

Islesboro Energy Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 8, 2025
In-Person and Zoom Meeting at 5:15 PM

☒ APPROVED

6/10/25

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chair Harriet Bering called the meeting to order at 5:17 pm.

2. Establishment of a Quorum

Quorum was established with over 4 members

Members Present: Chair Harriet Bering, Vice Chair Bill Thomas, Monica Mullins, Holly Fields

Members Present via Zoom: Cressica Brazier, Trevor Blackford

Members Absent: Janis Petzel, Melissa Burns, Ex Officio

Others Present via Zoom: Nita Villarreal

3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

Motion: To approve Minutes of March 11, 2025, as written, B. Thomas, seconded by M. Mullins. No discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 6 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

4. Budget Update

- Harriet reported that not much has changed in terms of what we've spent. Harriet notified the Select Board that we may be shifting funds around because of the need to get the rebate application in, and pay for the fire station heat pumps out of this year's budget. If the rebates get approved, we'll save enough on the library to be able to do that. Their point of view was as long as we're using the money for legitimate energy projects within the scope of what we've been asked to do, that is fine.
- We still have some Prize money, some of which has been earmarked for a consultant, with the hope that we will get additional funding to allow for developing microgrids. We haven't gotten that funding. We're planning to use some of that money to support the activities of our Island Institute Fellow.

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

a. Library update—heat pumps and solar

- Harriet reported that the solar project is in the works. No update.
- For the heat pumps, we accepted the bid from Mark Ogden. The rebate application was submitted. Bill added that Efficiency Maine has the application.

b. Municipal Building Project Update (Cressica)

- Harriet reported that she's been meeting with the MBPC members to go over the CDS grant budget and how that's being spent. We are trying to use it as quickly as possible.
- We have money in that budget for a rooftop solar array on the new Health Center. Cressica prepared a detailed RFP, and Harriet has posted it in a few places. Harriet has been in touch with SolarLogix and ReVision, and PV Maine (recommended by Janet). Harriet has an appointment with SolarLogix and ReVision to look at the site.

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- Harriet asked the group for recommendations on where to post the RFP and if anyone knows any other solar contractors that we should reach out to.
- Carrie offered to post the RFP on Constant Contact.
- The town has an ordinance that addresses the process for bidding on large projects, and posting it appropriately is part of that. We set a date for bids to be in by April 30th.

c. EV Charger update

- Holly has contacted three electricians for quotes for installing two chargers. Justin Electric is not doing any quotes right now because they're booking ten months out. Greg Janney of Islesboro Electric was loath to give a quote, as there is already an electrician working with the contractor for the Health Center. Thomas Campbell Energy was supposed to get Holly a quote yesterday, but she hasn't received it yet. They're probably the best option for a competitive quote at this point.
- Harriet added that we have money in the CDS budget for the chargers, and also in our Energy Committee fund.
- Cressica suggested that if Greg is voicing those reservations, maybe we should get a quote from the current electrician for the building project, All Phase Electric, in order to demonstrate that we've checked with them.
- Bill added that very soon there might be a challenge to getting a quote because prices are likely to soar. Holly stated that it's also because they're all flat-out busy.
- Discussion about charger level. We don't want to go higher than Phase 2 chargers.
- Several other towns have recommended FLO charging stations. All Phase just priced out running the wire.
- Cressica will follow up with Holly and Harriet. She has some questions based on what Harriet has heard from the budget team.
- Holly asked if anyone has asked the Community Center what they went through with their charger. Bill replied that he was involved with that. There's a post that can accommodate two chargers, but there's only one currently. It went in because we got donations that supported it. There was a period of time when it wasn't working correctly, and we had to get someone to repair it, but it seems to have been working fine since then. There's a maximum of four hours on it now, after some people were occupying it for longer periods every day.

d. Fire Station update

- Bill reported that we got the SolarLogix contract written up on March 19th. It was signed and went back to them on the 21st. We sent in the rebate application to Efficiency Maine, and yesterday we got the notification that the application was fully funded. We have \$7200 directly from Efficiency Maine, and \$1,000 for each of the four units in the fire station. The documents were signed today, and Janet sent them back. Now we need to set up the timing for the work.
- The idea of a new generator came to us when we were talking with Fred and Murt about the whole plan for the fire station, including moving the existing generator

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outside. They thought they could use the old generator for the Up-Island Public Safety Garage and get a new generator for this building.

- Bill talked with Mark Ogden about a new generator. He sounded interested in being involved. He is a generator salesperson and maintenance person. Bill will do some research on the cost of a 30,000 - 40,000 kW generator.

