

PLYMOUTH COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MEETING

January 7, 2021

A regular meeting of the Plymouth County Commissioners was called to order at 8:38 a.m. at the County of Plymouth Administration Building, 44 Obery Street, Plymouth, MA. Present were Commissioner Sandra M. Wright, and Commissioner Jared Valanzola. Commissioner Gregory M. Hanley participated via Zoom.

Also, in attendance were Treasurer Thomas O'Brien, Register of Deeds John Buckley, County Attorney Shannon Resnick, 4-H Director Molly Vollmer, County Administrator Frank Basler, and Executive Assistant Nancy O'Rourke.

Commissioner Wright offered congratulations on behalf of the board to Commissioner Valanzola, Commissioner Hanley and Treasurer O'Brien on their swearing in. Commissioner Wright invited Commissioner Valanzola to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Annual Reorganization of Board

Per M.G.L. Ch. 34, Section 4, Commissioner Wright called for nominations for the position of Chairman. Commissioner Valanzola nominated Commissioner Hanley as Chairman.

Commissioner Wright seconded. Ballots were cast and with a 3-0 vote Commissioner Hanley was elected Chairman of the Plymouth County Commissioners.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Commissioner Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Chairman Hanley thanked the board and requested a meeting schedule of every other Thursday at 5:30 p.m. for all future meetings of the Plymouth County Commissioners. Commissioner Wright and Commissioner Valanzola concurred.

Vote Meeting Minutes- December 21, 2020

Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of December 21, 2020. Chairman Hanley seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Abstain. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Vote to accept and approve CPS Forms

Margaret Morrison-Anniversary Step Increase to 15-2; Debra Whelan-Anniversary Step Increase to 13-5; Susan MacDonald-Anniversary Step Increase to 13-4; Paul Adams-Resignation as temporary custodian; Harley-Anne Hamilton-Termination; Daniel A. Pallotta-Term expired as Plymouth County Commissioner; Jared L. Valanzola-Elected Plymouth County Commissioner.

Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to accept and approve the personnel status forms listed. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Vote to accept and approve vendor vouchers

Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve vendor vouchers as recommended by the Treasurer. Commissioner Valanzola seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Vote to accept and approve payroll voucher

Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve vendor vouchers as recommended by the Treasurer. Commissioner Valanzola seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Appoint MMHG Advisory Committee Member and Alternate

Chairman Hanley made a motion to appoint Commissioner Valanzola to the Mayflower Municipal Health Group Advisory Committee with Administrator Frank Basler remaining as the alternate member. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Appoint Plymouth County Cooperative Extension Trustee/Liaison

Chairman Hanley made a motion to appoint Commissioner Wright as Trustee and Liaison to the Board of Trustees for the Plymouth County Cooperative Extension Service.

Commissioner Valanzola seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

CARES Act: distribution votes

Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to approve reimbursements in the amount of \$181,213.35 to the City of Brockton. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to approve reimbursements in the amount of \$172,774.36 to the Town of Hanson. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to approve reimbursements in the amount of \$119,606.78 to the Town of Hull. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to approve reimbursements in the amount of \$43,643.23 to the Town of Hull. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to approve reimbursements in the amount of \$83,531.03 to the Town of Kingston. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to approve reimbursements in the amount of \$285,148.23 to the Town of Lakeville. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to approve reimbursements in the amount of \$39,523.03 to the Town of Lakeville. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to approve reimbursements in the amount of \$114,071.12 to the Town of Scituate. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to approve reimbursements in the amount of \$95,040.42 to the Town of Scituate. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

CARES Act: Administrative expenses

Administrator Basler submitted a report for Administrative Costs for the March 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020 time period for Operating Costs vs. Non-Operating Costs. The recommendation is to set aside \$92,750.41 for CARES Act administration. Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to authorize the Administrator to submit the reported administrative costs for reimbursement to the CPA and lawyer for approval. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call-Commissioner Sandra M. Wright-Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola-Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley-Yes.

Chairman Hanley proposed the purchase of Zoom hardware and software to use for remote meetings. Discussion was tabled to the next meeting.

Vote-Approval for IRS standard mileage rate CY 2021

Commissioner Wright made a motion to vote to decrease the mileage allowance from \$.57.5 cents per mile to \$.56 cents per mile effective January 1, 2021 per the Internal Revenue Service. Commissioner Valanzola seconded.

Vote: Roll Call–Commissioner Sandra M. Wright–Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola–Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley–Yes.

Chairman signature required for letter for CY 2020 Meeting Minutes–DOR

Commissioner Wright made a motion to authorize Chairman Hanley to sign the annual letter requiring the County send the Meeting Minutes for Calendar Year 2020 to the MA Department of Revenue. Commissioner Valanzola seconded.

Vote: Roll Call–Commissioner Sandra M. Wright–Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola–Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley–Yes.

Pleasant Street, Plympton update and vote

Attorney Resnick briefed the board on the status of the request of the Plympton Board of Selectmen to release an easement previously approved that has never been used. The land is currently used for cattle raising and the owner has no immediate plans to use the property for anything else. The owner is paying taxes on the land and would like to reduce those costs. After some discussion, the board would like to request a nominal fee to reimburse the original cost to the Inhabitants of Plymouth County before releasing the easement. Attorney Resnick will submit the proposal.

