

Islesboro Energy Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, December 9, 2025
In-Person and Zoom Meeting at 5:15 PM

☒ APPROVED
1/13/26

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chair Harriet Bering called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

2. Establishment of a Quorum

Quorum was established with over 4 members

Members Present: Chair Harriet Bering, Vice Chair Bill Thomas, Monica Mullins, Kathy Kerr, Janis Petzel,

Members Present via Zoom: Cressica Brazier, Holly Fields, Trevor Blackford (5:23)

Members Absent: Ava Schlottman, Peter Rothschild, Ex Officio

Others Present: Elizabeth Dyer

Others Present via Zoom: None

3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting: November 10, 2025.

**Motion: To approve the Minutes of November 10, 2025, as amended, K. Kerr, seconded by J. Petzel.
No further discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 7 yes, 0 no.**

4. Project updates

a. Fire station

- Bill sent a detailed update via email. He summarized that he called several contractors: Chris Bolduc, Evergreen Home Performance, Mike Clayton, Ron Gallant, Eric Tierney, Andy Staples, and Bill Shoppe. Chris and Mike said they didn't have time to do it. Eric didn't get back to Bill. The other three did, but they have not yet given a quote. Bill has been in contact with Evergreen Home Performance Rep Nate Spectre, who is trying to put together a quote for the insulating work. He requested the quote be broken down into two forms: one for just the repair of the doorway and weather sealing of the room, and one for insulating the room, because we discovered that there's no insulation in any of the walls or ceiling. Waiting for quotes.

b. Health Center Solar

- Harriet reported that we got a proposal from Sundog Solar, but by Town law, we need to do a formal RFP for a project of this magnitude. Cressica will be working on that.
- Cressica added that before we release an RFP, we need to ensure that we can have the permitting in place. She stated she sent the document outlining the pre-RFP steps.

c. EV chargers – Holly

- Holly reported that she spoke with Shaun from SolarLogix today. He is planning on coming out on Thursday to make sure the wiring is in place. He asked if we had acquired the chargers yet.
- Harriet stated she thought it was part of the contract that he would get those.
- Holly stated she called him back to get clarification on that and left a message. She will follow up with him.

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5. ETIPP Update

- Harriet reported that yesterday was the ETIPP onboarding meeting, which provided an overview of the process. We have Skye Butterson-Dunn, who is our regional partner at the Island Institute, and a regional lead at what is now known as the National Laboratory of the Rockies (NLOR), formerly the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). The lead will bring in the technical experts.
- The first few months will be spent on scoping the project, working with us to define exactly what we want for the end product. They explained that they're not going to create a shovel-ready blueprint, but they will develop enough of a technical plan that we'll be able to use when we look for funding or developing RFPs.
- There will be regular meetings every two weeks, and we'll try to keep everyone updated on what's happening.
- Kathy asked the group to summarize what the committee had after first round of ETIPP.
- Janis explained that we applied to this round because we had done the low-hanging fruit of the first round, and we weren't sure where to go next. The process made us take stock of what energy inputs we have, what we wanted to do, how much it would cost, etc. They set up different scenarios at the end. If we went fully renewable energy to cover the whole island, it would have been exorbitantly expensive. They suggested a middle road between all fossil fuel and all renewable energy—renewable energy plus backup generators with diesel. They also gave us the general idea of how much solar we would need to install to cover our needs.
- Bill added that they crystallized what we already knew and gave us boundaries on the cost of things. The biggest plus was that we had outside support for some of the ideas, and justification from experts, for the kind of approach we were considering before we went into the process.
- Janis stated that with this round, we're taking the best-case scenario, refining it, and figuring out what we need to actually do it. Since we've done the initial work, they don't think the scoping will take as long as with some other communities.
- Harriet added that the idea is to create a plan for a microgrid that can perhaps be implemented incrementally. We've discussed having a microgrid around the Town Center, or one up island, and getting a better handle on the technical parameters.

6. MAINECAN Conference

- Harriet stated that Cressica has been involved with the Maine Community-based Energy & Climate Action Network (MAINECAN), which is hosting the Maine Sustainability and Water Conference in Augusta at the end of March. They've asked if we're interested in participating.
- The event will focus on three initiatives: home-energy coaching, community coordinators, and vulnerability assessments. They also want to highlight the diverse array of community-specific projects we have been working on over the last year. They need to know by December 19th. It would take some work to put something together to present.
- Cressica stated that we would just need to send in a couple of sentences that state we're interested and we're working on several projects we'd like to share. Then we can talk in a subgroup about what format we want that to take. One of us could just record it by talking to one of the support team members, or we could take our posters to the conference if we decide to go in person. There are options we can talk about later if we get a foot in the door now.

