

Tisbury Climate Committee (TCC)

Meeting Minutes

Date: May 8, 2023

Meeting called to order: by Melinda Loberg, Chair at 6:29 PM. (It was scheduled for 6:15, but we realized we didn't have a quorum and had to contact Bill Straw and Bruce Stuart, who couldn't Zoom by video but could Zoom by phone, so that we could conduct business.)

Place: Zoom: Meeting ID: 975 061 9542
Passcode: climate

Attendance: Committee Members: Melinda Loberg, Louise Clough, Rachel Orr, Kate Shands
Bill Straw (present from 6:29 to 6:35) and & Bruce Stuart (present from 6:35 on).

Guests: Holly Stephenson, Henry Stephenson, one or both of whom may be interested in serving on the TCC.

Review and Approval of Minutes: Louise moved that the minutes of April 17 be accepted, Rachel seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

Discussion: *[Recorder's Note: Discussions are grouped for clarity and brevity.]*

EITPP Grant. Melinda reported that the Select Board had voted to support the grant that Kate Warner of the MVC had submitted, which would provide technical advice and support to the three down-island towns (Edgartown, Oak Bluffs, and Tisbury) in order to harden town resources, provide for electrification and ensure that the town water departments could continue to supply water in case of a prolonged electrical failure to their own citizens and to those of the three up-island towns (Aquinnah, Chilmark, and West Tisbury) that do not have town-provided water. (The grant provides people, not money.) Melinda had completed a stakeholder support form and asked for committee support to submit it. Kate so moved, Louise seconded, and the motion passed 5-0. Rachel commented that providing water in case of emergency was at the top of this committee's list of priorities, so it was great that we could complete this task.

Stephensons. Melinda then asked Holly and Henry to tell us a little about themselves. Holly said she had been on the MVC a few years ago and on the Tisbury Planning Board. She was also on the Planning Board of New York City (NYC). In addition, she had served on a committee with Rachel that was considering a playground for the Tashmoo area. She noted that she is very interested in climate issues. Henry said he had been on the Planning Boards here and in NYC and on the Staten Island Community Board. He helped with design issues, including access to the waterfront. He wasn't sure he wanted to be a full-time member of the TCC but would be interested in being available if his expertise were needed. Holly asked if there were any rules about two family members serving on a committee. Melinda said no and asked that one or both of them write a letter to Pam Bennett expressing interest in serving. Henry said he had a backlog of projects and was looking for things that overlap. Holly added

that Henry was the founder of the Energy Committee (it was a subcommittee of the Planning Board), and Melinda noted that Bill Straw and Bruce Stuart both came to us from that committee.

Mass Save Initiative. Melinda announced that because the Covid pandemic is officially ending on May 11, there is a Mass Save initiative that might allow re-purposing of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds to support other purposes, perhaps climate-related goals.

Climate Action Fair. The committee discussed their responses to the fair, including the welcome presence of new participants such as other towns, the OB librarian, and the League of Women Voters; multiple EV demonstrations; and circulation of a petition to electrify the ferries. All agreed that there was general enthusiasm and good community-building. Regarding the electrification of ferries, Melinda said she would contact Jim Malkin and invite him to a meeting. She added that next year, Tisbury would have a booth.

Green Communities. Melinda reported that Bill had called Laura Selmer, and she had said we couldn't apply for GC grants every six months or one year but rather every two years. Melinda said she wasn't happy with that response, and we needed to check to see if that was true. Melinda said we've asked for a staff member at the Town with whom we could work for some time, and we need to renew our efforts once the election is over. Holly asked if we had previously gotten grants every six months, and Melinda explained that the Town had applied for a grant for the senior center, but the bid for the work was more than the amount of the grant, so we had to forego that grant. We had applied again, but the limited Town budget meant we had to retract the application. She said we are hoping to get some funding from Vineyard Power and added that the Town voted to put money in a reserve fund for climate-related projects.

Cape Light Compact (CLC) Evaluation Request. Melinda said that Tisbury is an Environmental Justice (EJ) Community and is thus eligible for state funds for lower-income residents; in fact, up to 80% of costs can be covered. Louise said the EJ boundaries need to be specified, and Rachel said they are public and include the Oklahoma area and the area around Tashmoo. Melinda added that CLC is looking for 80 volunteers from the island to have solar panels and heat pumps installed in their homes. Rachel suggested that we could ask CLC to do what Vineyard Power did and have an event at the Library or the Senior Center, where people can interact with them one on one. She said it could be announced in the Friday folders the kids take home from school. All agreed that was a great idea, and Melinda said she would contact Maggie Downey to discuss it. Melinda then said we had discussed asking CLC to do a new evaluation of the Senior Center, looking at possibilities for solar panels, backup batteries, car chargers and heat pumps. She asked for a motion to suggest to the Select Board that they request an updated analysis. Kate so moved, Louise seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

Adjournment: Melinda thanked Bruce for being present in order to achieve a quorum. Motion to adjourn by Rachel, seconded by Kate. The motion passed 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Next Meeting: May 22 at 5:30 PM, place TBA, hopefully in person at the Senior Center.

Minutes Submitted by: Kate Shands