accept the staff recommendation.

Mrs. Goff returned to the meeting at this time.

4. Wapatequa Woods Reservation (Town of Tisbury)

The Commission reviewed the sole bid received for an agricultural lease here, comprising 2.0 acres: (1.) Marcanthony Piland, March 13, 2023. He proposes to graze poultry.

Mr. Kisiel reported that he was unable to complete reference-checking here and that this matter will be placed on a future Commission agenda.

5. Tisbury Meadow Preserve (Town of Tisbury)

Mr. Kisiel noted that Johanna Douglas had expressed interest in a possible agricultural lease here, which the Commission had most recently discussed at its March 6, 2023 meeting, but withdrew her interest in favor of the Quenomica Preserve North lease discussed earlier in the meeting. The Commission took no action.

6. Southern Woodlands Reservation (Town of Oak Bluffs)

The Commission reviewed deeds effectuating the swap of properties here between the land bank and town, approved by the Commission at its March 29, 2021 meeting and by the Oak Bluffs Town Advisory Board at its October 5, 2004 meeting. The town meeting vote was unconditional (e.g., no citing of nitrogen credits; no dedication of its received property to affordable housing). Commissioners also reviewed chapter 161 of the acts of 2022, where the commonwealth authorized the conveyances.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to authorize its chairman, vice-chairman and/or secretary-treasurer to execute the deed, after counsel has finalized it in accordance with the votes of the town meeting and legislature.

The following members of the Edgartown Town Advisory Board were present for the following discussion: Michael Donaroma, Steven Ewing, Kate Foster, Donna Goodale, James Kelleher, Christina Miller.

7. Quenomica Preserve (Town of Edgartown)

The Commission and its Edgartown Town Advisory Board met in joint session to review a preliminary draft management plan for this property, prepared by staff.

Discussion occurred as to (1.) the kayak tie-off, which was proposed in order to dissuade visitors from hauling boats over the coastal bank; (2.) the reason for the prohibition on dogs, viz., to avoid dog-otter interactions, as Quenomica South is an area of high otter activity; (3.) the designation of the kayak area as a landing and not a launch, as the Kanomika Road is not a fitting access road for a launch (the launch in the neighborhood is at Wilson's

Landing); (4.) the neighbors' concerns that are apt to be raised at the public hearing; (5.) the planned limitation on horses at Quenomica South; and (6.) the nature of the duck blind that the land bank is proposing to construct, viz., a year-round wooded platform into which sides will be inserted during the duck-hunting season.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously in a roll call vote (1.) to approve the plan as a draft; and (2.) to schedule a public hearing for 4:00 pm on April 10, 2023 to take comment on it. By a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote likewise to approve the plan.

All of the members of the Edgartown Town Advisory Board, with the exception of Mr. Ewing and Mrs. Miller, departed the meeting at this time.

8. Agency Land Management: Wildfire Mitigation Planning

The Commission was to have been visited by Daniel Doyle of the Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC) to discuss the Dukes County Fire Council's wildfire mitigation planning, but he had yet to arrive. By a motion made and seconded, the Board voted unanimously in a roll call vote to continue this matter until its next meeting.

Commissioner Wesley Mott joined the meeting during the following discussion.

PUBLIC INPUT

1. Agency Administration: Public Input

Philip Cordella spoke to the (1.) the agency warrants; and (2.) the Quenomica Preserve draft management plan.

NEW BUSINESS (continued)

9. Agency Land Management: Wildfire Mitigation Planning

Daniel Doyle of the MVC joined the meeting at this time and Mrs. Goff invited him to make his presentation. This matter had been most recently discussed at the Commission's October 3, 2022 meeting. He stated that the planners were looking for incentives to clear lands of fuels and have been studying the benefits — nitrogen uptake in ponds; amendment to soils that are otherwise depleted; and absorption of storm runoff in swales — of biochar production. He invited Commissioners to an April 12 workshop on the subject, details of which he will separately distribute.

ENDORSEMENT OF THE WARRANT

The Commission endorsed Warrant no. 2023-42.

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 3:51 pm.

certification: 
Nancy Weaver, Secretary