Legislative Focus for 2021

The Commissioner's discussed plans for upcoming legislative and budget requests to the state legislature for the county and agreed Deeds Excise increases should be the focus for all counties. The Board agrees the County Commissioner's Association must be involved in garnering support from the Commissioners of the other counties and cannot have competing interests. Treasurer O'Brien stated the deadline for 2021 legislation is currently February 19, 2021. The Treasurer feels the Norfolk County Commissioners should file the legislation and be the lead. After much discussion, Commissioner Wright made a motion to direct Treasurer O'Brien to work with the other counties with re-submitting the legislative bill for a 30% increase in the counties portion of deeds excise receipts. Commissioner Valanzola seconded.

Vote: Roll Call–Commissioner Sandra M. Wright–Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola–Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley–Yes.

Register's Report

Register Buckley reports deeds excise figures for the end of the 2020 calendar year and the first six months of FY 2021 are up significantly due to the real estate sales boom and an abundance of refinancing. Recorded documents are at their highest since 2006. The foreclosure moratorium has ended, and the Register feels those numbers will unfortunately be increasing.

Treasurer's Report

Deputy Treasurer re-appointment

Treasurer O'Brien submitted a letter to inform the Commissioners pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 35, Section 2, he is re-appointing Jeffrey M. Welch as Assistant Treasurer, effective immediately. Mr. Welch will retain the title of Deputy Treasurer while assuming all statutory

rights and obligations of an Assistant Treasurer. There will be no change in title or compensation associated with the statutory appointment.

Audit Contract FY 2021–2023

Treasurer O'Brien presented the proposed fee estimates from Melanson CPA's for fiscal year audits for 2021, 2022, 2023 as well as a single audit for the Plymouth County CARES Act. The board and Treasurer O'Brien all agreed Melanson CPA's have done an outstanding job on the past Plymouth County Audits and the fee proposal is very reasonable. Commissioner Valanzola made a motion to proceed with contracts for the auditing services of Melanson CPA's for FY 2021, 2022, 2023 as well as the single audit for the Plymouth County CARES Act. Commissioner Wright seconded.

Vote: Roll Call–Commissioner Sandra M. Wright–Yes. Commissioner Jared Valanzola–Yes. Chairman Gregory M. Hanley–Yes.

A&F Memo–Federal Rental Assistance Funds

Treasurer O'Brien presented a memo received recently from the Executive Office for Administration and Finance Federal Funds Office regarding possible duplication of funding benefits issues with eligible county governments for federal rental assistance funds. Chairman Hanley requested this subject be on the next agenda for Executive Session discussion.

Extension Director's Report

4-H Director Molly Lipper briefed the board on the ongoing remote and virtual programs currently in process with the 4-H program and announced the Center for Disease Control has reached out to Plymouth County Entomologist Blake Dinius for information on his tick analysis research. Chairman Hanley requested a press release on Blake's recent accomplishments with the CDC.

Maintenance Superintendent's Report

Administrator Basler briefed the board on a few recent scares with possible positive COVID-19 cases. All have been negative. All courthouses are currently open with a reduced courthouse personnel staff. The county staff has been doing projects as well as cleaning the buildings. Upcoming major projects at the Wareham District Court will consist of LED light replacement, ceiling tile replacement and the installation of a new generator. Administrator Basler and Superintendent Wedge met with new Wareham District Court First Justice Edward Sharkansky and he is very pleased with the condition of the courthouse.

Administrator's Report

Edward Byrne Grant

Administrator Basler briefed the board on the recent administration and reporting system changes for the federal Byrne Grant applications and the 40-hour training requirement for re-certification and financial reporting. Both Brockton and Plymouth Police Departments will be receiving grant checks in the next few weeks.

Dredge

Administrator Basler reports he is currently working with the Town of Mattapoisett as well as a number of towns in Barnstable County on use of the Plymouth County Dredge.

4-H Greenhouse

Administrator Basler reports he is currently working with the Plumbing Inspector on issues with the drains and possible installation of bathrooms in the 4-H Greenhouse.

FOIA Request-Boston Globe

Administrator Basler and Treasurer O'Brien continue to work on the ongoing FOIA request of the Boston Globe for Plymouth County CARES Act submissions and applications.

Commissioner's New Business

Chairman Hanley requests discussion be held at the next meeting on possible hiring of additional employees to assist with the Plymouth County CARES Act extension.

Commissioner Wright would like feedback from Treasurer O'Brien.

Commissioner Valanzola requests discussion be held at the next meeting regarding the Lincoln statue recently removed from Boston Park Square and currently in storage. Commissioner Valanzola would like to send a letter to the City of Boston to request the statue be moved to Plymouth County.

Chairman Hanley appointed Commissioner Valanzola as the lead negotiator representing the Board on union contracts currently in negotiations. Attorney Resnick and Administrator Basler will also be part of the negotiating team.

The next meeting will be held Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

At 10:20 a.m. the meeting adjourned.

Documents and/or exhibits

- Meeting Minutes-December 21, 2020
- Vote-IRS Mileage Decrease 2021
- Report-Plymouth County Administrative Costs for CARES Act
- Letter-Reappointment of Deputy Treasurer Jeffrey M. Welch
- Audit quotes-Melanson CPA's
- Memorandum-A&F Federal Fund Office

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy O'Rourke
Executive