

Tisbury Climate Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: July 11, 2023

Meeting called to order: by Melinda Loberg, Chair, at 5:32 PM.

Place: Zoom: Meeting ID: 845 5940 00556 Passcode: 912567

Attendance: Committee Members: Melinda Loberg, Louise Clough, Anna Edey, Keith McGuire, Rachel Orr, Kate Shands, Bill Straw
Guests: Casey Hayward, Liaison to Planning Board
Angela (Angie) Gompert, VTA [Vineyard Transit Authority] Administrator
Jay Grande, Tisbury Town Administrator

Melinda began the meeting by reading the Covid disclaimer and the Zoom information. She introduced Casey Hayward as the new liaison to the Planning Board.

Review and Approval of Minutes: It was moved and seconded that the minutes of May 16 and June 13 both be approved, and both motions passed 7-0

VTA Discussion: Angie updated the committee with a summary of the VTA's climate-related activities. The VTA headquarters at 11 A St. in the Airport Business Park has 8 solar canopies which feed battery storage units to power the VTA buses. Thus, they have their own little micro grid. They are working through issues with Eversource, such as rules and charging protocols. The rollout for the public transit industry has been slow. There are no diesel heaters in the buses; they use electric heaters which use 20 kWh. They have installed induction chargers (IC's) on Church St. in Edgartown; there are 3 sets of 2 pads which produce 150 kWh, and they cost \$2 million. The buses "squat" over the pads; there are no plug-ins. Conductive chargers couldn't be used in towns; they would produce 500 kWh, but they cost more. The VTA is looking at a second location in W. Tisbury, again using IC's, which would not be able to charge other vehicles such as cars. W. Tisbury has a strong, proactive approach, and the VTA can share property with the Town Hall. Angie noted that IC's may not be necessary in the near future; they are a short-term stop-gap measure. There is not currently a good battery storage unit manufacturer in the U.S. but ultimately, they will have battery storage, and that possibility exists in W. Tisbury. By 2028, the VTA's diesel bus fleet will be fully electric. The VTA is looking at Level 3 plug-in chargers for the long-term, and they think that FedEx and UPS could use their chargers in the future. *[Level 3 charging is the fastest type of charging available and can recharge an EV at a rate of 3 to 20 miles of range per minute. Unlike Level 1 and Level 2 charging that uses alternating current (AC), Level 3 charging uses direct current (DC). Inductive charging is one form of Level 3 charging.]*

Discussion then moved to what can be done in Tisbury. Currently, the VTA is switching out the Lift bus (#10 to & from the Park & Ride) mid-day to maintain charging. Issues discussed among Angie, Jay and various members of the committee included the following:

- We need to develop faster charging capability in Tisbury. Level 3 charging would be ideal, and Angie knows of private enterprises that might be interested in public/private partnerships for Level 3 charging on the island, but there are complications concerning the bid process on Town property. The Town is subject to 30B, but the VTA is not.
- The Steamship Authority (SSA) location is not ideal for induction chargers, because the IC's require that the buses park straight over them, and that site has the buses turning around the traffic circle. It might be possible to reconfigure the parking lot there to accommodate straight-in parking. Angie has copies of previous plans for that lot and can provide them to us.
- Potential sites for solar canopies and/or charging stations in Tisbury include the Union Street location, Water Street (where there is already a straight parking pull-over area) and several locations around the DPW, including the P&R lot, the Landfill Drop Off (LDO), an area across from the Annex, and the leaching field.
- Another P&R agreement with the Steamship Authority is coming up.
- There was a proposal for a small solar array across from the Annex about 8 years ago. VTA has investigated the Park & Ride (P&R) site, but IC chargers at that location would impact the capped landfill, and the landfill itself is not suitable. If feasible, the wastewater leaching field would be a good idea. The Infrastructure Bill has lots of opportunities for electric charging financing and green energy plans overall, and we need to study other opportunities. Canopies would be great in that area, but there are limitations. It was noted that it is necessary to dig down 12-14 feet for canopy foundations.
- The Lift bus is a priority because of its frequency of use, and having a recharging station of some kind for that bus on land adjacent to the P&R would be good.
- We need to reorganize the uses and activities of the Town property at the DPW area. We need a study of that area, and we need to invite Maura Valley (Health Agent & local DEP authority) to a meeting to discuss what can be done there.
- The Union Street location has advantages, but there a lot of parties involved, which makes it difficult. Flooding is a concern at that location, but IC's are self-contained and ground water doesn't get into them, and IC's can be picked up and moved, but wires in the ground may be sacrificed. Level 3 charging is the best bet for the future. Union Street is town-owned, and an easement could be arranged.
- The Planning Board and the Master Plan Committee are looking at all of these areas. There will be a Town Cabinet meeting with the Planning Board and the Select Board to look at the DPW area. We all need to look at where the money will come from.
- There are chargers at the Public Safety Building; there is a 260-kWh storage facility at that location, but there is no public charging capability.
- There are major utility issues to work out with Eversource in general. It might be possible to tie into the Eversource easement that crosses over Town property. There is

a 100-foot-wide strip that comes in at the Sheriff's Meadow property in West Chop. Jay said he talked to Ronit Goldstein [Community Relations Specialist from Eversource] and Ben Robinson about undergrounding along that strip, but it didn't seem to register with Eversource. It would not be insurmountable. It would be good to invite Ronit to a meeting.

- At the Union St. location, the Town could delineate a lease area for the VTA, and they could apply for grants independently.
- Rachel can pull the easement agreements that already exist.
- In answer to a question from Bill, Angie said she likes the idea of fuel-cell buses, but we are not there yet. In September, there will be a meeting of regional transit authorities, and eventually we might get there, but it will take time. The MBTA likes diesel and is not interested. It's a fuel source that doesn't exist on the island. Ideally, there would be a large electric charging station that everybody could participate in, including Uber, Lyft and others
- The Steamship Authority has much better charging capabilities and opportunities in the Falmouth/Woods Hole area than on the Vineyard.
- The Committee needs to do more research and legwork on all of these issues; we need to familiarize ourselves with what has already been accomplished. A discussion with Maura is a high priority. Melinda will invite her to our next meeting.
- We need to have more information and a good plan before we deal with Eversource.

Steering Committee Report: The MVC is putting the goals together and will issue a report. They are a little behind schedule.

Public Health & Safety Thematic Working Group Report: The group has not met, but Louise reported that Lila Fischer was coordinating with the Dukes County Health Council to have a climate change sub-committee.

Other issues: Rachel asked Jay about electric charging at the school and whether current plans preclude a solar canopy, and he said he couldn't answer that question. Rachel said the building alone will not provide enough power, and Jay said he would take that back to the construction team.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Bill and seconded by Rachel. The motion passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:49 PM.

Next Meeting: July 25, 2022, at 5:30, place to be determined.
(The option for Zoom meetings will be extended; possible dates include March or December 2023. If in-person meetings are held, they must have a Zoom option as well.)

Minutes Submitted by: Kate Shands