

Islesboro Energy Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 9, 2024
In-Person and Zoom Meeting at 5:15PM

APPROVED

2/13/24

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chair Myra Sinnott called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

2. Establishment of a Quorum

Quorum was established with over 5 members

Members Present: Vice Chair Bill Thomas, Dick DeGrasse, Cressica Brazier, Monica Mullins, Josh Leach, Toby Martin, and Melissa Burns, Ex Officio.

Via Zoom: Chair Myra Sinnott, Holly Fields, and Harriet Bering

Others Present: Cory Hua, Janice Leach, and Kizzi Barton (via Zoom)

3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

Motion: To approve Minutes of December 12, 2023, as written, B. Thomas, seconded by D. DeGrasse. No discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 9 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

4. Quick Updates on On-going Projects/Old Business

a. Energy efficiency projects update (Bill)

- Bill reported that he's collecting data to update the records of fuel and electrical consumption in the buildings. He has requests out for the data.

b. Fire/Public Safety projects update (Josh/Cressica)

- Josh asked which thermostat we will be going with in the garage. When the firefighters do the monthly inspections in the garage, Josh makes sure to look at the thermostat, because it's easy to bump it up without knowing it. He suggested getting a thermostat for the insulated wall. Maybe move the old thermostat closer to the door so it's not in the way, or just do away with it.
- Bill suggested keeping the old thermostat in place, put a double-throw switch where only a few people know about it, flip it to the new thermostat, and people can play with the old one all they want. If the new thermostat ever fails, we can flip it back to the old one. Bill will check to see if he has thermostat wire at home. He will measure the length needed, and order the thermostat. Discussion about what kind.
- Cressica stated we will try to get in touch with Justin regarding the louvres, if not, we'll do our own research. Bill will reach out in the next day or two.
- The light fixture in the garage is not repaired yet. Josh stated there's a ladder that will reach it.

c. Energy Prize update (Cressica/Kizzi)

- Cressica provided a handout with project updates and links to the website.

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- Since last meeting, we've made progress on both prize goals.
 - Myra met with ReVision and came up with a strategy for identifying community solar sites. We've started the solar site evaluation, and will continue to communicate with our contacts at ReVision.
 - Home Energy upgrades: we have planned our first Home Energy Assessment week. Kizzi has met with many people regarding their home energy needs, which has helped us develop a home energy upgrade plan. We will be able to work with people on a much broader scale, distributing it digitally. See the link on the report. We will be testing with the committee before we distribute materials to the community. We want to make sure the feedback we give is effective.
- Kizzi is going to Colorado for the National Prize in-person training next week. We can all attend via Zoom. This will be good for learning about community engagement, and everything we will need in order to apply for the big funding in April and July: The Energy Improvements in Rural and Remote Areas Grant.
- We will be having community events (listening sessions) to get information from residents about what they want to see in a community energy plan.
- Ask anyone you know who might be willing to talk about their home energy needs to get in touch with Kizzi. We are also still trying to identify contractors and installers to get pricing information in order to better prepare our grant, as well as to better prepare residents for upgrade costs.
- Toby asked if there is a list of criteria in order to qualify for Round 2. Cressica answered that there is a document on the Rural Energy Prize website.
- Dick asked if that includes engineering studies for grid capacity and community solar storage systems. Cressica stated that yes, that was part of our proposed plan. We're working with ReVision in order to get a baseline generation plan set up, then we will identify a partner that they'd be comfortable working with for an engineering study. We've talked with a few individuals. Dick requested that Cressica send the details of those individuals.
- Cressica clarified an email she sent out today regarding heat pumps and furnace boilers as back-up for the municipal program. It applies only to this building, not to residential installations.
- Myra answered Dick's question about reaching out to individuals at ReVision and stated that the committee will limit who is talking with potential partners.
- Monica stated the Islesboro Sporting Club would like to work with the Energy Hub. She will contact Kizzi.
- Myra reminded everyone that the Energy Hub is under the authority of the Select Board and Town Manager. Committee members can reach out to Cressica as the contact person for the Energy Committee.

d. Municipal Building Project (Cressica)

