

**Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee
in Joint Meeting with the
Tisbury Climate Committee
6:30PM, Wednesday, November 16, 2022
by Zoom Cloud Conference**

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Present: Chair Nancy Gilfoy, Louise Clough, Jynell Kristal,
Mary Ellen Larsen, John Oliver, Rachel Orr, Allan Rogers,
Climate: Chair Melinda Loberg, Louise Clough, Rachel Orr, Bill Straw,
Kate Shands,
Others: Recorder - Marni Lipke,

* TFC members late arrivals or early departures.

• Call Meeting to Order

- The Tisbury Climate Committee was called to order at 6:30PM.
- The Tisbury Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) was called to order at 6:30PM. (*Recorder's note: Discussions are summarized and grouped for clarity and brevity.*)

• Role of Climate Committee, Relationship to Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC), Island-wide Climate Initiative

• Past and Potential Future Projects in Tisbury Related to Energy Conservation/Generation and Mitigating Impacts of Climate Change, Funding Possibilities, (See documents on file.)

- Green Community Grants,

- Other

- About a year ago at the urging of the Planning Board the Tisbury Select Board (TSB) formed the Climate Committee. Chair Melinda Loberg was grateful for previous Energy Committee Chair Bill Straw's institutional memory and wisdom, as well as for the 2 joint Climate/FinCom members Louise Clough and Rachel Orr that provided such excellent communications. Keith McGuire was the Committee liaison to the MVC Climate Task Force, and the Committee worked with Margaret Song of Cape Light Compact.
- The mission included 3 main areas of activity: conservation, generation and climate change impact.
- The Town had a number of energy generation, switch from fossil to electric power, and conservation projects completed or in process:
 - the Tisbury School Project—grant funded parking lot solar canopies, but no funding for solar roof panels yet;
 - Department of Public Works (DPW);
 - the Senior Center—2023 Warrant article for 400 watt solar roof panels installation estimated at \$159,408;

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- Library addition accompanied by entire building systems renovation;
- Emergency Services Facility (ESF) \$122,000 solar roof 8-year payback from \$7,000/yr. energy savings and \$10,000/yr. rebate;
- the large 190 watt panels solar field at the Park & Ride—3rd party (Ace American Capital) installer/owner with a contract through Cape and Vineyard Electric Cooperative (CVEC) expiring in 2032. Over its 25 year lifespan the panel efficiency dropped to 80%.
 - ° The field generated \$120,000 in annual revenue into the Town's General Fund. A strong campaign to dedicate some of the income to further sustainability/generation/conservation was not successful but the FinCom was eager to help advocate for a change.
 - ° At the end of the contract the owner either had to sell the installation to the Town or return the land to its original state. This meant the Town could likely acquire the installation for a nominal fee, and repopulate it with higher wattage panels for 100% of the enhanced power. The FinCom asked about surety, but it was too early to lock it in—a lot could happen in 10 years. The Committee would work on various strategies and be ready when the time came.
- As a Green Community Tisbury was eligible for 2 grant application rounds a year (restricted to energy efficiency and coordinated through Cape Light Compact), with the requirement that one be completed before the second grant was awarded. Unfortunately, the Town only had capacity for 1 project per year. In addition, if bids came in slightly higher than estimated there was no reserve to add to the grant and projects had to be abandoned and money returned.
- This year the grant project was a heat pump for the ESF—again slightly more than anticipated but Building Commissioner Ross Seavey might be able to resolve the difference through negotiations.
- The goal was to outfit all appropriate Town buildings with heat pumps or solar while retaining the fossil fuel heating systems as backup.
- Battery technology was moving fast to solve a number of problems such as hazardous materials (hazmat), water issues, and fire dangers.
- Future projections included different electric rates for different times of day/week (called demand billing), so that the Town might be able to reduce costs by running on batteries during peak hours and re-charging at non-peak times.
- Park & Ride solar canopies for public car charging stations would generate income. Free chargers for Town employees were planned.
- Vineyard Power/Vineyard Wind was required to disperse \$7,500,000 over 15 years to Island communities for program development—Tisbury share \$716,000 or ~ \$50,000 per year. If/as Vineyard Power generated more projects the \$7,500,000 could multiply.

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- Climate Change Impact The Committee had been persuading the Water Dept. to purchase batteries to power the pumps in catastrophic storms—current practice was manual pumping.
- Vineyard Haven was the most viable year-round port, but much of the sea level rise/shore line changes and critical infrastructure needs were outside or only partially within Town control.
 - Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation (MassDOT) maintained many of the access roads to the Steamship Authority (SSA) port (State Rd., Beach Rd., etc.), and so was responsible for coastal protection and stormwater management. The long MassDOT process meant projects took 2 to 4 years to implement.
 - The State and the Town continued to argue over the fiscal responsibility for repairing/upgrading the Beach Road seawall. In the end it was likely to fall under a federal grant through Coastal Zone Management (CZM).
 - The huge investment of raising road heights would require major grants and whole-Island funding, to be coordinated through the MVC Climate Task Force.
 - The SSA plan was to stop service 24 hrs. before a catastrophic storm, in order to sequester their ferries behind the New Bedford storm wall. A worst case scenario would be the trashing of the Vineyard Haven harbor in which case, alternate routes were the Oak Bluffs ferry terminal and/or the airport.
- Islandwide emergency management groups were constantly reviewing and revising comprehensive plans involving Federal/Massachusetts Emergency Management Agencies (FEMA/MEMA) and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Public Outreach The Committee looked to raise emergency self-preparation awareness and find subsidies for residents and business owners.

