

Tisbury Climate Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: May 16, 2022

Meeting called to order: by Melinda Loberg, Chair, at 5:35 PM.

Place: Zoom: Meeting ID: 815 5427 3589 Passcode: 976276

Attendance: Committee Members: Melinda Loberg, Louise Clough, Keith McGuire, Rachel Orr, Kate Shands, Bill Straw

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

Review and Approval of Minutes: Several small corrections were made to the minutes of May 2, 2022. Louise moved for acceptance, Rachel seconded, and the motion passed 6-0.

Discussion of Agenda Items:

Climate Action Plan (Month, Week):

The committee reviewed the events of Climate Action week and reported on the events they had attended. These included the Coast Guard tour, the Trustees event at Norton Point, the conservation walking tour in West Tisbury, the shorelines event with Bow Van Riper at the museum, the movie on indigenous inhabitant perspectives, and the finale event at the end of the week. The finale event included lots of thoughtful conversation, information-sharing, and feedback to the Climate Action Task Force. All agreed that the events were interesting, informative, and well attended; and that the week was a big success.

Steering Committee & Thematic Working Group (TWG) Reports:

Melinda said now that Climate Week is finished, we will need to turn to the Climate Action Plan. Keith reported that there will be a need for committees to get the goals accomplished. Rachel said the Plan will be available, and we need to talk to the Select Board. Keith said they want people to sign on, but he didn't know about Select Boards. He said there are 7 TWG's, and a summary document will be available after the June 5 Steering Committee meeting. He can send it to us, and it can be attached to the minutes.

Follow-Up to Facilities Manager Job Posting & Green Communities [GC] Action:

Bill said he had been focusing on reduction of fossil fuel use. He said 75% of our fuel is consumed by vehicles, and that truck manufacturers have made strong progress in moving to electric vehicles. He added that he spoke with Margaret Song; the grant application for heat pumps has been submitted, and they are waiting to hear the result. He said we should hear by around July 4. He said Nick Lucas at Nelson Mechanical said he can't start the job until December. He added that if the grant is only partial, the Town should be prepared to make up

the difference in cost. The last time, the cost of the project was too high, and we couldn't accept the grant. GC doesn't like it if grantees don't accept their grants. Melinda asked if we have to have bids, and Rachel said she didn't know how Margaret had structured the grant. Anything over \$10,000 has to go out for bids, but with Cape Light Compact, sometimes we don't have to use bids. Rachel asked if we could retrofit the DPW fleet trucks or if we have to make new purchases. Bill said the greatest progress has been with the Ford F-150, the largest-selling truck in the US, and that Freightliner is working on conversion kits, but our fleet trucks are small. Rachel outlined several ways we might be able to fund these things, including a warrant article for a likely Town meeting this fall, stabilization funds, the capital savings account, and an energy fund, which has just been created.

Melinda said she had sent the documents we created to Jay but hadn't heard back yet. She asked how much we want to push GC goals with the Facilities Manager (FM) and said we need to have a better understanding of how we're doing on those goals. Rachel said Bill stresses having measurable goals and we could create a checklist and a way to measure them and could do that in conjunction with the FM; Such a list would be useful for job sites and for money and how to obtain it. Melinda said we should ask Kirk first how we're doing, and Keith agreed, adding that the FM will be a new person, just getting to know the job. Melinda said she will meet with Kirk and Jay. Bill said a simple goal would be to have all Town buildings converted to heat pumps by 2028. The police department is done; this year we hope to do the DPW; there are 11 Town buildings, and we could aim for one per year and get Kirk and Jay to agree. Melinda said we also need to focus on charging stations if we are encouraging electric cars. Bill said he can just plug in his hybrid car, but Melinda said we're focusing on municipal vehicles. Keith said we need to know how many vehicles the Town has and where people would like to have the charging stations. Rachel said we already have them at the Town Hall Annex and the Senior Center. Other possibilities include the Library, Owen Park, the Tashmoo property, and the DPW. She said Town Hall and the Katharine Cornell Theater would be difficult, but the tennis courts nearby could be utilized. Melinda added the School and the Park & Ride. Bill noted that we could have solar canopies at some of those locations. Rachel asked if we wanted to include personal chargers as a benefit or if we just wanted to use the chargers for Town vehicles. She added that the School doesn't have Town vehicles. Keith said there are chargers in Aquinnah that can be used if you pay for them, and Louise said there are fast chargers at the Chilmark School that she assumes the public can use.

Melinda asked if the Town could put out a bid for the Park & Ride and Union Street locations, and Rachel said Alan Strahler [Chairman of Edgartown Energy Committee] said Edgartown is already thinking about what's needed for charging. Melinda said that makes her think that the Climate Committees of all the towns need to compare notes. She suggested that she could reach out to the chairs of all those committees. Keith commented that West Tisbury recently passed a by-law requiring all new buildings to be all electric. Melinda went back to finding out how many cars and trucks the Town has; Rachel said Jon Snyder [Town Treasurer] would know because he insures them. Bill said under GC rules, the Town had to establish a fleet list; any time they purchase a car, they have to go back to that list. We could go to Jay and see what vehicles the Town plans to buy. Melinda said she would include vehicles and heat pumps when she talks to Kirk and Jay. Keith commented that West Tisbury bought electric vehicles through GC.

