

## **Tisbury Climate Committee**

### **Meeting Minutes**

Zoom Meeting

ID: 853 1846 5731, Passcode: climate

January 6, 2025, 5:30 PM

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

Daniel called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM and announced that the TCC Annual Report had been submitted.

**Review and Approval of Minutes:** Louise moved that the minutes of December 2, 2024, be accepted, Rachel seconded, and the motion passed 5-0 (Bill abstained).

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

#### **Leaf Blower By-Law discussion**

Daniel reported that the committee handling this issue is trying to align the language among the towns and that we have a draft from them of the proposed by-law for Tisbury. He wants, in addition, not only to align the policies of the Town with the TCC recommendations but also to make sure that the Town agrees to follow the recommendations that we are asking landscapers to follow. However, he's having trouble reaching Kirk [Metell, DPW Director]. Melinda agreed that the Town should take a leadership role and said it's wrong to ask landscapers to do something the Town is not willing to do. A general discussion followed about the best ways to get in touch with Kirk. Daniel noted that he got pushback from the committee when he said he wanted to contact the DPW. He added that he had received e-mails from Margot Sharff, Zada Clarke, and John Cahill concerning this issue.

Melinda commented that Tisbury has been very slow to respond to this endeavor; the group has concentrated on communicating with the Select Board, and it's good for the TCC to have a role here. Bill asked where our noise ordinances are, and Rachel said a general by-law was voted on at Town Meeting, and the Town Clerk should be able to get it to whomever wants it. She looked up the date for submitting articles for the Special Town Meeting and reported that it is January 28. [She then explained that articles for Special Town Meeting are those that don't involve money; articles that involve money are addressed at the Annual Town Meeting; both meetings are held on the same night.] Melinda said the TCC is a subsidiary of the Planning Board and perhaps they could handle this issue. She noted that if we, as a committee, want to propose something, we don't have much time. Rachel added that we have already missed the deadline for anything that involves money. She said the Select Board has only money issues on their agenda today, and Louise added that police and fire funding are on that agenda.

Melinda said that we do have a fund of money available to us; it's worth inquiring about the total amount in that fund. We could possibly use money from that fund. Daniel asked about the fund, and Melinda said we voted at Town Meeting to put money into a fund every year for TCC projects. It's a stabilization fund which has received \$50,000 twice. We don't have a grant application now, so we or the Town could identify an important use for that money. Daniel noted that there are numerous energy projects that could save the Town money, if implemented. Melinda agreed and mentioned EV chargers and Bill's list of energy goals [see *below*]. Louise said that if the library project passes, solar is not included, and maybe our fund could help in that effort; it would fit into Bill's list. We could ask that money continue to be put into that fund. She suggested that we could set some money aside to be used for purchasing the landfill array. Bill said that first, we need the Town counsel's opinion about where we stand on the solar array contract. We're currently getting a payout for the lease of the land. He said that if the Town were to own the array, we would have to re-populate it, and he doesn't know if the funds in the stabilization fund could be used for that. Daniel said that's another Planning Board issue and we could ask them if they want to look at it now. Bill said it would be good to start planning for it now and added that he had tried to get CVEC to commit to a plan, but they're not ready to do so. He suggested that we could begin committing money annually to that end.

### **How the Town should go about meeting its climate-related goals (Bill)**

Here is Bill's draft:

*Tisbury Energy Goals Statement:*

1. *Solar on all possible buildings with battery backup.*
2. *Heat pumps, hybrid hot water heaters, LED lighting and car chargers on all possible buildings. Plan on a propane heat/hot water backup system for each.*
3. *Own the solar array at the end of the park and ride.*
4. *Connect the 3 wells to a micro grid and connect to a remote site battery backup.*
5. *Explore the possibility of a town owned windmill located at the Park & Ride or at the town dock on beach road by the bridge.*

Bill said that the goals the Select Board had laid out had a few energy items, but they were not precise. He said the low-hanging fruit would be to change the hot water heaters in all Town properties to hybrid models. He asked if anyone knew where we stand on other items. Melinda said Vineyard Power is still working hard on the Senior Center project, and a contract has been signed. Bill asked if it was through CVEC, and Melinda said yes, and Luke Lefeber would be the person to contract. Bill asked if Tisbury still has a facilities manager, and Melinda said yes [Erik Blake]. Bill said he had sent out a progress report from Packer showing that the Town has stopped purchasing 21,000 gallons of heating oil for the school and said he would send it again. Rachel asked if we could get the numbers from 2018 and commented that the library was spending about \$3,000 per month for propane in the early 2000's when she was a trustee. She said the Town could be saving a lot of money if the school renovation passes and the library goes all electric. Melinda said those numbers would be good to put in our annual report. Bill asked if we could put it on the Town website, and Daniel said the administrator for the website is hard to get hold of.