- Besides a 2023 warrant article funding the Senior Center solar, Ross Seavey was looking at and the Committee might sponsor an article on the most recent State “stretch code” changes which tightened building codes.
- The Committee was also working with Town staff on energy savings, purchasing and other climate sensitive issues.

• Climate and Department Budgets

- The Committee strongly advised progress on some Town-wide issues.
 - In 2022 the Town created an energy stabilization fund which should now be funded to spread out costs for large projects.
 - In addition a budget line for climate/energy reserves could cover small gaps in grant matches or cost overruns so that the Town needn’t miss/return available grant moneys. This line would avoid the Town Meeting time constraints needed for Stabilization withdrawals.
 - Five years ago Tisbury hired an energy assessment on all municipal buildings, however it was now deemed more efficient to assess each building as it became an energy efficiency/generation project.

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- The Town had been unable to fill the Facilities Manager position voted last year and Ross Seavey had recently tendered his resignation. The Committee emphasized the urgent need for a Facilities Manager as well as a Building Commissioner to oversee buildings and forward many of these initiatives—particularly the School Project. It was noted that Tisbury salaries did not keep pace with market rates. There was a suggestion the Town contract out the Facilities Manager work possibly drawing on a larger skill set, but an on-site person that knew the buildings was very much preferred.
- The FinCom was interested in oil vs. heat pump (e.g. before & after) data.
- The Committee suggested the FinCom ask Departments about day-to-day savings (see below: p.6 - Actions).
- A particularly cheap and easy fix would be to switch from hot water tanks that drew electricity 365/24/7 to instant hot water heaters (~ \$250) under each sink—a simple installation requiring a plumber and an electric outlet,
- The FinCom and Climate Committee exchanged thanks and praise.
- LOUISE CLOUGH MOVED TO ADJOURN CLIMATE COMMITTEE 7:43PM; KATE SHANDS SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY SHOW OF HANDS; 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS.

Committee Reports

(See below: Actions.)

- The Embarkation Committee first meeting was tomorrow.
- Housing Bank – State Senator Julian Cyr and Representative Dylan Fernandes advised that instead of presenting individual Martha's Vineyard legislation, the Island advocate for a State-wide universal bill transfer fee (like the short-term rental bill). Regulation and spending entities would then be under local jurisdiction. This would also avoid having to go to the State Legislature for every little change. Consequently the Committee approached the Island Select Boards for decisions on the voted proposal versus the legislation. It was on the agenda of several Select Boards, but as yet there was no acknowledgement from Town Administrator Jay Grande.
- The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) was interviewing applicants and would meet with the FinCom (see below: Meetings/Events).
- The Tisbury Select Board (TSB)
 - Tracey Jones' last day as Ambulance Director would be Thanksgiving. She was training the new administrative assistant to schedule the personnel shifts.
 - The FY24 Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for both union and management/professional (M&P) was set at 6.8%, which made an override highly probable. The TSB was waiting on the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) assessments before setting the tax rate.

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- Martha's Vineyard Regional High School Committee (MVRHSC) was looking at up to \$2,000,000 for a feasibility study. They also debated and rescinded a homeless shelter on the property. The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) would notify next phase decisions in about a month.
- (See also below: Meetings/Events.)
- TSC/School Project – The gym wing was demolished and students would move into the temporary school November 28th.

Future Meetings (See below: Meetings/Events.)

- Department FY24 budgets would not available until January.
- In-person or Zoom meeting would depend on venue availability and member convenience.

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair

Adjournment

• *ALLAN ROGERS MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:03PM; LOUISE CLOUGH SECONDED; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: 5 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSTENTIONS: MARY ELLEN LARSEN—AYE, LOUISE CLOUGH—AYE, ALLAN ROGERS—AYE, RACHEL ORR—AYE, NANCY GILFOY—AYE.*

Appendix A: Meetings/Events

- MVRHSC Public Budget Hearing – 7:00PM, Tuesday, November 29, 2022
- **TFC/TSB - 6:30PM, Wednesday, December 7, 2022 – by Zoom**
- **TFC (CPC/Embarkation) - 6:30PM, Wednesday, December 21, 2022 - TBD**
- STM/ATM –Tuesday, April 25, 2023 – MVRHS PAC

Appendix B: Actions

All – Please remember not to hit “Reply All”.

Nancy – schedule early MVC interview.

Dec. 7th Joint TSB/TFC Issues

- dedicate some solar revenue to sustainability projects,
- fund Energy Stabilization Fund
- budget line for grant facilitation, matches, cost overruns.

Future Agendas

- Approve Minutes from: 10/18/22, 11/16/22,
- New School Maintenance Budget

Budget Season Notes

- contact Town Clerk re: resuming Article List updates;
- vote items/dept. budgets next meeting after they are presented/discussed;
- redraft FinCom letter to include deadlines and send to Committees/Boards;

continued >

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Appendix B: Actions (Cont.)

- include Building Dept. fee revenues (offsetting expenses) in budget interview;
- ask departments to project all needs 5 years out i.e. like a capital plan but on other factors—staffing, program changes, etc.
- possible early votes: ° standard articles,
 ° smaller/level funded department budgets,
 ° CPC & Embarkation.
- Ask departments: general energy efficiency and emergency preparedness:
 - ° insulation, window repairs,
 - ° turn down heat/air conditioning, turn off lights, motion sensor or timers,
 - ° under sink hot water heaters,

\$100,000 FY23 Reserve Fund spending tally – Balance: \$100,000

Appendix C: Documents on File:

- Agenda 11/16/22
- Tisbury Climate Committee Goals for 2022 (3 p.)
- Tisbury Climate Committee, Date of Formation: August 24, 2021...
(2 p.) 8/15/21

Nancy Gilfoy – Chair

Date

Minutes approved 1/25/23