

Tisbury Climate Committee

Meeting Minutes

Zoom Meeting

ID: 381 957 6371, Passcode: climate

April 14, 2025, 5:30 PM

Attendance: Committee Members: Daniel Phelan, Louise Clough, Rachel Orr, Kate Shands, Bill Straw, Bruce Stuart, Melinda Loberg (late arrival)
Guests: Cheryl Doble

Daniel called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

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

- 1. Review and Approval of Minutes:** Louise moved that the minutes of January 27 and March 3 be accepted, Bill seconded, and the motion passed 6-0.

- 2. Update about Cape Light Compact grant funding for the Town. Rise engineering visited the Tisbury Fire Station. Awaiting an update from DPW.**

Daniel reported that Rise Engineering showed up and did a thorough walk-through at the Fire station with Kirk, but the follow-up from the Town was not in time for this round of funding. The Rise engineer will have a complete package ready for the next round. Daniel reminded us that Laura Selmer came and presented to us, but there were only 5 weeks available to get the report in. The committee agreed that this is a major and recurring problem; that the Facilities Manager is the appropriate person to follow up with the grants, and that we need to address this issue with the Select Board (SB) and the new Town Administrator (TA). The committee agreed to invite the TA and members of the SB and the Planning Board (PB) to our meetings and/or to have one of us meet with them to be sure they are aware of such issues. Rachel noted that we have liaisons from the PB assigned to our committee and we could remind them at our meetings.

- 3. Leaf blower By-Law discussion – Need Follow-up when FinCom and Select Board meet about warrant articles.**

Daniel reported that the PB has the leaf blower proposal on its agenda for Wednesday. The FinCom voted on it, but the language was changed by Roy Cutrer afterwards (he wanted property owners to be able to use leaf blowers on Sundays), and they don't have the new wording. Daniel asked if we should have a vote in support of the proposed warrant. Rachel moved that we approve the original proposal, knowing that the language will change. Louise seconded, and the motion passed 7-0.

4. Tisbury Energy and Climate-related Goals Report – Ongoing (Bill), Climate Stabilization Fund Questions – Consider writing a report to read at Town Meeting to offer good news about the school, thank the School Building Committee, and talk up the solar and the reduction of fuel costs or volume.

Bill showed the committee his plan by screen share:

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 & Ride.
4. The Town will provide support as needed to the Tisbury Water Department for the purpose of implementing the recommendations of the ETIPP grant (MVC). The ability of our wells to continue pumping water during an extended period of no electric power is a vital need of the community.
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.

Grants are available to cover the cost of most of the above list from the following sources: Green Communities, Cape Light Compact, Vineyard Power, and the Cape and Vineyard Coop.

Daniel added that we need to review the original contract for the solar array and re-negotiate it in a way that will benefit the Town.

Melinda noted that we also have an RFP pending for car chargers for public use.

The committee agreed to keep the plan short and simple, but elaborate when needed, especially regarding #3.

There was some discussion about wind turbines and the difficulty of siting them, but Rachel felt that the word “explore” covered that issue. Melinda suggested that we send the plan to the SB and the PB with today’s date on it. Rachel moved that the committee approve the plan with Daniel’s addition, write it up, and send it to the SB and the PB. Melinda seconded, and the motion passed 7-0.

5. Vineyard Power (VP) Advisory Committee Appointee Discussion – Resiliency and Affordability Program, VP received \$7.5M of Funding. CO date for VW is 2025, releasing \$500 per year after that. \$200K available to Tisbury for a solar and/or battery grant. Need to approach the Select Board to appoint a new liaison to the VP Advisory Committee. Invite Richard Andre for a follow-up meeting.

Daniel reported that that Richard Andre was supposed to have a meeting and Daniel was to go, but VP hasn’t had a meeting yet.

Committee Updates (ongoing)

a. Flood Plain By-Laws – Louise Clough – Slide Deck Coming

Cheryl summarized the workshop the MVC hosted on April 5 to help guide the development of updates to the island towns’ Floodplain and Wetlands Bylaws. She said Shannon Huist, Barnstable County Floodplain Specialist gave an overview of the model bylaws they have developed on the Cape; and Chris Seidel, MVC

Cartographer and GIS Coordinator presented the Storm Tide Pathways maps and several other maps she has compiled to help the towns understand sea level changes and projections in each of our towns. Her maps are available on the MVC Website. Cheryl also reported that Liz Durkee is retiring and is hoping the towns can propose bylaws soon.

b. Meeting “Green Leaders Qualifications”, Decarbonization Roadmap Assistance from DOER – Approach the Town Administrator about this. Forward flyer.

