



Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission

MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
MEETING OF NOVEMBER 2, 2020

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

James Lengyel

OTHERS PRESENT DURING THE SESSION

None

PRESENTATION OF THE WARRANT

Warrant no. 2021-22 was made available for the Commission's inspection.

PUBLIC INPUT

None

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 OCTOBER 26, 2020

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 30, 2020: \$677,070.00

NEW BUSINESS

1. Eachpoquassit Hill Preserve (Town of West Tisbury)

Staff reported that the Island Autism Group (IAG) has asked the Commission to supply a letter of support to accompany its various applications for funding here.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to do so. Such letter will emphasize the land bank's appreciation that IAG's plan will restore active farming to this property.

2. Sepiessa Point Reservation (Town of West Tisbury)

Staff reported that abutter Thomas Flexner needs to upgrade the utility service to his house, a right for which is contained in a July 15, 1993 road relocation agreement. The purpose of the agreement was to discontinue vehicular use of the Clam Point Road in favor of an access road that the land bank wished to construct connecting the Tiah's Cove Road and the land bank boat slide. The access road was then installed and all vehicular use transferred to it; the utilities remained under the Clam Point Road.

Comcast recently sought to upgrade this service but determined, in consultation with land superintendent Ian Peach and the West Tisbury Conservation Commission, that doing so under the Clam Point Road would affect wetland resources along the Tisbury Great Pond. Doing so along the access road would, instead, be neutral.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to inform Mr. Flexner that it interprets the agreement to mean that utilities and vehicular use were conjunctively relocated and that his utility right is therefore located along the access road. Commissioners agreed that trenching *per se* is intrusive enough that it would be prudent to relocate all Clam Point Road utilities at the same time. Mr. Peach will so inform Mr. Flexner, and will likewise ensure that the land bank will be consulted during installation so as to be certain that the access road surfacing and shoulder is not unduly affected.

PUBLIC INPUT

None

ENDORSEMENT OF THE WARRANT

The Commission endorsed Warrant no. 2021-22.

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 reconvene in regular session after the conclusion of the executive session. The Commission entered executive session at 3:16 pm.

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION: 3:26 pm

Commissioner Peter Wells had joined the meeting during executive session.

NEW BUSINESS (continued)

3. Arrowhead Farm (Town of West Tisbury)

Per a request from Mr. Wells, the Commission discussed its June 17, 2020 preliminary management plan here, in particular the following element: *discontinue or, if not possible, greatly scale back existing public equestrian business [a] in favor of agricultural production and [b] depending in part on [future] lessee's plan for premises.* He stated that this property may possibly be the last chance for any local equestrian group to find a permanent home.

Asked to explain the history behind the preliminary management plan, Mr. Lengyel reported that the land bank has always prioritized actual active agriculture (e.g., crops, livestock for marketing, etc.) over recreational horse use and that the above excerpt honors this history but also declares the land bank's openness to considering some sort of adjuvant equestrian use as a possible supplemental part of a larger agricultural enterprise.

Mrs. Goff stated (1.) that she believed that a local equestrian group — the Rising Ride Therapeutic Equestrian Center — recently found a home at Misty Meadows Farm in West Tisbury; and (2.) that it was important to the transaction that the land bank take ownership, at the end of the life-estate, of a "clean" property, viz., one that did not have any businesses claiming a right to remain on what at that point would expressly be land bank land.

Mr. Ewing stated that he agreed that productive farming was the top goal; he also asked about the level of demand for such a stable. Mrs. Goff stated that it depended on the economy: in the past people had backyard horses, but

now costs are high. Ms. Weaver reported that she had asked a horse-owning friend about horses and horse-keeping; this individual characterized them as "luxury pets" that working people cannot generally afford. Ms. Weaver also questioned whether such a non-agricultural building would transgress the definition of passive recreation.

Mr. Wells stated that the burdensome economics of horse-tending is in fact a justification for retaining such a business — which, he noted, would be overseen by a lessee and not the land bank. He believes that the land bank should continue to examine this prospect.

No action was taken, as the matter is at this time mooted by the likely length of the life-estate.

ADJOURNMENT

By a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to adjourn. 3:44 pm

certification: Wesley T. Mott
Wesley Mott, Secretary