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- Monica offered to help summarize the trifold posters created for a previous event.
- Bill proposed that we participate in the event.
- Janis feels that the committee needs more hands. She's at the limit of what she can do. We have a lot going on, and it would be helpful to have more hands on-deck.
- Bill suggested writing two sentences now and having the discussion later.

Motion to participate in MAINECAN, B. Thomas, seconded by K. Kerr. No discussion. Roll Call.
Motion passed, 8 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

7. Maine Island Coalition Report

- Janis circulated a report via email. There are three grant opportunities coming up, one that is due at the beginning of January, so it's likely too late for that one.
- There were three representatives from Islesboro, plus Elizabeth, who attended the meeting.
- Even if those grants don't apply to what we're doing, it would be good to pass the information to other groups. This past meeting focused on Emergency Management, so Janis forwarded the report to Fred Porter.

8. Event Subcommittee Update

- Janis thanked everyone who's been working as part of the Event Subcommittee
- Janis stated we will be participating in the ICC Holiday Market, which is this coming Saturday, December 13th. We will have a table set up, and Alan Cross will be there with some batteries. Janis was hoping to have a bulk-buy signup for batteries at the table, but it's too complicated. Alan agreed to do a more extensive talk in February.
- The table will also have the poster, decorated for Christmas, and LED lightbulbs for people who sign up for a home energy coach visit (which means we have to get this program going).
- Cressica and Elizabeth have been doing online Electric Coach training through Rewiring America. We're hoping to get people interested in DIY weatherization workshops, like we did at Carrie's house. We will have some weatherization materials and equipment at the ICC table for show & tell, to get people thinking about what they can do in their houses.
- Once the holidays are over, the subcommittee will meet to discuss ideas for summer and fall.
- Harriet stated we talked about recruiting someone who might be a good speaker for the Forum. They are actively signing speakers up now. She mentioned it to Peter Rothschild.
- Kathy stated she has some leads from Patrick O'Bannon. She will also reach out to Nakomis Nelson to see if she can get in touch with the Selendys.
- Bill suggested Satchel Toole might be a good spokesperson. He's central to the Efficiency Maine programs, and we have a good relationship with him.
- Kathy clarified that we are looking for someone who would have knowledge in the combination of historic preservation and energy efficiency, to appeal to the summer community.
- Trevor stated he knows an architect who has done retrofit work to turn historic barns into passive houses. He will try to get his contact info.
- Holly has an idea to get batteries to loan out, similar to how the library loans other equipment.
- Discussion about details Alan might like to talk about for his talk in February.

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[Trevor left the meeting at 5:41.]

9. Island Fellow Update

- Elizabeth reported that this month, she is working with the Event Subcommittee. Part of that work has been making a handout about energy at home. We've been working through the data from the home energy survey that went out last year, and Cressica has been helping with that. The handout will include ways to alleviate the expense of heating a home, and will have a blurb about what the Energy Committee is working on for the coming year, such as the battery backup talk and DIY opportunities.
- Working on the handout lent itself into generating a technical report of the home energy survey, because there was a lot of information gathered by the survey. Elizabeth will be going through every question in there, and writing a detailed report about the information and what we can learn from that. This will hopefully be done next month. The goal is to have a bank of data visualizations and data in general that we can pull to make other handouts in the future, and to have talking points for folks who have questions.
- We talked last month about the Energy Committee possibly doing an Adult Ed program. We have a lead on a meeting with Haley, possibly Thursday, to discuss potential topics for an adult ed course for March. Possible topics: How to Read Your CMP Bill, Energy Coaching Sessions, Tips for Electrifying Your Home, What is a Microgrid?, etc. If any members of the committee would like to lead any of these classes, please talk to Elizabeth.
- Elizabeth reported that she is also working with the ETIPP team. Our next step is figuring out stakeholder connections and communicating with the community about our project.
- For the other part of her fellowship, she is working on youth programming. For the ICC Holiday Fair, she will be making sustainable, recycled-fabric gift wrap with the kids in the Kid Zone.
- Janis added that Elizabeth has been working hard and is ahead of schedule for what they had plotted out for the fellowship.

