



Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission

MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 4, 2024

via remote technology

CALL TO ORDER: 2:30 pm

LAND BANK COMMISSIONERS PRESENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Steven Ewing, Frederick Khedouri, Wesley Mott, Kristen Reimann, Sarah Thulin,
Nancy Weaver, Peter Wells

LAND BANK COMMISSIONERS ABSENT AT CALL TO ORDER

None

STAFF PRESENT AT CALL TO ORDER

Winston Bell, Harrison Kisiel, James Lengyel, Julie Russell

OTHERS PRESENT DURING THE SESSION

David Foster

PRESENTATION OF THE WARRANT

Warrant no. 2025-11 was made available for the Commission's inspection.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Hearing no proposed additions, Mr. Mott declared the agenda approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 26, 2024

By a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted in a roll call vote five in favor, none opposed and Messrs. Khedouri and Wells abstaining to approve the minutes as written.

COUNTY AND LAND BANK COMMISSION TREASURERS' REPORTS

None

TRANSFER FEE REVENUES

Revenues for the week ending August 30, 2024: \$268,670.14

NEW BUSINESS

1. Agency Administration: Receipt of Gift

Staff reported that the land bank had received a \$100 gift from Tammy Kallman, in memory of Wayne Kallman. After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to accept the donation, with gratitude.

2. Agency Land Management: Livestock Grazing Program

The Commission discussed an August 30, 2024 memorandum from goatherd Winston Bell concerning the agency's grazing program.

In it he recommends that the land bank (1.) auction off its entire goat herd in autumn 2024, owing to etiolation (in particular, failing parasite resistance) and age; (2.) purchase in winter 2025 up to 30 head of pineywoods cattle (a breed that [a] is specifically suited to grazing in both grasslands and woodlands, which meets agency ecological goals in both habitats, and [b] is particularly heat-tolerant and parasite- and disease-resistant; and (3.) plan in summer 2025 for a future grazing herd of either cattle and goats or cattle and sheep, with regular quadrennial auctioning to maintain vitality.

Commissioners variously discussed (1.) the budget for the grazing program, apropos of which Mr. Bell reported that of the allocated \$65,000 some \$3,600 has been spent, and that winter savings will accrue via reduced hay purchases; (2.) the unique benefits of pineywoods cattle, viz., that they were never bred as beef cattle requiring a significant muscle/fat profile and therefore are efficient at thriving on little; (3.) future infrastructure needs (e.g., a barn, *inter alia*), about which Mr. Bell offered that it would be best to "just be open" to the many creative things that various livestock can do; (4.) whether additional labor will be required, to which Mr. Bell responded that cattle fencing is simpler than goat fencing and he alone can handle it; and (5.) ecologist Julie Russell's opinion, which is [a] that the program is working, adducing the grasslands at the Waskosim's Rock Reservation, and [b] that absent this intervention, shrubs will ineluctably return; and [c] that goats are effective but not perfect and the staff is still analyzing best practices.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote (1.) to accept Mr. Bell's recommendations and to direct staff to implement them; and (2.) to amend its personnel code so as to recast the position of goatherd as livestock manager.

3. Squibnocket Pond Reservation (Town of Aquinnah)

The Commission discussed an August 27, 2024 memorandum from land superintendent Harrison Kisiel concerning the implementation of this property's management plan.

In it he recommends (1.) that, with respect to all capital purchases and for ease of accounting, the land bank front all expenditures and seek, prior to the end of each fiscal year, reimbursement by the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation (SMF) of its prescribed 44%; (2.) that, with respect to labor costs during construction, no allocation/reimbursement between the parties be made, on the grounds that each institution agrees to contribute maximum staff time to the project given each's many competing priorities elsewhere; and (3.) that SMF be responsible for hiring and paying summer rangers with the land bank's doing likewise for the on-the-ground maintenance crew, with an accounting and (as needed) reimbursement at the end of each season. Regular and open communication is expected to forestall any possible disagreements.

Commissioners variously discussed (1.) the value of the proposed phase-in over time; (2.) enforcement of the strictures of the management plan and, in particular, the hours when it is open and when it is closed; and (3.) the reservation system (e.g., full-day versus half-day), which will be subject to future debate when data for the James Pond Preserve reservation system are tallied and submitted to the Commission for consideration.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to accept Mr. Kisiel's recommendations, mindful that there will be an upcoming discussion about reservations.

4. 40-44 Meetinghouse Way (Town of Edgartown)

Mr. Kisiel reported that two bids had been received for the installation of two roof-mounted solar arrays at the land bank office and shop, listed here in descending order by price: (1.) South Mountain Company, Inc., \$119,800; and (2.) KRN Contractors LLC, \$99,850. The budget for this project is \$120,000. This matter had been most recently discussed at the Commission's November 20, 2023 meeting.

Mr. Kisiel recommended the South Mountain proposal; although South Mountain's is not the low bid, its system and panels are larger, yielding a greater output. He projected monthly generation to be 180% of the agency's needs.

Commissioners variously discussed (1.) the need to attend to the economics of the program in the future, which are apt to change; and (2.) the

importance of ensuring that the system acts as a closed loop, so that the land bank and not the electric company nets the financial benefit.

After discussion and by a motion made and seconded, the Commission voted unanimously in a roll call vote to accept the staff recommendation. Staff is to coordinate with South Mountain so that the system maximizes the land bank benefit and to return to the Commission if adjustments are necessary.

PUBLIC INPUT

None

ENDORSEMENT OF THE WARRANT

The Commission endorsed Warrant no. 2025-11.

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. Mr. Mott 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. He further announced that the Commission would not reconvene in regular session after the conclusion of the executive session. The Commission entered executive session at 3:13 pm.

certification:



Kristen Reimann, Secretary