6. Community Event

- Harriet stated that we had talked at one point about hosting an event in the summer when many of the seasonal residents are here.
- Bill stated it seems that the target is shifting, for both the date and the focus. We might want to think a bit about what we want to accomplish.
- Harriet stated that we could think about doing more than one event, maybe planning two or three over the course of the next 12 months, and they could be different types.
- Holly feels that fairs are always fun.
- Bill stated that an event could be educational, or offer buying opportunities. Holly would like to encourage educating people about alternatives to generators, and the difference between a lithium-ion battery and a lithium-iron battery.
- Trevor suggested that we should have organizing principles as a committee. We need to adopt tangible goals, and define why we exist as a committee.
- Bill explained that the committee's mandate is to reduce the Town's energy dependence and increase its efficiency. We have evolved in our own thinking to reach outside that box. We're coming to the end of that work, as we have worked on almost all the municipal buildings. If we don't come up with another purpose, we will just disband.
- Trevor stated that he thinks we need to get approval for that expanded scope of a mandate. We should get explicit about it. If we have a mission statement that we can refer to, it will make decisions for community events a lot easier.
- Harriet stated that this is a good point. We have some time to do some brainstorming. We've also been helping residents improve home energy efficiency.
- Trevor suggested forming a subcommittee to work on a revised mission statement.
- Bill stated that the Select Board has to approve our idea. We have to talk about why it's good for the community and why the Select Board should be interested in doing these things.
- Subcommittee: Bill Thomas, Trevor Blackford, and Monica Mullins volunteered.
- Trevor suggested coming up with a proposal for a fair, and eliciting feedback from the community.
- Carrie suggested possibly handing out a survey at Town Meeting, if Janet says it's okay.
- Bill stated that the website serves very little educational purpose. Restructuring it may not be feasible. We could link another website to the existing page. Harriet suggested using the Energy Hub website.
- Discussion about possible date for a fair: Mid-June seems to be a good target, maybe at Community Park. Bill and Monica are willing to help with organizing.

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7. Grant application status

- Cressica reported that NREL asked if we want to participate in the Technical Assistance Program. Cressica will look into whether or not we're eligible. We would just be getting technical assistance. It's similar to ETIPP. We could also consider reapplying for ETIPP for an in-depth project. They would start to design the microgrid.
- Harriet asked which would be the better option. Cressica explained that the Technical Assistance Program is probably much more competitive. Cressica doesn't have enough information right now, as we haven't yet talked with the Island Institute about continuing with ETIPP. NREL also encouraged us to consider ETIPP.
- Bill asked what good the technical assistance would be for us in the absence of funds to follow through. It seems the planning of the design might be more projective and more fundamentally useful, as we could build on it. Cressica replied that the technical assistance would de-risk the project. This is a very complicated application of microgrid control systems. It would be a strong advantage to get all the potential parties who would be applying for actual project funding to be on the same page and have a solid proposal or plan for when the next project funding comes up. All of our project proposals so far have been speculative. In the absence of project funding programs, we can take advantage of this pause in order to have a substantial project plan set up with technical assistance.
- Harriet stated that the grant we submitted the Concept Paper for has been taken down. Cressica added that they are re-evaluating; they may bring it back up. She has heard that OCED is very concerned about restructuring and whether or not they're going to be an actual office that can administer the grant in the near future.
- Harriet added that the NREL program would need to involve CMP.

8. New business

- Harriet reported that the committee has two seats open. Four or five people have expressed interest. Bill and Harriet thought it would be nice to have the interested people attend our next meeting. With that many people we'd probably need to do some kind of closed vote.
- Harriet would like to encourage everyone who is interested to stay involved, even though we only have room for two voting members. We will need people to help us with activities.
- Interested people: Eric Jagger, who knows about insulating and design features; Bob Kochan, who is a forensic engineer and has been involved with tidal and wind energy production; Barry Wherren, who has personal experience with construction of his own energy efficient home; Ava Schlottman, who is interested in trying her hand at committee work and could be very helpful; Melissa Olson, who is the library director and has done the Sustainable Library Initiative process.
- Trevor recommended that we get official statements of interest in emails from each person, and ask them to give a spiel at the meeting.

9. Next meeting Tuesday, May 6th, at 5:15pm.

10. Adjourn

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**Motion to adjourn meeting at 6:10 pm, B. Thomas, seconded by M. Mullins. No Discussion. Roll Call.
Motion passed, 6 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carrie Reed". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "C" and a stylized "R".

Carrie Reed, Secretary

