

Tisbury Climate Committee (TCC)

Meeting Minutes

Date: October 17, 2022

Meeting called to order: by Melinda Loberg, Chair, at 5:36 PM.

Place: Zoom: Meeting ID: 825 7841 1560 Passcode: 775299

Attendance: Committee Members: Melinda Loberg, Louise Clough, Rachel Orr, Kate Shands, Bill Straw, Bruce Stuart * (late arrival)
Ross Seavey, Building Inspector, Town Liaison

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

Review and Approval of Minutes: Several small corrections and additions were made to the minutes of October 3. Kate moved that the minutes be accepted, Louise seconded, and the motion passed 4-0 with 1 abstention (by Kate, who was not present at the last meeting.)

Discussion: [*Recorder's Note: Discussions are grouped for clarity and brevity.*] Melinda began by saying that she wanted to report on two meetings. The first was the 4:00 PM meeting with the Water Department and Commissioners. She, Louise, Bill, and Kate were present at that meeting with David Schwab, Roland Miller, and James Cleary. Ben Robinson, Kate Warner, and Deborah Jernegan [Head of Vineyard Montessori School] were also present. She reported that the meeting began with a discussion of the lead levels at the Montessori School, which are lower than they were but are still unsatisfactory. She reported that the TCC members were concerned with hardening of the systems, and that the Water representatives continually tried to reassure us. They said the department had generators and 2,000-gallon propane tanks at the wells. In case of a disaster, they could provide water for a month in the winter and for a week or two in the summer. She said they shied away from catastrophes and were satisfied with their planning. In a worst-case scenario, they could go to manual control of the wells and towers. They said putting electric lines underground would be cost prohibitive. It's too soon for battery storage. Solar was considered for the water department roof but was rejected. Bill added that he had brought up cameras and the transformers on the electric poles at the wells, and that Roland said that a Comcast camera connection would be very expensive. Rachel mentioned that the Comcast contract is being negotiated right now, and that Jeff Kristal is representing us. Bill reiterated that they were resistant to our suggestions., except for talking to Eversource about cutting trees along the power lines and asking them to look at the transformers and possibly putting them on the ground. In addition, they are not interested in having the Town provide services to them; they want to preserve the financial separation between the Town and the Water Works. Rachel asked about the water coming out of the taps and asked if they addressed the chemistry or manual amendments and Melinda said no; they rely on alarms from the SCADA system. Rachel asked what SCADA was, and Melinda said it was

the computer system managing the water system and that employees can monitor SCADA on their cell phones. She added that it's the same system the wastewater plant uses.

[Note: SCADA: "**Supervisory control and data acquisition** is a category of software applications for controlling industrial processes, which is the gathering of data in real time from remote locations in order to control equipment and conditions."]

Melinda said she would draw up a summary of that meeting and send it to the water department; she added that Kate Warner added a lot to the meeting and that she obviously has David Schwab's respect. She said that a high priority for them is a higher, smaller water tank, and noted that we did put some thoughts in their minds.

The second meeting Melinda wanted to report on was one that included Jay Grande, Kirk Metell, Ross Seavey, Melinda, Bill, and Louise; this meeting addressed proposed warrant articles for the 2023 Town Meetings. The agenda items for discussion were as follows:

Special Town Meeting:

1. *Adopt new DOER Specialized Stretch Code.*
This item was tabled because there will be a new Stretch Code in January.
2. *Home Rule petition: all new construction be all-electric.*
This item was also tabled because we didn't meet the 10% housing standard; it's unlikely to happen and is not the highest priority.
3. *New Town vehicles should be hybrid or all electric.*
This item was agreed to, with an exception for heavy duty vehicles. Bill noted that this item did not need a warrant article because it was already agreed to under our Green Communities [GC] status. Rachel suggested that it would be worth reading the GC document and added that we might want input from the Police Department because they are having maintenance issues. She added that it warrants a broader conversation.
4. *Procurement policy requirement for all-electric buildings/vehicles (GC requirements).*
Melinda will distribute the GC document.
5. *Fossil fuel free electric pool heaters.*
Ross said that these heaters are covered in the Energy Code, and they may be in the new Stretch Code. He noted that anecdotally, electric heaters are more common.

Annual Town Meeting:

1. *Battery storage – in a prioritized order.*
 - *ESF.*
The battery discussion in general centered around the fact that batteries are not technologically ready yet.
 - *Senior Center.*
The Senior Center is proposed as a warming site. Solar there was estimated to cost \$160K. Melinda will revisit the cost and update it. Bill said it would be better to over-estimate, and Ross said he would reach out to Harvest Sun. He noted that some costs have come down, and Harvest Sun is ordering panels in bulk in anticipation of increased demand. Melinda asked how soon we need to be ready for warrant articles, and Rachel said winter, and updating should be easy. Bill

suggested that we specify the highest wattage available. Ross said he could ask them about that.

