

Tisbury Climate Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: February 7, 2022

Meeting called to order: by Melinda Loberg, Chair, at 6:32 PM.

Place: Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/93715101542>
Meeting ID: 937 1510 1542 Passcode: 942297

Attendance: Committee Members: Melinda Loberg, Louise Clough, Anna Edey,
Keith McGuire, Rachel Orr, Kate Shands, Bill Straw, Bruce Stuart
Guests: Ben Robinson, MVC

Melinda began the meeting by reading the Covid disclaimer and the Zoom information.

Review and Approval of Minutes: Several small corrections and additions suggested by Anna had previously been made to the circulated minutes of January 24, 2022. Louise moved that the minutes be accepted, Keith seconded, and the motion passed 6-0, (Rachel abstained, because she wasn't at the last meeting, and Anna wasn't present until after the vote.)

Discussion: Bill, as our CLC and CVEC representative, began by reporting on his investigations into the purchase of the solar array at the landfill. He said that CVEC managed the project, and that the Town leases the land to them at approximately \$100,000 per year; the Town has received more than \$600,000 already. CVEC has the right of first refusal for purchasing it, and the cost would be about a million dollars. He noted that the Town does not have the technical expertise or a designated person to manage the solar array, and the cost is not worth it. We have to find out what CVEC wants to do; they have no capital. It is on the agenda for the next Executive Committee meeting Thursday morning, and he requested that one other member from the Climate Committee attend that meeting with him; he suggested Melinda. Eversource might be interested in purchasing it or in leasing the land from the Town. Eversource parked diesel generators next to the solar array when the cables lost power. They could put batteries there, and the Town could continue to get \$100,000 per year for the lease of the land. Melinda commented that Vineyard Power is also a potential player. Bill said he tried to reach them, but got no response. Richard Andre has some expertise in this area. We need to know who has the expertise and the equipment to run, manage, and repair the system. Anna asked for the figures to be put into writing. She added that we have to be self-sufficient, not dependent on Eversource, and that off-island consultants may be a waste of money. Rachel asked, if CVEC has the right of first refusal, would they assign that to us? Tisbury can't manage it, but we could have a third party do so. Melinda said we are still in the information-gathering phase. Bill asked Ben if Eversource would consider owning several solar arrays. Ben said it has never come up, but MVC is planning to talk with them. He raised the possibility of people in the community purchasing individual panels. He said the goal is to keep it up and running, and it's

a natural fit for infrastructure collaboration. Melinda commented that newer panels would be more efficient. Bill said there are 3,000 panels which produce 290 Watts each; there are now larger panels available that produce 480 W; for the same land area, we could get much more bang for the buck, and we could probably sell the panels we have. Tisbury holds the high card; the contract states that after 20 years, the site must be returned to its original condition.

Removing the concrete blocks would be difficult, so it would make sense to keep those for ourselves. The Town has a nice revenue stream without doing anything.

Melinda said we'll wait for further information and moved on to the Green Communities (GC) grant process. She reported that she and Bill met with Margaret Song and Jay Grande and said Margaret was very helpful. They landed on three buildings that could be outfitted with heat pumps: Town Hall, the Senior Center, and the wastewater treatment plant. Bill said he thought there was a 4th building on the list; was it the DPW? Melinda said we would hate to miss a grant opportunity; we had not previously considered Town Hall, but any plans to change it will probably be a long time coming, and if we installed heat pumps there now, we could keep that equipment no matter what happens to the building.

Melinda noted that she had sent the Climate Committee a draft of our goals for 2022, including the heat pumps as a high priority. Rachel asked if we could get a grant for a building under construction and added that the DPW has already been evaluated. Bill said Jay wants an assessment; Margaret is ready to write a grant and have an engineer come out to do an assessment; Jay sent a message to that effect to his staff. The engineer would look at hot water and lighting needs at the same time. Once the evaluation is done, it will be forwarded through Margaret to GC at the state level. We need to make sure we cover all contingencies so that we don't lose another grant because of increasing expenses.