Seeking grant opportunities:

Melinda said Rita [Jeffers / School Building Committee] sent material about potential grants, both Federal and State. She said it's an extensive list and wondered how we approach this challenge and whether it's our charge to go after grants. Bill said we should have some influence, but it's a full-time job. He asked if the Town doesn't have someone who handles grants. Melinda said it's done by departments; the Town doesn't have a grant writer. Rachel noted that the school superintendent has a full-time grant writer. It's under the education format; there is some separation between the school and the Town. She said she researched grants when she was on the School Building Committee, and we often don't qualify because our real estate values are too high. She added that we do need to know whether the Town or the School is applying. Melinda said she knew the School Building Committee would like us to help, but she said we need to identify how we can help. She said she could send the list to all of us to review and we can give some feedback to the School. Bill asked if the Finance Director handles grants and asked how many towns in Massachusetts have full-time grant writers. He noted that some towns have really taken good advantage of GC money. Melinda said some people have done some basic work, but the Town doesn't have the bandwidth to handle grants, which is why they have had to give some money back. She said we have to factor that in. Every department has a head, and they need to bring along some grant money, or at least do the research. Rachel said that's what she was told when discussing grants with town officials: all grants require a certain amount of administration, and things don't always fit easily. Melinda said that for CZM grants, they have used consultants and it has worked well, and so did grants that had a technology partner. Rachel said that reminded her that early on, the School Committee Owner's Project Manager would handle the website, but apparently the website got dropped from the contract. She suggested that maybe CHA could review the grants, given that they are our Project Manager.

Keith commented that the issue of how we can empower ourselves should be on every meeting agenda. For example, the Town should be looking at GC money and other grants such as for the fire chief and roads. He said we can't actually do that, but we can tell them they need to form a committee to handle that. We should make notes of these ideas and look for ways to increase our power. Melinda said she was making notes. Keith asked if we should attend Select Board (SB) meetings. Melinda said we could certainly look at their agendas and decide whether to attend. She noted that we will have a new SB shortly. Rachel said she used to attend SB meetings, but they switched the meeting time to standard work hours, and she can no longer do that. Melinda said she sent an e-mail to Jay questioning the wisdom of 3 pm meetings and also that they are held in person with no attempt at a hybrid format. She said she got a terse reply, and that Rachel makes a good point. Melinda said she makes an attempt to go; if there's something important on the agenda, she can let us know.

Tisbury School Building Committee Update:

Melinda said she doesn't know what to say about the School project. The initial bids indicate that they can't afford the original plan. Keith asked about when the meetings are, and Melinda said to go to the project website. She said she thought they chose Plan C of the 3 proposed alternate plans, and Rachel said yes, they chose option 3. She noted that the School Building

Committee is a subcommittee of the School Committee, and that the issue came up at the SB meeting and at the FinCom meeting. The numbers are based on cost estimates, not bids. They are putting the project out for bids and should have real numbers by late June or early July. There is confusion about the temporary building; the trailers are already here and need to be connected to water and sewer. A letter went out to the parents; the teachers need time to move in; the timing is hard to pin down. She suggested that Melinda might want to take a look at the wicks. She said we need to look at the infrastructure; the owners are looking at it from the School point of view. Melinda thanked her and said she would take a look; She asked if, in this choice, they are eliminating work on the windows, and if the FinCom went along with that. Louise said yes, and maybe some of that work can be done in the future. Rachel said the windows have failed; they are fogged and leaking. The masonry work would not be a lot of money. She asked Jon Snyder if we had money in the stabilization account to replace the windows, and he said yes. She said it's easy to take that out of the budget, because it's a stand-alone bid and can be removed. Reade Milne had a big problem with this, but she was outvoted. Keith said if the architect is signing off on something that is not sound, it doesn't make sense legally. Melinda said it may be easy to take out and go back to the Town and ask for more money, but it puts the Town over a barrel, and of course they don't want to do that. She noted that it's not the responsibility of our committee. She said there will be more to come on the subject of the School and asked for suggestions for the next meeting. Rachel said there is one quick thing she wanted the share: she went to the Eversource meeting about the new cable and the one to be repaired, and asked about a fiber-optic option. A municipal fiber-optic cable will be included. Keith said he wasn't sure if our next meeting should be before or after the CAP Plan wraps up on June 9. It was decided we should meet after that.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Bill, seconded by Rachel. The motion passed 6-0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 PM.

Next Meeting: June 13, 2022 at 5:30 PM

Minutes Submitted by: Kate Shands