

Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission

MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
MEETING OF OCTOBER 30, 2023

via remote technology

CALL TO ORDER: 3:00 pm

LAND BANK COMMISSIONERS PRESENT AT CALL TO ORDER

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

LAND BANK COMMISSIONERS ABSENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Kristen Reimann, Peter Wells

STAFF PRESENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Harrison Kisiel, James Lengyel, Julie Russell

OTHERS PRESENT DURING THE SESSION

Philip Cordella, Samuel Houghton (*Martha's Vineyard Times*), Thomas Humphrey (*Vineyard Gazette*)

PRESENTATION OF THE WARRANT

Warrant no. 2024-19 was made available for the Commission's inspection.

Commissioner Peter Wells joined the meeting at this time.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 23, 2023

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

TRANSFER FEE REVENUES

Revenues for the week ending October 27, 2023: \$475,000.00

NEW BUSINESS

1. Squibnocket Pond Reservation (Town of Aquinnah)

Ecologist Julie Russell was present to update Commissioners on progress in implementing this property's management plan.

She reported that the staff has been focusing on two matters: (1.) revising the plan so as to incorporate into it all of the stipulations of the commonwealth's natural heritage program, as was mandated by the environmental affairs secretary in her approval; and (2.) "superdefining" the wetlands and their resource areas — no small task on a property of this size — so that there are no snarls when the land bank and Sheriff's Meadow Foundation begin their peregrination through the permit process (which will trigger the wetlands protection act; various endangered-species regulations; and various districts of critical planning concern, viz., island roads, coastal and town-wide Aquinnah). The goal is to minimize boardwalks — and thereby maintenance — on the trail system, which will ultimately tally out between 3 and 5 miles on this 335.7-acre property.

As for timing, Ms. Russell stated that the staff hopes to finish the site evaluations before winter and then file for permits thereafter. Mr. Kisiel speculated about a winter 2024-2025 opening. As no action was necessary, the Commission took none.

2. Agency Land Management: Wildfire Mitigation Planning

The Commission continued, from its October 23, 2023 meeting, its discussion of a proposal from the Martha's Vineyard Commission and the Dukes County Fire Council to clear along the main spine trail in the Wapatequa Woods Reservation. A site-visit took place on October 27, 2023.

Ms. Weaver summarized the attendance at the site-visit and noted (1.) that no one from the town fire departments attended or commented; (2.) that the use of the term "firebreak" is a misnomer as the goal is not so much as to stop the spread of a fire as it is to supply access for fire vehicles; and (3.) that it appeared that the project was proposed at Wapatequa Woods because it "fit the grant application" and not necessarily because the venue was condign. A motion was made and seconded to disapprove the proposal.

Staff input was requested. Mr. Kisiel stated that, in lieu of this particular proposal, the land bank crew could identify and create a 12-wide corridor for such vehicles that would be subtle: trees in the corridor would be removed

but not underbrush.

Mrs. Thulin stated that she was concerned about any specifications or requirements that might accompany the grant. Mr. Mott asked if the proposal fit into an overall wildfire mitigation plan for the island, to which Mr. Kisiel replied that "the plan is not at that point." Mrs. Goff stated that the reservation, as is, is an asset to the neighborhood and that the land bank itself should cooperate with the larger planning but be prepared to undertake its own projects on its own land.

Mrs. Goff called for a vote on the pending motion; it carried unanimously in a roll call vote.

3. Agency Administration: Election of Officers

The Commission conducted its annual election of officers.

By a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to appoint Mr. Mott as chairman; Ms. Weaver as vice-chairman; and Mrs. Reimann as secretary-treasurer.

PUBLIC INPUT

None

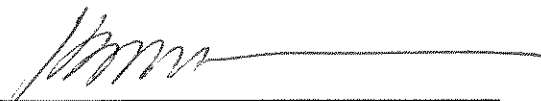
ENDORSEMENT OF THE WARRANT

The Commission endorsed Warrant no. 2024-19.

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 3:44 pm.

certification:



Kristen Reimann, Secretary