Melinda then reported that she had contacted Michael Watts and Rita Jeffers [Tisbury School Building Committee members] suggesting that we have a second look at the school building. She got a letter back saying Tappe [architects] and WT Rich [project manager] were working on permits for the temporary school; that the expected EUI (energy use intensity) is 24.3, almost at the top of Zero Net Energy school projects being tracked by Eversource; that there is a full solar plan that could be implemented if Tisbury wanted to approve the funding; that they have no money for an external audit; that they could invite a member of our group to attend one of their meetings; and that they would be happy to come to one of our meetings. Anna said she would love to have a chance to tell them what she thinks could be improved in the building plan, but Rachel, who was previously on the School Building Committee, said that at this point, there is really no opportunity to change anything in the plan; we could have a conversation about racks, conduits, and solar over the parking lot, but that's the extent of what could be changed. Melinda said she would write to them asking to see the plan, and once we have it, we can invite them to a meeting. Ben said he had gone to a meeting with the school building committee in early January, that construction documents are in progress, and agreed that the opportunity for change is closed.

Keith commented that the draft list of goals is a good one, that hiring a Facilities Manager will be important in getting what we want done, and that we are a new committee with no power, so we have to come to a consensus on our priorities. Rachel said she wanted to circle back to the heat pumps: we need to add the two Water Works buildings and the Annex to the list, and a solar system and battery backup at the Town wells was a high priority. She said that the

Facilities Manager is an existing position with a job description; Kirk Mettall held that position but was promoted, so it is now empty. She added that the DPW is coming to the FinCom [Finance Committee] on Wednesday, so she and Louise would hear about that then.

Anna said we need information on the energy cost of pumping water into the water towers; Bill said he's not sure that information should be in the public domain; Melinda said she thought the Water Department could provide that information, and she and Bill would meet with Chris Cassidy. Keith moved that we adopt the list of goals as our priority list; Bill seconded, and the motion passed 8-0. Melinda said she would make a few edits to the list, including preparation for a category 5 hurricane and adding 2 Water Works buildings and the Annex.

Melinda said that GC had announced some changes to the grant program, including a grant program for lighting specifically for schools; she said she will let the School Building Committee know about that.

Melinda then reported that she had also reached out to the Steamship Authority. They have a meeting tomorrow with the MVC and the Island Climate Committee. Ben said a lot of groups are meeting with the Steamship Authority. He didn't know what the meeting tomorrow was about, but topics of interest are alternative fuel vessels and federal funding. Melinda said energy was not the only concern. Access was important as well. There was a brief discussion about evacuation as opposed to sheltering in place in the event of a major storm. Rachel suggested we make that the entire agenda for a future meeting. Melinda said she had tried to reach Greg Leland [Fire Chief], who is our Emergency Manager, but hasn't heard back from him yet; she will invite him to a Committee meeting. Melinda asked if it was okay for her to share the TCC list of goals with Jay Grande and Kirk; the committee agreed, and Bill said to be sure to mark it "draft".

Steering Committee Report: Keith repeated his previous report that the CAP Team is developing climate goals with the Thematic Working Groups and wants to meet with representatives from the town (staff and residents) in March to get feedback on those goals. He made a motion for this Committee to allow him to go to the Select Board and say that the Climate Committee supports the CAP goals. Rachel seconded. The motion passed 8-0.

Public Health & Safety Thematic Working Group (TWG) Report: Kate reported that the group had developed three goals for 2040, and that at the next meeting on February 11, the group plans to develop objectives for those goals.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Rachel, seconded by Anna. The motion passed 8-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 PM.

Next Meeting: February 28, 2022 at 6:30 (time changed so committee members can attend a MVC Stormwater presentation from 5:00-6:30).

Minutes Submitted by: Kate Shands