



Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission

MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
MEETING OF JANUARY 26, 2026

via remote technology

CALL TO ORDER: 3:00 pm

LAND BANK COMMISSIONERS PRESENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Steven Ewing, Frederick Khedouri, 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

OTHERS PRESENT DURING THE SESSION

Philip Cordella, James Graham, William Smith

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Hearing no proposed additions, Ms. Weaver declared the agenda approved as presented.

Commissioner Kristen Reimann joined the meeting during the following discussion.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 12, 2026

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

TRANSFER FEE REVENUES

Revenues for the week ending January 16, 2026: \$353,685.74

Revenues for the week ending January 23, 2026: \$148,500.00

OLD BUSINESS

1. Agency Land Management: Research Request

The Commission continued, from its January 12, 2026 meeting, its discussion of a request from Tick Free Martha's Vineyard to launch a number of drones from various land bank properties; a motion from that meeting is pending.

Mr. Kisiel reported that, upon inquiry, he learned that Tick Free Martha's Vineyard plans (1.) to conduct its research between February 15 and March 7; (2.) to give the land bank 48 hours' notice, so that details can be posted on the land bank website; (3.) to maintain an average height of 200 feet, never penetrating too close to treeline; and (4.) to park in the land bank trailheads and walk into the interior of the properties. Mr. Khedouri stated that complaints by the public, if any, ought to be swiftly forwarded to the operators; for instance, if a drone is launched on a land bank property but then uses a neighbor's airspace the operators should be informed if the neighbors report their having been disturbed.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to approve the request, with the following conditions: (1.) that notice of the event, with dates and details, be advertised by the proponents in the *Martha's Vineyard Times* and *Vineyard Gazette*; (2.) that like information be posted on the land bank website; (3.) that no drone be permitted to operate on land bank land for an hour on either side of dawn or dusk, so as to avoid disturbing bats and owls; (4.) that no drone will descend deeper than twenty-five (25) feet above the treeline; (5.) that no motorized vehicles will be utilized on any land bank property beyond the trailheads; and (6.) that every reasonable effort will be made to launch away from any abutters' dwellings.

Commissioners agreed that they were willing to make this exception to their *Public use of land bank properties* policy on the grounds that the undertaking (1.) is for research and not recreation; (2.) is designed to minimize impact on land bank visitors; and (3.) will advance important public health objectives. All activities will be coordinated with land bank staff; data are to be supplied to the institution when reasonably available.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Agency Land Management: Summer Use Reports

The Commission reviewed a January 14, 2026 package of summer use reports, prepared by staff, containing data and details about this past

season's public use of the (1.) Aquinnah Headlands Preserve (Moshup Beach); (2.) Chilmark Pond Preserve; (3.) Great Rock Bight Preserve; (4.) James Pond Preserve; (5.) Manaquayak Preserve; (6.) Sepiessa Point Reservation; (7.) Tashmoo Preserve; and (8.) Wilfrid's Pond Preserve. The reports will be distributed to the respective Town Advisory Boards.

PUBLIC INPUT

1. Agency Administration: Public Input

Philip Cordella stated (1.) that he didn't receive the meeting materials yet; (2.) that if the land bank meetings were recorded the Edgartown selectmen could benefit from seeing how well the land bank did in making its decision and determination about the drones; and (3.) that he wonders when the data as to airplane landings at the Trade Wind Fields Preserve will be available.

James Graham noted that there are restrictions as to the use of drones near airfields.

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. Ms. Weaver 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 3:15 pm.

certification: Steven Ewing
Steven Ewing, Secretary