

Islesboro Energy Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 10, 2023
In-Person and Zoom Meeting at 5:15PM

 APPROVED

11-14-23

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: Chair Myra Sinnott, Dick DeGrasse, Cressica Brazier, Monica Mullins, Toby Martin, Josh Leach, and Holly Fields

Via Zoom: Vice Chair Bill Thomas

Members Absent: Harriet Bering and Melissa Burns, Ex Officio.

Others Present: Dave DeGrasse and Janice Leach

Via Zoom: Kay Mann and Amy Mulnix

3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

Motion: To approve Minutes of September 12, 2023, as written, T. Martin, seconded by J. Leach. No discussion. Motion passed, 8 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

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

a. Energy efficiency projects update (Bill)

- Bill had no report.
- Cressica reported they have finished the Efficiency Maine paperwork for the LED lights, so that project is complete.
- The EV charger is still in progress.

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

- Josh reported that we still don't know if there is moisture getting into the Fire Station Garage. He is not aware of any potential leaks on the ridge cap on the roof, but there is concern of the drywall starting to show signs of moisture from above.
- Overhead Door Company is coming this month to adjust the doors that are not going all the way down.
- There was talk years ago about getting remote door closers for the trucks, but there was concern about shutting the door inadvertently on someone backing in, so they opted to not get them. Toby stated he is concerned about loss of heat. Josh explained that currently a second person closes the door behind the truck, so there is a system in place.
- Josh would like to consult with Justin Electric on the louvres on the generator, to see if there's a way they might open when the generator starts instead of leaving them open all the time.

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- c. Municipal Building Project (Cressica)
 - Cressica reported that there was a MBPC meeting last week. They are in the budget reconciliation process in order to reach a guaranteed maximum price.
 - They are having to phase the project by cutting certain features in order to bring it under budget, so we won't be able to discuss certain energy features until they have figured out how to reach a level of functionality in the buildings.
- d. Energy Prize update (Cressica)
 - Cressica reported that they've been making progress on each component of Energy Prize activities.
 - They've been having discussions with community groups, including a productive discussion with the Islesboro Economic Sustainability Corporation (IESC). There are more upcoming discussions with other community groups to see how we can fit together to help them improve energy efficiency.
 - Cressica is building a database of participants who can join for energy audits or one of the grant proposals—people who are interested in home energy upgrades or willing to host solar arrays. Bill received an email from Josiah Emery on 700 Acre Island. He would like to host a solar array on the family property, and the family is in agreement. The ownership model and design are to be determined.
 - Monica added that Philo Hutcheson is also interested in hosting a solar array.
 - Bill stated that John Kauer is also interested in hosting a solar array.
 - Discussion about property details. Cressica has a GIS mapping system.
 - Toby asked about creating lists of potential individuals and property details that can be shared. Cressica explained that she has been building a database that will soon be more accessible to others.
 - Amy Mulnix volunteered to be a possible solar host.
- e. Treasurer's update (Toby)
 - Toby broke down the financial information he's gathered into Income, Expenses, and Balances. The Energy Prize money is now in the IEC account. There is a credit figure of \$450. Cressica explained that the figure is a truing-up of the LED upgrade project; we received a \$450 reimbursement.
 - Toby requested that those who have any financial arrangement with the Town let Toby know when any transaction happens so he can keep track of it. All things need to be accounted for in detail, with receipts.
 - Myra suggested that the Energy Prize funds be tracked separately. Toby stated he is happy to do that.

5. Discussion

- a. Maine Power Options – Kay Mann (Dick)
 - Dick gave background on his research to form an aggregation group to purchase wholesale power. Forming a group would involve a lawyer. In his research, he discovered Maine Power Options, which is an aggregation group.

