

## **Tisbury Climate Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** June 5, 2023

**Meeting called to order:** by Melinda Loberg, Chair at 5:30 PM.

**Place:** Tisbury Senior Center Library

**Attendance:** Committee Members: Melinda Loberg, Louise Clough, Rachel Orr, Kate Shands, Bill Straw, Bruce Stuart

Guests: Holly Stephenson, Luke Lefebber, Vineyard Power (VP)

**Review and Approval of Minutes:** Louise moved that the minutes of May 8 be accepted with one minor correction, Rachel seconded, and the motion passed 5-0, with one abstention.

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

Melinda reported that the Tisbury School received a grant for EV charging stations in the parking lot.

Because Luke was present, Melinda decided to start with the Senior Center project instead of following the agenda. Luke introduced himself, noted that Vineyard Power (VP) is a partner of Vineyard Wind, and outlined their Resiliency and Affordability Program (RAP), which will provide jobs, infrastructure, and direct investments to towns on the Vineyard; the total investment amount is \$7.5 million over 15 years, \$700,000 of that going to Tisbury. The money will increase resiliency for Island towns and increase affordability for low-income residents. The resiliency money will help provide solar power and battery storage for town and tribal essential facilities.

The Senior Center is an essential Tisbury facility. A previous grant proposal submitted to CVEC was unsuccessful, and CVEC is looking to re-issue that grant. VP will help with the grant proposal and act as a go-between with Maria Marasco, the Executive Director of CVEC. Luke is looking to include as much accurate information in the RFP as possible and needs to know what Tisbury wants for the building; he added that VP is not concerned with the financing structure but does want to make sure that Tisbury is able to get what it needs for its essential facilities. The needs can include heating and cooling, water, and appliances that will be backed up by resiliency. Several people said that the roof had just been replaced, so it was solar-ready. There was a lengthy discussion of what the Senior Center currently uses for heating and cooling, how much electricity the Senior Center uses, strategic electrification plans, what the cost of batteries might be and how long they might last, and the need to ensure that the solar installation can handle the needs of the building, and that battery backup is adequate.

The group then took a tour of the building to assess its current structures.

Bill said he had talked to Margaret Song at Cape Light Compact (CLC) and she said that the Town had been late with its annual report, which set us back: we cannot apply again in October but will have to wait until next spring. Luke noted that there are only two officially certified Red Cross shelters on the Vineyard: the Oak Bluffs School and the tribal facility in Aquinnah, but that the Senior Center, the Vineyard Haven library, and the Tisbury school can serve as warming and cooling shelters in Tisbury. Rachel said that the Senior Center is easier for people than the school because it is on one floor; she also noted that the school cannot be used during school hours and that the School Committee makes those decisions, not the Town. Melinda added that initially the plan was for the school to be an official shelter, but the architect said that would be too expensive. Rachel said that the fire station has been used in the past, but that emergency management is located there, and having the Senior Center provide water and charging capacity would take a burden off the fire station.

There was then a discussion about whether the Town would own the solar and battery installations or have a power purchase agreement with a contractor. If the Town owns them, they would be required to maintain them, and the Town is not currently in the best position to do that. Luke noted that the Town might want to purchase the installations after the initial agreement period. The next step in this process is to ask Jay Grande to ask RISE Engineering to do an updated assessment of the building, and Melinda said she would do that. The question of whether VP could help finance a facilities manager was raised but not answered; Rachel wondered if it might be possible for the towns to share an island-wide facilities manager.

Bill brought up the issue of the 12 new generators Eversource has added on the island and the huge amount of fuel they require. Rachel said the generators have always been in the zone of contribution for the well and still are, but they are now closer than they were before the cable broke; they are also surrounded by residential property. There was an extended discussion concerning Eversource that included the following points:

- The generators are on land that has easements, not on land that Eversource owns, and easements are not intended for generation.
- They are located in an EJ community.
- They are very noisy and have emissions that travel downwind.
- The areas where they are located have been paved and fenced.
- Hamilton Tree trucks are parked under power lines.

Melinda suggested that Rachel and Bill, who is our representative to Eversource, compile a list of these concerns and that she could convey that list to the Select Board, who could communicate these concerns to Eversource. Other committees and departments that should be involved in these discussions include the Planning Board, the Board of Health, the Open Space Committee, and the Water Department.

Melinda then brought up the Cape Light Compact that was discussed at the last meeting. She said she had talked to Maggie Downey about public meetings to inform the public, and Maggie was all in. Luke said there is a program called CVEO (Cape and Vineyard Electric Offering) that will fund 100% of weatherizing, heat pumps, and solar and battery power for income-eligible

households, 80% of which must be deed-restricted. We need to notify individuals who qualify and set dates for information sessions. There was a discussion about ways to find those individuals and handle publicity, including end-of year notices at the school, press releases, the Town columns, and the Tisbury Street Fair, in addition to talking to David Vigneault at the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority and people at Island Housing Trust. Kate offered to talk to Joyce Stiles-Tucker at the Senior Center.

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn by Bill, seconded by Rachel. The motion passed 6-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM.

**Next Meeting:** June 12 at 5:30 PM at the Senior Center Library

**Minutes Submitted by:** Kate Shands