

Islesboro Energy Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, December 12, 2023
In-Person and Zoom Meeting at 5:15PM

APPROVED

1/9/24

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: Chair Myra Sinnott (via Zoom), Vice Chair Bill Thomas, Dick DeGrasse, Cressica Brazier, Monica Mullins, Harriet Bering, and Toby Martin

Members Absent: Holly Fields, Josh Leach, and Melissa Burns, Ex Officio.

Others Present: Kizzi Barton (via Zoom)

3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

Motion: To approve Minutes of November 14, 2023, as written, B. Thomas, seconded by H. Bering. No discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 7 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

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

a. Energy efficiency projects update (Bill)

- Bill reported that the heat pump in the meeting room has been repaired.

b. Fire/Public Safety projects update

- Bill reported that the lights in the fire station are now working. It was most likely the circuit as suspected. Monica added that one of the lights is not properly installed. It's currently hanging from the ceiling. She will check on it after the meeting.

c. Energy Prize update (Cressica/Kizzi)

- Cressica provided a handout with project updates and links to the website.
- Cressica asked members to share contact info for contractors who have installed energy projects on the island, as well as costs/quotes.
- We had a home energy assessment day, and are planning more of them with Evergreen.
- We will be meeting with Revision for the solar & virtual power plant projects.
- Planning window inserts community build with the Island Institute.
- We're starting home energy survey & upgrade plan.
- Starting to plan events. We have the opportunity to participate in a training session in Colorado in January, and Kizzi will represent us there. It allows us to go back to NREL, where Bill went a few months ago.

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- d. Municipal Building Project (Cressica)
 - Cressica reported that the Municipal Building Project Committee is working with a new Construction Manager: Ledgewood Construction. We're waiting to see what the guaranteed maximum price is. It's out for bidding now.

- e. Maine utility policy/rates update (Dick)
 - Dick reported that Constellation is now the supplier for the Town's electricity accounts. We had a question about whether or not Constellation could supply an off-peak power rate for storage elements to go with a solar system. The answer from the Utility Commission is, "We are not aware of any prohibition on a CEP providing supply service on a Time-of-Use basis. You would need to speak with Constellation and CMP with regard and respect to billing and metering." Dick feels we should not design a solar system for this island until we evaluate the ability for off-peak power.
 - Bill answered that we are a year or two away from designing solar storage. Cressica added that we are in the preliminary stage of developing an energy-independent solar network, and we are in the site-selection process.
 - Door is open for rate structure opportunities with Constellation.

- f. Budget update (Toby)
 - Toby provided a budget update, with a spreadsheet record of the current fiscal year since July 1 showing an available balance of \$37,658.20, with several project items budgeted and on hold that will depend on the upcoming auditor's report due in February.
 - Toby asked how much we are going to ask the Town to fund for FY 2025. We should plan soon.
 - We don't know how the figures are going to resolve at the end of this fiscal year.

5. Discussion

- a. Town Office EV Charger Relocation
 - Last month we talked about the EV charger location and Fred Porter's concerns about the fire risk. After that, Janet sent Myra some information about the risk pool through MMA, where they share safety information.
 - Monica kindly offered to spearhead this project. Holly offered to help.
 - The new Health Center building and redesign of the municipal building are coming, and it's not exactly clear how it will all work out. Cressica forwarded plans with where they are planning spaces for EV chargers. We need to wait until we know more about the Municipal Building Project.
 - Myra has had conversations with Fred Porter, and he is looking into finding trainings for how to deal with potential fires. We can try to point them towards information on how to address fires.

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- Cressica stated we could possibly move it before the new building is built if they provide the conduit for us.
- Monica stated there's a company called Cell Block Fire Containment. They work with products that eliminate fires from lithium batteries. Perhaps we can find a grant? Or find some donors who can purchase equipment? Myra stated we may have a little extra in our budget. Monica will price out the kits.
- Monica suggested the Energy Committee create a mailing with info on how to deal with electrical fires.
- Bill stated he did some incomplete research and found that the frequency of electrical fires is lower than gasoline fires, probably proportional to the number of cars on the road. He also found there's a blanket that's being used by a number of places. Bill would like to do more research.
- The EV charger is off for now.
- Myra would be happy to help provide items that will help ease people's minds about fires.

b. ETIPP exit interview

- Jamie Cook, our new liaison at the Island Institute, asked us to do an exit interview for the Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Program.
- Cressica and Bill did most of the interview.
- Bill reported that they discussed communication issues between the committee and the NREL group. Those issues also came up with other groups.
- We mentioned that we still don't have the official report.
- We liked the fact that ETIPP underscored some of the plans we had talked about ourselves, and gave credence to thinking the committee had generated years before. It gives more weight to those ideas when we take them to the community.
- The big absence in this program is seed money. After you get the report, you have nothing with which to begin to implement. So, participants are expected to write grant proposals and ask for funding on the basis of having done nothing successfully in the interim. Other groups made the same comments.

6. Coordination/Communication with Other Groups

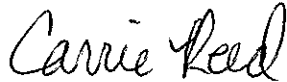
a. Islesboro Energy Team (IET)

- Toby reported that there are two articles coming out in the paper that talk about the Energy Conference and the Bulk-buy program for heat pumps. Janis Petzel took that over and is doing an amazing job.
- Once Janis made an arrangement with the contractor for the program, the IET held an information session at the library.
 - At least 50 positive responses, with interest in the program.

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- The first round saw strong installation interest from about 30 homeowners; those who have signed contracts will have their heat pumps installed in mid-December.
 - Round 2 will be held between Feb-April.
7. "Homework" for next meeting
- Keep up the good work! Myra thanked all members.
 - Toby suggested adding "New Business" to the agenda, to provide people with a way to bring new ideas. Myra answered that if there are suggestions for agenda items, please tell her ahead of time.
8. Next meeting, Tuesday, January 9th, at 5:15pm.
9. Adjourn
**Motion to adjourn meeting at 6:08pm, B. Thomas, seconded by M. Mullins. No discussion.
Motion passed, 7 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed, Secretary