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- Dick introduced Kay Mann from Maine Power Options, which serves non-taxable entities. There's no cost to join, and no lawyers involved.
- Kay spoke via Zoom and stated the Town of Islesboro is already a member of Maine Power Options, and the one-time membership is a lifetime membership, which entitles the Town to enter into a contract with Constellation New Energy for the supply of electricity.
- Constellation quotes different rates on different days according to the forward markets for the commodity of natural gas, which drives the price of electricity. The quotes this time of year are as low as they get all year because we're between heating and cooling seasons. Quotes are good until 5:00 each day.
- Contracts range between 1 year – 4 years for quotes.
- Medium and large meters normally have a different rate that fluctuates month to month. (Check MPUC website for fluctuation.) If we contract with Constellation Energy, they would give a fixed price that doesn't fluctuate.
- Dick asked how many members currently contract for electricity. Kay answered that currently it's around 240 or 250 of the over 800 members of Maine Power Options. The contracts that are currently being quoted are 10-11 cents/kWh.
- One factor for quotes is annual usage. Members sign a letter of authorization for the utility to release usage history data for Constellation to base quote on.
- We can get a new quote any time before the end of contract; shoulder seasons are good times to lock in a rate for the next contract period. There is no fee for renewing. There is a penalty for leaving the contract early.
- Constellation offers a service for market rate watches. We can sign up to receive updates regularly.
- Dick to email Kay to request a sample contract. Bill has info for municipal accounts; Dick has school's bills. If the school doesn't have a membership with Maine Power Options, they would need one; it would be a separate contract.
- Bill clarified that he tracks 10 accounts that are exclusive of the school.
- Discussion about advising the Select Board to get a rate quote.
- Cressica suggested not going higher than 11 or 12 cents, because we don't have insight into what the standard offer will be next year. It could go as low as 11 cents. The Town is currently paying the standard offer of 16.6 cents, which is in effect until January.
- Bill recommended resolving the issue of whether the school is included or if they are a separate entity. The rate is conditional upon the amount we buy. Bill will call Janet tomorrow.
- Janice suggested instead of a specific number, we recommend a certain amount below the standard offer.
- Discussion about process and recommendation to Select Board. Bill suggested getting the contract and having the Town lawyer look at it.
- Bill had to leave the meeting early.

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Motion: That the Islesboro Energy committee recommend the Select Board consider authorizing the purchase of electricity supply for Islesboro Municipal accounts from the Maine Power Options energy purchasing consortium as soon as possible, D. DeGrasse, seconded by T. Martin. No further discussion. Motion passed, 7 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

b. Budget update and vote (Myra)

- Myra explained changes to budget proposal. She made adjustments that were discussed at last meeting. Increased Fire Station funds.
- 44,650 is the budget. Holly recommended adding a Miscellaneous line of \$5350 to bring it up to \$50,000.
- Toby asked if there's a way to change holding off on large items so we can get items that are a higher priority. Myra responded that we don't know if we can prioritize yet. We will learn as we go.

Motion: To accept the IEC Proposed 2023-2024 Budget, as amended, H. Fields, seconded by M. Sinnott. No further discussion. Motion passed, 7 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

c. Energy Prize next steps on hiring Coordinator (Cressica)

- Cressica reported that Myra, Bill, Harriet, and Cressica have conducted interviews with several candidates for the Community Energy Coordinator role.
- They would like to make an offer immediately to the most qualified candidate. If this person accepts a full-time role, we are still able to ask another candidate to join us in a part-time capacity.
- We have \$65,000 allocated for initial personnel hires including the \$50,000 full-time position. We can allocate more if we decide that we need more support.
- \$25,000 is allocated for outside consulting services, \$10,000 for events, outreach materials, etc.

6. Coordination/Communication with Other Groups

- a. Islesboro Energy Team (IET) is hosting a Film, An Inconvenient Truth, at library Oct. 12
- b. IET Conference Oct. 14, 8:30-3:00 – Bill, Cressica, Myra, Dick presenting.
- c. Follow-up events at the library after the conference.

7. Next meeting, Tuesday, November 14th, at 5:15pm.

8. Executive Session

Motion to enter into Executive Session at 6:45pm, M. Sinnott, seconded by H. Fields. No discussion. Motion passed, 7 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed, Secretary