10. Budget Review & Discussion

- Harriet distributed a budget summary sheet. Brian Bohanon has one line in the Town budget for the Energy Committee, with various things that have been charged to it. He has the Prize balance as a separate account.
- We received the rebates for the library heat pumps. Those and the fire station heat pumps both came in under budget after the rebates. We are still working on the other fire station upgrades.
- When we requested this much money, it was because we were anticipating moving the generator to an outdoor enclosure. It turned out that Murt didn't want to do that. We will simply seal off the existing generator room to reduce heat loss in the station. We hope this will also come in under budget.
- The EV chargers should come in under budget.
- The secretarial fees are being handled differently by the Town, so that's no longer part of the Energy Committee budget.
- We've spent about \$2,000 on community events. There are still some expenses from Window Dressers, including making a donation, which will come from the Prize money.

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- The Prize balance is separate, and we have more leeway with that as well as the money we will be getting from the ETIPP program.
- We have a meeting January 9th to talk about how we want to plan for using this money as well as what we will need for next year in the budget from the Town.
- Bill asked if there is any possibility of reallocating excess from this year to the installation of the solar array at the Health Center. Harriet replied that she thinks that's something we could do. There's a separate budget for the Health Center Solar Array, which is part of the CDS grant. The estimate we got from Sundog Solar was around \$178,000, but it's possible that the final cost could be more than that.
- Harriet invited the group to brainstorm ideas ahead of the budget meeting in January.
- Bill suggested the Town consider purchasing the streetlights from CMP. Camden and other local communities have done this. The town manager of Camden was positive about the benefits of doing this, and can put us in touch with the electrician who did the work for them.
- Monica suggested purchasing a generator or batteries for the Up-Island garage. Carrie stated that there is a plan in place for the generator.
- Bill stated we could push for a solar array for the Up-Island garage. We could also foster the future use of a hydronic heat pump for the floor.
- Harriet asked Cressica to talk about the budget for the Prize money. Cressica explained that it has \$25K for planning or design studies, and there's about \$20K left for the Energy Coordinator services. We have to discuss with Brian what's in that budget now, because there have been some discrepancies in the rollover. The last component should have been about \$5K for partner services. We have exhausted the materials and activities funding, which was originally \$10K. For Window Dressers and other projects that are outstanding, we'd have to go into the other funding categories, but it's another kind of service.
- Harriet explained that there's \$50K with the ETIPP award, which we will not get all at once. It gets paid out at different phases of the project as we go along. We created a schedule for payment. The initial payment will be about \$15K. They are paying us for the work involved in doing the project, and we can use that money for whatever we think is appropriate toward getting that done, and that can be things like sending some people to a conference, or materials we want to buy. We might use it for having surveys done for the properties that we'd like to use for the solar arrays.
- Harriet will send email soliciting ideas for the budget meeting in January. Janet sends out budget requests at the beginning of February. Then we have to make a case to the Select Board.

11. Other Business

- Bill provided an update on solar output and electric billing.
- For the library, there has been no report from the website since August. He has been in touch with SolarLogix. They know what the problem is, and they keep putting off when they're going to come fix it. This is important because we get a lot of electricity that CMP does not see, as it has been produced behind the meter. We don't know what that is, because we don't know what the array is doing. For Bill's home, CMP sees 40 – 60% of what his array produces.

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- For the Health Center, there is a problem determining what the demand is. There were two billing segments October, one short and one long, but CMP entered equal amounts of kilowatts for each billing segment, which is not a proportional distribution of demand. The total for the month was 37.6 kW for the demand charge, which is a lot. Bill inquired about why they apportioned the numbers equally across disproportionately sized periods of time, and he's waiting for a response. This month demand is high—36 or 37. There is no hope of getting us under the 20kW per month limit for a year so that we can get the Small Building designation. It's important to decrease the demand of that building. They charge a rate for every kilowatt hour that's used, plus the supply charge.
- Monica asked if the Health Center is included in the contract we entered with Maine Power Options. Cressica replied that the contract was not renewed, and it was only for the supply charge, not demand.
- Bill stated that this makes the proposed solar array all the more important, or an appropriate use of batteries.
- Elizabeth found that there is an analysis tool that can be used to figure out demand.
- Bill stated that he discovered that the way the cascade works is that all the output from each of the four arrays goes into the pool, which is represented in the Salt Shed bill. That is the only bill we get that accumulates credit for the cascade. Each month, there is an allocation sequentially to the various ten accounts, and you play out the total until it's gone. Last month, we covered just about all the bills with solar production. This month, we didn't, because the Health Center got no allocation. It makes sense to do this analysis every three or four months.

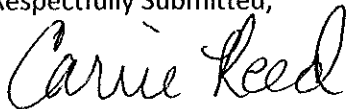
12. Next regular meeting: January 13th, 2026. Budget planning meeting: January 9th.

13. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn meeting at 6:12 pm, B. Thomas, seconded by M. Mullins. No Discussion. Roll Call.

Motion passed, 7 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed, Secretary