Bill asked if we should pass his energy plan on to the Select Board. Rachel said we should take an informal vote and discuss it with the Select Board and the facilities manager. Bill suggested that we should review it and discuss it at the next meeting. Melinda suggested that we have a preliminary discussion with the Water Department; they may have been developing a plan for energy to the wells, and Rachel agreed. Bill said we could delete that item from the list or re-word it. Daniel said the water department heads were all at the ETIPP meetings, so we could possibly say, "per the ETIPP report...". He added that we should definitely include it on the list. Bill said they are proposing to bring buses to the wells to service them in case of an emergency, and Daniel added that they are very specific as to which buses they will use. Melinda suggested that we could word it differently, saying Tisbury will support the Water Department in implementing the ETIPP plan; that would give deference to the Water Department's authority. Rachel agreed and said it would be a Tisbury priority to have back-up systems for the wells. Bill asked Melinda to put the wording together about the water department.

Melinda said that while we're talking about microgrids, we should recommend that the school and the EMF should be on one. Bill agreed with that and added that all buildings should have fiber-optic cable. Daniel asked who would assess the buildings for hot water heaters, and Bill said the money would come from Green Communities, but we missed the deadline for this round. He added that we would need for Kirk or the facilities manager to approve them. He also noted that hybrid hot water heaters are 2-3 times as efficient as the old ones. He thought we might not even need to take that item to Town Meeting; they might be able to come under maintenance. He asked why we are heating water on the weekends and said he and others shut one off for the weekend about 4 years ago, and no one complained.

Rachel said there is an article for money for the Harbormaster's office, and it's not a lot of money. She said it would be good if we made these changes in time for these items to be part of the planning for that project. Bill agreed and said we need to change to instant hot water heaters under the sinks there, but we don't have the authority to do any of this. Daniel said he wanted to have a regularly scheduled meeting with Kirk and the facilities manager, and Rachel said she wanted to tell Kirk that we need to work together and coordinate better.

Melinda suggested that we get on the new Town Administrator's list; we could sit down with him and discuss these issues. She said perhaps we could prepare a brief for him. Rachel thought that was a good idea and said he's not coming from Massachusetts, so he may need an introduction to some of these matters. She suggested we could build the brief from the Annual Report. Bill asked if we should work on this for the next meeting. Rachel suggested that Bill could add something to the bottom of his list about Green Community and Cape Light Compact funds, that is, include potential funding sources but keep it short. She added that the Martha's Vineyard Commission has done a great job with funding.

## **Committee Updates**

### **EV Chargers**

Melinda asked where we stood with the car-charging stations, and Daniel said that Jay did respond to his e-mail, but punted it to Kirk, who didn't respond. Melinda said the funding may replenish while we dilly-dally and added that anyone on this committee could talk to Kirk about this issue.

### **Update on mitigating or contending with insects harming the native trees**

Daniel said that he was hoping to talk to Kirk about this issue as well. He said there had been an article in the paper about it. Rachel said she had taken a walk around Brightwood Park and the shellfish hatchery and noticed that a lot of the pines around there, especially those close to the road, are in bad shape. She said the primary power lines run through there and she is concerned about the proximity of the power lines to the damaged pines. She thinks some neighborhoods around Weaver and Winyah Lanes may be very vulnerable and could be cut off; she wondered if we should be trimming these damaged trees. Melinda wondered if we should recommend that the Town contact Eversource, and Rachel said she would like to review the situation again with a second set of eyes. Kate volunteered to walk with her. Rachel said it's an area kind of like Herring Creek Road that's both public and private. Melinda said that they are cutting down trees in West Chop Woods, and Rachel and Louise wondered what the plans are for the logs they've cut and what will happen afterwards in terms of invasives. Daniel suggested that Kirk might have a Town policy about that, and Melinda joked that we should have our next meeting in Kirk's office. Daniel said he would stop in at Kirk's office this week. Melinda said we need to have either Kirk or the facilities manager attend our meetings.

Daniel said there was nothing else new from committees.

Rachel said she had a piece of trivia to share and told the committee that the reason the island has municipal wells, which is unusual for municipalities, was a result of Hurricane Carol in 1953. Before that, we were using surface water, so we were vulnerable to large storms. She added that the Town has had to switch gears fast in the past in response to major events. In answer to a question from Bill about our vulnerability, she noted that Tisbury's wells are deep and would not be as vulnerable in another major storm as those in Oak Bluffs, which are shallower.

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

**Next Meeting:** Jan. 27, 2025, at 5:30 PM by Zoom.

**Minutes Submitted by:** Kate Shands