



Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission

MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
MEETING OF FEBRUARY 1, 2021

via remote technology

CALL TO ORDER: 3:00 pm

LAND BANK COMMISSIONERS PRESENT AT CALL TO ORDER

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

LAND BANK COMMISSIONERS ABSENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Wesley Mott

STAFF PRESENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Cynthia Krauss, James Lengyel, Ian Peach

OTHERS PRESENT DURING THE SESSION

Philip Cordella

PRESENTATION OF THE WARRANT

Warrant no. 2021-38 was made available for the Commission's inspection.

PUBLIC INPUT

Commissioner Wesley Mott joined the meeting during the following discussion.

1. Agency Administration: Public Input

Mrs. Thulin stated that hereafter five minutes per individual per meeting will be allocated. Philip Cordella spoke to (1.) recording of Commission meetings; and (2.) Commissioner contacts on the land bank website.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 25, 2021

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

COUNTY AND LAND BANK COMMISSION TREASURERS' REPORTS

None

TRANSFER FEE REVENUES

Revenues for the week ending January 29, 2021: \$724,220.00

TRANSFER FEE HEARINGS

1. Izael Silva (Town of Oak Bluffs)

The Commission conducted a hearing on Mr. Silva's request for a one-year extension of the timetable by which he must domicile on his "m" property (transfer no. 59575). Mrs. Thulin opened the hearing at 3:10 pm.

The Commission reviewed the contents of an January 18, 2021 email from Mr. Silva in which he reports that he is the builder of his house and that it is still under construction. Mrs. Thulin closed the hearing at 3:11 pm.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously to grant a one-year extension, such extension to terminate on December 5, 2021.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Nancy Weaver recused herself and joined the general public as an observer, in order to avoid any possible appearance of conflict-of-interest.

1. Beech Tree Preserve (Town of Tisbury)

The Commission reviewed a January 28, 2021 staff memorandum summarizing the sole bid received for the installation of lagoon-access stairs here: (1.) Sebago Dock and Lift, Inc., \$34,988.68. The budget for this line item contains \$34,700; the budget reserve is available for the small overage.

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

Ms. Weaver returned to the meeting at this time.

2. James Pond Preserve (Town of West Tisbury)

The Commission discussed the status of the three buildings — main house;

cottage; storage shed — on this preserve. None is winterized and Mr. Peach outlined the challenges of upgrading them for some possible conservation use. The preliminary management plan calls for the land bank to “evaluate whether any of the buildings, or portion thereof, is worth retaining as staff housing; remove all those deemed unworthy and renaturalize site thereafter.”

Discussion occurred. Mrs. Reimann expressed interest in a housing component here — a “24-hour presence” on a property that is apt to be well-used. Mrs. Goff offered that using the main house as a dormitory had occurred to her. Mrs. Thulin noted that the main house sits prominently on the landscape.

Commissioners agreed that staff should study the matter further and return with recommendations and figures.

3. Southern Woodlands Reservation (Town of Oak Bluffs)

The Commission discussed phase-one planning here for its workshop upgrade and whether it should hire a surveyor to prepare a current-status site-plan — to serve as a base for future planning — or whether staff should prepare such a site-plan in-house.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to issue an invitation-for-bids for a surveyor to prepare a plan of the workshop area and its environs that will identify buildings and driveways; topography; wooded and grassy areas; and the like.

4. Tisbury Meadow Preserve (Town of Tisbury)

The Commission reviewed a January 27, 2021 staff memorandum regarding the planned upgrading of the Mai Fane House here; this matter was most recently discussed at the Commission's October 26, 2020 meeting.

The memorandum details a series of cost changes submitted by Thomas Brennan Homes, which had submitted the sole bid for this project. Some arose from requests by the land bank and others from the building code. The price would rise from \$225,002 to \$252,652. Funds for the overage would be drawn from underexpended line items in the *Land Upgrades* section of the budget.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote (1.) to accept the cost changes; and (2.) to authorize the execution of the land bank's standard contract here, tailored as needed to project circumstances.

5. Oak Bluffs Trail Planning

The Commission discussed its March 12, 2013 agreement with the town for the Old Holmes Hole Path. It applies to the portion of the ancient way located between the County and Barnes Roads; the extant portion east of the County Road was, however, deliberately excluded, as it terminated at a dead-end.

No longer. The Sheriff's Meadow Foundation recently arranged for a public trail connecting the dead-end point and the Vineyard Haven Road and it would now be sensible to ask the town to amend the 2013 agreement so as to include the easterly stretch of the ancient way. The Oak Bluffs Town Advisory Board, at its January 29, 2021 meeting, voted to recommend that the land bank enter into such amended agreement.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote (1.) to accept the Board's recommendation; and (2.) to direct staff to implement it.

6. Sepiessa Point Reservation (Town of West Tisbury)

Mr. Wells asked for an update on this matter, most recently discussed at the Commission's January 25, 2021 meeting. Mr. Lengyel stated that he had telephoned West Tisbury animal control officer Anthony Cordray to report the Commission's full support of his enforcing the town's dog bylaws on land bank lands.

Mr. Peach reported, following a question from Mr. Wells, that the policy at Sepiessa Point is that dogs must be leashed during wildlife nesting season (generally, April 1 - August 30) but not otherwise. Mr. Wells, citing examples, stated that voice control doesn't always work. Mrs. Goff stated that she and many others enjoy walking their unleashed dogs during the off-season. Mrs. Reimann agreed but stated that it will be important to hear from Mr. Cordray if he encounters problems. The Commission took no action, pending future possible reports from Mr. Cordray as to his observations.

PUBLIC INPUT

1. Agency Administration: Public Input

Mrs. Thulin stated that hereafter public input will take place at the end of the meeting. Philip Cordella spoke to (1.) his dogs; and (2.) Commissioner contacts on the land bank website. Commissioners expressed concern about their being possibly asked to discuss land bank matters outside the aegis of a public meeting — as with other island governmental agencies, the proper conduit for communications from the public is via mail or email to the agency itself, as they are then distributed to Commissioners.

ENDORSEMENT OF THE WARRANT

The Commission endorsed Warrant no. 2021-38.

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. Thulin 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 4:02 pm.

certification: Wesley F. Mott
Wesley Mott, Secretary