- *Wherever we install solar systems (parking lots, school, etc.)*

Melinda asked if Ross could ask about charging stations in the parking lot at the same time he discusses solar panels at the Senior Center. Ross said Jay is open to additional installations. The roof may be the best thing to do first; the parking lot should be second because it will require engineering time; and battery back-up should be third. He added that there is now an inverter out there that allows direct access to panels without battery back-up.

- *Town Wells – begin development now because there are many things to consider and overcome, including safety, security, tree cutting, associated buildings & infrastructure, undergrounding, interconnection.*

Melinda reiterated that the Water Department wants to preserve the financial separation between itself and the Town.

Bill asked Ross for an update on batteries at the OB School, and Ross said he didn't know, but he could reach out to them. Rachel said that propane and oil prices will be going way up and asked if, in a catastrophe, since we're not comfortable with batteries yet, we would have access to Angie's buses [Angela Gompert, VTA Administrator] and whether we have an arrangement about that. Melinda said she would reach out to Angie. Melinda and Rachel mentioned communities in Florida and Hawaii that are completely solar powered. Bill asked if we could have the current cost of electricity and propane on our website, and Melinda said Suzanne Kennedy keeps track of that for the Town, and it would be easy to put it on the Town website, but the Town negotiates fixed rates, and that might not be applicable to residents.

2. *Continue with heat pump installations in Town buildings. Need a timeline to identify the order.*

Bill said that we are eligible for energy conservation measure under the GC Act. He said we don't know how long GC will last, and we want to get funds whenever we can.

Melinda said the bottom line is we need a spreadsheet for our plans. The Senior Center, the library, and the school are in the pipeline. Bill said the school and the library have heat pump plans in place; Melinda said we won't need GC money for those. Bill asked what's next, and Melinda said the Annex and the water company; Bill said the water company isn't open to us discussing their projects. Rachel suggested the old superintendent's house, the dog pound, and the harbormaster's shack. She wondered if we could do a package deal on smaller buildings. Melinda said we would need to have the engineering in place. She added that the harbormaster's building is poorly constructed, and the Town is considering moving it for the view and changing the site work for Owen Park.

3. *Change over to hot water heaters in Town buildings.*

Melinda said this item got a lukewarm response from Jay, Kirk, and Ross. Ross said he didn't remember the discussion well enough, but he knows we use very little hot water in Town buildings. He didn't know if Margaret [Song] discouraged this change, and he didn't know about the advantages of small water heaters. He said we need to ask

Margaret about our next GC project. Bill said we could use instant water heaters under the sinks, and Ross said that was a good idea, but he didn't know whether we have the amperage to do it, whether we need both a plumber and an electrician, and whether we have the funding. Melinda said that again we needed to check with Margaret. The Town uses hot water at the ESF (Fire Station) and the harbormaster's shack.

4. *Install electric car chargers at the Park & Ride.*

This was a popular item. Edgartown put in four changing stations at their Park & Ride, and Alan Strahler has provided us with necessary documents. Melinda asked if managing this program was do-able for Ross, and he said yes. Melinda asked if he received the documents, and he said no; please forward them. Bill said if the chargers were at the extreme end of the Park & Ride, they would be closest to the Eversource facilities, and he suggested that we continue to consider a solar canopy there. Melinda said we can charge people to use the car chargers, and that Alan provided us with a list of vendors.

5. *Generators – School & Fire Station – connect them? For back-up.*

There was not much interest in this item.

6. *Harbormaster's building – solar walkway/Gazebo/battery storage.*

Bill said we should look at solar hot water at the harbormaster's shack, and Melinda agreed, saying summer shower use is compatible with solar heating. However, Jay said at that meeting that although he was interested, he was not yet ready because of proposed changes to the building.

7. *Late addition – Reduce the use of gas-powered leaf blowers/string trimmers (Noise pollution and de-carbonization.)*

Melinda said there was no discussion on this item and asked if we should take it on or focus on the agreed-upon items. Rachel said she had no sense of how much they pollute but hated the noise. She added that landscapers don't like the electric ones because they are insufficient to the task.

The two articles everybody agreed on were the Senior Center and the car chargers.

Melinda then said this discussion was winding up and asked for a motion to adjourn.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Rachel, seconded by Kate. The motion passed 6-0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Next Meeting: October 24, 2022, at 5:30 PM. Agenda is to host four members of the Master Plan Steering Committee. (Rachel said she will not be able to attend and said to be sure we have a quorum.)

Minutes Submitted by: Kate Shands