Rachel found the flyer but said she didn’t know if the assistance was still available. She said the energy plan we just approved is pretty close to what the flyer outlined. Daniel said he would check the link and forward it to the committee if the funding is still available.

c. ETIPP – Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project – Update from meeting

Daniel reported that he attended that meeting; that there were representatives from all the town water departments; there was an engineer who specializes in water systems; and it was an in-depth presentation. He said they can’t share the slide deck, but it presented the battery capacity of each bus, how long it takes each bus to charge, and which bus is assigned to each pumping station. They estimated that the buses on island could provide 75% of the water necessary and 100% if there were no showers or watering of lawns. It could be expensive; it’s very complicated; and they would need off-the-shelf components to accomplish it. It’s not near-term, but it’s feasible. Rachel asked about funding, and Daniel said the Towns would probably own the equipment. Bill said there are other things that could be done, such as having more water tanks and more storage, which would be simpler. Daniel said other suggestions included having the towns own portable battery backups (basically generators) that could be taken back to the VTA to be charged; he added that he had not realized that the VTA had a microgrid at their airport business park location. Bill said the water departments have talked about having batteries close to the wells, but they run the risk of contamination. Bruce said that people who have private wells could get hand pumps that only cost about \$150 that could be used for their own use and that of their neighbors. He added that if the towns bought them in bulk, the price could be less, and plumbers could install them. Bill said those could also be installed at the town wells. Rachel said we should get the word out to rural residents for emergency preparedness. Bruce said he could bring the information to the next meeting, and Daniel said we could prepare a flyer. Bill said he has 6-gallon jerry cans that cost about \$14 each. The Town could buy some of those and distribute them. That would be useful for toilets, since using salt water can kill the systems. Daniel said ETIPP has another meeting in the summer.

d. EV Chargers at Park & Ride and 21 Beach St. Notes: Needs to be signed off on by the new Town Administrator, Possible addition to the RFP for upgrading the

chargers at the Senior Center and High Point Lane. EV Chargers Upgrades cost assessment is about \$4K.

Daniel said we need to show the new TA the RFP. The High Point Lane charger is being used by a private Tesla owner. Kirk said the chargers are provided by a grant from the State and can't be monetized. He suggested putting up a sign that says 4-hour parking only. Daniel said he asked Jon Snyder, and Jon doesn't think there's a contract. Daniel said if the TCC is in favor of spending money on upgrading the chargers we already have, it's not that difficult or expensive; it would cost about \$4K to upgrade each charger to one that could take credit cards, and we could put more chargers there because the electric capacity is greater than the chargers are using. Rachel said she doesn't think the Town should be paying for private use, and that's good to know, that in case that would be a better location than the Park & Ride.

e. Seawall grant

Rachel said that she was concerned because the BRIC grant for the Five Corners flooding project was a FEMA grant and may not be funded anymore. The State doesn't want to be responsible, and Federal money may not be there. She's hoping the seawall is sturdier than we think. The problem is the hospital: having the road closed doubles the time for emergency vehicles to get there from Tisbury. She said we need to follow up more, but it's not looking great.

Upcoming meetings:

None announced.

Delayed Proceedings:

- a. Plan to meet with Tisbury departments on their climate-related issues.**
- b. Invite new Town Administrator to our next meeting.**
- c. Reconstitute the Committee to seven people.**

Rachel said we need to ask when our appointments are up and ask the SB to declare us to be a 7-member committee. Louise said Holly would like to stay on, and she wondered if she and her husband could share the position, but Louise thought probably not. Kate said that Cheryl Doble is interested, and Melinda said she just needs to ask to be appointed. Everyone agreed Cheryl would be a great addition.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Louise, seconded by Rachel. The motion passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Next Meeting: May 12.

Minutes Submitted by: Kate Shands