

Dukes County Commission (DCC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 19, 2025
4:00 PM
Hybrid Meeting- Admin Building Conference room & Zoom

In Person:

Dukes County Commissioners: Christine Todd, Peter Wharton, Doug Ruskin, Don Leopold,

County staff: Martina Thornton

Others: Matthew Sudarsky

On Zoom: Randy Milch, Juli Vanderhoop, Tristan Israel, Juliet Mulinare, Paulo DeOliveira, Helene Schaeffer, Ann Wallace, Bob Rosenbaum, Ethan Genter

Christine called the meeting to order at 4:00pm

Minutes 1-22-2025 & 2-5-25

Peter/Don moved to approve minutes from January 22, 2025 Tristan had request a correction. The January 22, 2025 approval was tabled until next meeting.

Doug/Tristan moved to approve February 5,2025, as written. Peter - yes, Tristan- yes, Doug - yes, Randy – abstain, Don- Abstain, Christine - Yes. Motion carries.

Dukes County Regional Housing Authority update

Ann Wallace, spoke on behalf of the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority.

They are the managers of the affordable housing available island wide.

The large project they are working on is the updating of their policies & procedures. Many of the policies & procedures changed given federal guidelines. The standard the board has chosen to base the changes is HUD, Housing & Urban Development.

There are worries over funding but currently they, the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority, do not receive direct federal funding.

Doug Inquired about the "Oak Bluffs rental assistance 120 program". Ann replied that Oak Bluffs is running a pilot program having 5 rentals available to persons with up to 120% AMI, which is above the level of 100% which is the limit that may be funded by Community Preservation Act funds. Oak Bluffs is putting in a warrant article to subsidize funding for these 5 units.

Peter inquired on home ownership. Dukes County Regional Housing Authority does handle the lottery services for home ownership for those up to 150% AMI.

Don was curious as to why they are not a non-for-profit. Ann told the group they were chartered very similarly to the MV Commission in 1986. Basically, they are like a municipality that cannot raise taxes.

Airport Commission candidate interview- Dr. Helene Schaeffer

Helene Schaeffer is a business owner in the Airport business park and feels like the tenants are not well represented. Largest concern is the traffic in high season.

CCMHG alternate interview – Jannette Andrews by Zoom

Would like to be an advocate for healthcare on the Island.

Other Cape Cod Municipal Health Group candidates for reappointment (not interviewed):

Kathy Logue- voting member

Beth Kaeka- voting member

Elain Graves- alternate

2025 Appointments

Doug is uncomfortable voting to appoint people that the Commissioners have never met and do not know anything about. Christine stated the process will be reviewed and a new policy will be in place for next year.

Don questioned if the Airport wants a representative body of stakeholders or should they have a set of expertise, skills & knowledge in the candidates. If that is the case should the DC Commissioners potentially suggest to the airport to have some way to have vehicle for stakeholders to have a voice short of being on the commission.

A discussion was had as to how the commission want to vote for the appointments.

Tristan stated that the votes for appointment have been disclosed and feels like is should stay that way.

Don/Randy moved to appoint **Stephanie Browne** for the personal Board 3 years Peter - yes, Tristan- yes, Don-yes, Doug - yes, Randy – yes, Juli-yes, Christine - Yes. Motion carries.

Randy/Juli moved to reappoint **Rudy Sanfilippo to the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority** for a 3-year term. Peter - yes, Tristan- yes, Don-yes, Doug - Abstain, Randy – yes, Juli-yes, Christine - Yes. Motion carries.

Tristan/Doug moved to reappoint **Ann Wallace** to the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority for a 3-year term.

Peter - yes, Tristan- yes, Don-yes, Doug - yes, Randy – yes, Juli-yes, Christine - Yes. Motion carries.

Tristan/Randy moved to appoint **Kathy Logue** as voting member to **Cape Cod Municipal Health Group** for a 3-year term. Peter - yes, Tristan- yes, Don-yes, Doug - yes, Randy – yes, Juli-yes, Christine - Yes. Motion carries.

Tristan/Randy moved to appoint **Beth Kaeka** a voting member to **Cape Cod Municipal Health Group** for a 3-year term.

Peter - yes, Tristan- yes, Don-yes, Doug - yes, Randy – yes, Juli-yes, Christine - Yes. Motion carries.

Tristan/Christine moved to appoint **Elaine Graves** as alternates to **Cape Cod Municipal Health Group** for a 3-year term.