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- Cressica reported that the Municipal Building Project Committee met on 12/28 in order to present some updated designs that they're still working on for both the Up-Island Public Safety Garage and the Health Center Building. They're in the process of working with the Construction Manager. No Guaranteed Maximum Price yet. We won't know for another month.
- e. Library update (Toby/Bill)
- Toby reported that Melissa Olson is putting together a list of things she wants to accomplish. She wants to achieve a carbon-free building, and do away with fossil fuels. Toby would like to set a schedule for meeting those goals, depending on the budget.
 - Bill reminded the committee that we have done everything in the library that we have scheduled to do. We are in a holding pattern now to establish performance of the building so we can plan what to do next. We are collecting data this year, and recording how the building performs after the upgrades. After we have a record, we will consult with experts on the appropriate heat pump installation to match the BTU demand of the building. At that time, we will consider the electrical upgrades necessary to facilitate that, with a possible inclusion of an EV charger. There's nothing pending at the moment. We should not take any action yet.
 - Melissa is interested in a solar array on the roof, but there are trees that are obscuring the roof. The size of the solar array would be determined in part by the demand of the library in conjunction with whatever additional output we can get from the solar array to go into the pool of electricity that the town is drawing from. But this is premature.
 - Holly asked if the library has any land that can be used for solar. Bill stated that the land is obscured by trees and brush, much of which is on other people's property. It's about a half-acre, and slopes in the wrong direction. A solar array could be anywhere on the island, as long as the output goes into the town account.
 - Bill stated that the Municipal building solar array will be paid off in April. He believes the same is true for the Transfer Station array, but isn't sure of the date.
 - Toby asked Bill if he knows the outstanding balance. Bill stated he could find out, but it's not our province. Toby would like to know for planning purposes.
- f. EV Charger update (Monica/Holly)
- Monica reported that there was a Fire Department meeting last night. Fire Chief Murt Durkee is doing research on lithium battery fires. He would like the EV charger for the Up-Island PS Garage to be across the parking lot.
 - The charger at the Municipal Building is currently turned off, but we can't lock the hard-wired outlet on the building.

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- Monica stated that we can move it now, but we would have to tear up the parking lot for a conduit. Bill stated it may be best to wait until the new construction.
 - Cressica stated that the Municipal Building Project Committee is incorporating it into their plans. They could possibly break ground in a couple months. We may be able to access electricity from the new building rather than tear up the parking lot.
- g. Maine utility policy/rates update (Dick)
- Dick handed out a printout of a post he made about the Standard Offer and the new rate that's coming out today.
 - He reported that rates are going down temporarily. The Standard offer has been lowered to about 10.5 cents. The price used to include the solar subsidy, but now it doesn't. The solar subsidy is the money they pay for people to install solar panels. The solar subsidy may come back at some point.
 - The municipal rate is through Constellation, and is just a fraction of a cent different. The new Standard Offer is slightly less.
 - Dick has spoken with Constellation about possibly serving the community beyond the municipality. He is getting mixed feedback, but there is a possibility.
 - Bill will be getting the data on the use of electricity by the municipality, but it will take a little while for the discount to be reflected. He will get a report together in a few months.
 - Toby asked how the contract with Constellation works. We will renew it in a year, and renegotiate it at that time.
- h. Budget update (Toby)
- Toby provided a budget update, with a spreadsheet record of the current fiscal year, July 1 – December 31, showing an available balance of \$37,658.20 of the \$50,000 budget. Several project items are on hold and will depend on the upcoming auditor's report due in February.
 - Toby requested that the committee think about the budget in terms of what we originally planned and whether those amounts are still true. If we're not going to spend on those items, we can remove the funding and apply it elsewhere.
 - We haven't taken care of some items, such as the appreciation gift, the sensors in the library, and the outreach event. Are these still accurate figures? The electrical engineering study figure seems quite high. If anyone can update, that would be helpful.
 - Toby asked Josh about the \$8,000 in a document we got this week, and if it applies to the \$15,000 budgeted for fire updates. Josh doesn't know who is paying for the work on the building. Josh believes that the \$15,000 was an approximation for the cost of windows, that was discussed in a previous meeting. Melissa Burns added that the \$15,000 was a guestimate on upgrades

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for the Municipal Building Project that may not be included with the new building. Toby stated he's looking for something more itemized and clearer.

- Myra suggested having a budget meeting in the spring. There are items that are uncertain and we're waiting for more information.
- Dick asked about Kizzi's salary and report. Myra explained that her salary is being paid separately from the prize money through the Town, and her report was presented by Cressica with the Energy Prize update. Cressica clarified that it's her role to brief the Energy Committee, and it's Kizzi's role to brief Janet and the Select Board.
- Melissa stated that the Select Board will begin the budget process at the end of February or early March. She will confirm this. If the committee needs a vastly different amount in the budget this year, we need to get that to Janet soon.
- Toby requested that the committee have a separate budget meeting as soon as possible.
- Bill added that there are two issues: how much money are we going to spend this year of what was allocated, and how much will we need next year. The amount of money we're going to spend this year has been altered by conditions. The two heat pumps that were going to be installed in the renovated municipal building space are on hold because the renovation has been delayed. We've been focused on the Energy Prize process. When we get to work on the physical jobs we have before us, we'll know how much we have to spend and how much we'll have left over. We're not ready to have that conversation.
- Myra will initiate an email conversation to plan a budget meeting. We can gather our thoughts and ideas.

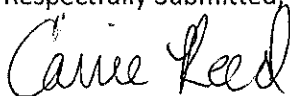
Josh Leach and Monica Mullins left the meeting at 6:35.

5. Next meeting, Tuesday, February 13th, at 5:15pm.

6. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn meeting at 6:43pm, B. Thomas, seconded by D. DeGrasse. Discussion about budget plan and annual report. Toby offered to put together the annual report. Toby will email the team for info. The deadline is March 1. Budget workshop in February. Roll Call. Motion passed, 7 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed, Secretary

