

Dukes County Commission (DCC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 29, 2025
4:00 PM
Remote Meeting

Dukes County Commissioners: Doug Ruskin, Don Leopold, Juli Vanderhoop, Peter Wharton

County staff: Juliet Mulinare, Paulo DeOliveira, Martina Thornton

Other: Norm Werthwein, Cameron Naron, Sakiko Isomichi

Don called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

Minutes from 10-22-25

Peter/Juli moved to approve the minutes from 10-22-2025 with Doug's edits. Doug-yes, Peter- yes, Don-yes, Juli- yes. Motion carries.

FY2027 Combining Health Care Access and Public Benefits Access Budget- Budget memo with details is on file

Juli/Peter moved to approve the budget of Health Care Access and Public Benefits Access as presented and as recommended by the county finance committee along with the recommendation to submit it to the towns as one request for Dukes County Health and Human Services. Doug-yes, Peter- yes, Don-yes, Juli- yes. Motion carries.

FY2027 County Warrant Articles (town appropriation based on EQV)

Warrant article to spend \$120,000 to replace flat roofs of the Dukes County Courthouse, paint the trim, and perform related repair and maintenance work as necessary - recommended by the finance committee.

Warrant article to spend \$75,000 for an ADA-compliant Dukes County Health Care Access building handicap ramp and related work as necessary - recommended by the finance committee.

A "placeholder" Warrant article to be submitted to Oak Bluffs for FY2027 Dukes County supplemental income - as recommended by the finance committee. Doug suggested \$50K as the dollar amount on the placeholder article.

Doug/Peter made the motion to approve all three FY2027 County Warrant Articles as proposed. Doug-yes, Peter- yes, Don-yes, Juli- yes. Motion carries.

Committee Updates:

Finance Committee none

Land Use Committee none

Legislative Committee none

Nomination Committee none

Manager's Report – Martina reported that she is working with BOHs to consider submitting an application for a state matching grant (Mosaic Grant) related to opioid settlement funding activities, where the state would match funding for the projects.

There will be a Vaccination clinic on November 9th at the High School, along with a winter clothing drive and information on available public benefits.

New Business

SNAP benefits are being canceled by the federal government by November 1st. There is an article in MV Times, where Sarah Kuh and Wendy Maseda, our Public Benefits Case Worker, and interviewed. The article lists services that can help people with immediate food insecurity. Don would like the commissioners as a group to help in some way. Martina suggested donations to the food pantry or to IGI. Peter suggested adding the commissioner's voice to the fact that the mass health rate will be going up by 30-50%. Don and Doug suggested listing, on the county website, ways to help. Doug will draft the phrasing.

Martina received a letter from Representative Tom Moakley's office (on file) informing the County of proposed bills related to the Court staff and to study the court's situation. Doug suggests a letter of support for the studies in writing.

Doug/Peter moves for Martina to write a letter of support for the proposed legislation. Doug-yes, Peter- yes, Don-yes, Juli- yes. Motion carries.

Doug/Juli move to adjourn the meeting. Peter- yes, Doug-yes, Don- yes, Juli - yes. Motion carries.

The meeting ended at 4:33pm.

Calendar

- The next county commissioners meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 12th at 4pm.
- The next County Advisory Board meeting will be on October 30th at 1pm in person at the County Administration Building.
- Island-wide Emergency Management Planning Gap Analyses workshop is on November 6th - morning or afternoon session is available.

Certified by:

T. George Davis, Clerk of Courts