Peter - yes, Tristan- yes, Don-yes, Doug - Abstain, Randy – yes, Juli-yes, Christine - Yes. Motion carries.

Tristan/Doug moved to appoint **Jennet Andrews** as alternates to **Cape Cod Municipal Health Group** for a 3-year term.

Peter - yes, Tristan- yes, Don-yes, Doug - yes, Randy – yes, Juli-yes, Christine - Yes. Motion carries.

It was agreed on that there can be a discussion on the Martha's Vineyard Airport Commissioner candidates before the vote at the next meeting.

Paying for PA Club to host the Steamship Authority conversation on March 6th 6-8pm -\$250

Don suggested the County host the meeting.

Tristan feels Christine should moderate the meeting; all agree.

It was brought up if the *citizens actions group* will be there, as County Commissioners, we do not want to be seen as endorsing the positions the group.

Doug voiced concern of having the public meeting in a bar. Christine will meet and discuss with Jim Malkin a change of venue. Doug would like to advertise the meeting in the papers.

Doug/Tristan moved to approve payment of \$250 for a venue, from the County Commissioners department, to support the information session of the Steamship Authority. an amendment of: if it is needed.

Peter - yes, Tristan- yes, Doug - yes, Randy – yes, Christine - Yes. Motion carries.

Committee Updates

- Finance Committee – Doug – did not meet
- Land Use Committee – Tristan –

The Land Use Committee would like to use \$133k from the 29 Breakdown Lane capital Fund to pay for the new HVAC system at 29 Breakdown Lane.

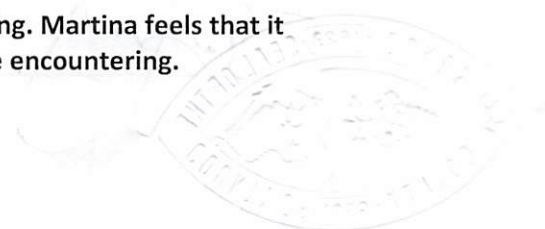
Tristan/Doug moved to approve payment for the HVAC system at 29 Breakdown Lane

Peter - yes, Tristan- yes, Doug - yes, Randy – yes, Juli-yes, Christine - Yes. Motion carries.

Land Use Planning would like to set up a meeting at the State level to review the Courthouse Assessment. Martina has reached out to the state officials to set that meeting.

Discussion was had about inviting State officials to the joint meeting with CAB on Courthouse issues.

Tristan feels it would not be appropriate to have them join the meeting. Martina feels that it would be beneficial for the State officials to see the resistance we are encountering.



There has been a request for some changes in the Norton Point Contract. Randy & Martina will review the request and then meet with Edgartown Parks Department.

- Legislative Committee – Christine – Nothing currently to report
- Communication Committee – Doug –
There are disconnects to outbound communication policy, particularly with the Health Care Access and other public benefits that we do. The Communication Committee believes there should be formal policy for the County staff for how we communicate with the public in general and the press in particular. Things are going out that have not been review by the county manager or the communication committee. Doug would like to add this policy decision to the March 5th Commissioners meeting.

Doug wants the Health Care Access sign redone to remove Vineyard and move Dukes County. There was consensus to engage a sign painter to so on site without having to get a whole new sign.

- Improvement Committee- Don
The list of priorities based on the last few discussion on the topic:
 1. Financial Stability
 2. Improve Relations with CAB, County Advisory Board.
 3. Better collaboration specifically the MV Commission, Emergency Management & Steamship
 4. Services needed over the next few years, based on what is going on in Washington DC, specifically health care, food pantries, homelessness
 5. Continue the work we are doing with communication
 6. Performance Improvement

Manager's Report – Martina

The RFP, for renting out upstairs of 29 Breakdown Lane, has been advertised. The deadline will be February 28th.

Randy Dull will be leaving his position of Veterans Services Officer.

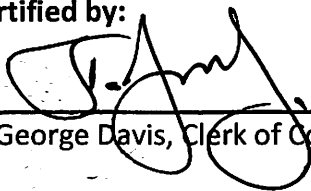
New Business

Joint meeting with the Commission and CAB will be March 5, 2025 at 3pm in person at the County Admin Building.

The next Dukes County Commissioners Meeting will be on March 5, 2025 at 4:00pm in person at the County Admin Building.

Randy/Tristan moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:25. So voted Peter- yes, Randy – yes, Don-yes, Doug -yes, Tristan- yes, Christine - yes. Motion carries.

Certified by:



T. George Davis, Clerk of Courts