☑ APPROVED
11/10/26

Islesboro Energy Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 6, 2026
In-Person and Zoom Meeting at 5:15 PM

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, Kathy Kerr, Elizabeth Dyer, Daniel Frohling
   Members Present via Zoom: Cressica Brazier, Janis Petzel (5:18)
   Members Absent: Ava Schlottman, Peter Rothschild
   Others Present: None
   Others Present via Zoom: None

3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting: September 8, 2026.

   Motion: To approve the Minutes of September 8, 2026, as written, K. Kerr, seconded by B. Thomas. No discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 6 yes, 0 no.

4. Project updates

   a. Fire station
      - Bill reported that the generator room work was done last week. It's completed and looks fine. The seal on the door is far superior to what it was before, and we assume that the insulation is in the wall. We received the invoice for the work, and Brian Bohanon is sending payment tomorrow.

   b. EV chargers
      - Harriet reported that the new chargers are in place. She and Brian were supposed to have a phone meeting today with someone from OpConnect, to orient us and help us decide on a rate, but he didn't show up. Aside from that, this project is done.

   c. Solar
      - Harriet reported that Cressica had identified a good site last month.
      - Cressica stated she presented the plan to the Select Board, and they were supportive of exploring the up-island site. We need to talk it over with Janet a bit more before we figure out where it can be better oriented, because we likely need to connect it through an existing meter.
      - Bill stated he's been able to find only two meters out there, and can't find a double-meter setup at all. It seems there is one meter for the salt shed, and one for the transfer station and compactors. He couldn't find an export meter. He will call CMP for more information.
      - Harriet added that the issue is that you have to be behind the meter to get net billing.

- Cressica stated that CMP can install a solar meter. We have the engineering drawings, so we can look to see if there are two meters somewhere on the drawing. We'll have to pick one or the other, and it will probably require a meter upgrade.
- Harriet added that the goal is to have it up and running by next year.

d. Energy Coaching

- Kathy reported that she met with Abby Wilder, head of the Islesboro Community Fund (ICF). She's supportive of having an ongoing liaison relationship and distributing information about energy coaching to people who get heating assistance through ICF. She offered that ICF would pay for coaching training if there's any cost. Kathy will speak to the ICF Board when she's further along in planning for the coaching program, maybe in November or December.
- Kathy added she continues to attend the New England Energy Partnership (NEEP) cohort for people interested in becoming coaches. The last session was a little daunting. It focused on legal liability. We will need a waiver for people to sign, indemnifying the coaches against being sued for causing damage to premises or equipment. Kathy is gathering samples, and then will run it by legal counsel for the town.
- Daniel stated he'd be happy to look at the waivers.
- Kathy stated that the next big step is to decide on a course for those who wish to become coaches. She researched two courses, and didn't like either one. They are the only courses that have been recommended to her. She didn't like that they're focused on electrification and heat pumps. One of them is a heat pump coaching certification class. There's no information presided about overall general home understanding or weatherization. Yesterday, she found Camden-Rockport Energy Coaching Program, and they offer their own training to prospective coaches, and have a set of eight videos that they have created, available online. The program manager said they are much broader than the scope of the other programs. Kathy is inclined to review the materials. She asked the manager if we can use them, and she said yes. Another advantage is that we can do that on our own schedule. The disadvantage is that they did not develop tests, so there's no formal certification. However, it's a rigorous training program. It sounds more ideal for our purposes. Kathy asked if anyone has concerns about going in that direction.
- Bill stated he doesn't have any concerns about that, and doesn't think we need to be that carefully trained. There are lots of websites that provide a sequence of events, things to target, ways to look at them, etc. A combination of those will provide a clear understanding of how to approach this.
- Harriet stated that it would be useful to make sure our coaches at least have a certain level of knowledge.
- Kathy added that we are on the cusp of a new thing. The oldest energy coaching program in Maine is three years old. It's in York, and it's very successful. This program in Rockport started a year ago. A Climate to Thrive on Mount Desert Island is just starting, and they'd be good to talk with for sharing startup experience.
- The next step would be to send call out for interested folks, with an ad in the newspaper or Facebook, flyers around town, etc., and have an information meeting about being an energy coach, with pizza and a video.

- Bill stated that another reason Kathy's shift to this other approach is a good one is that it doesn't work well to have heat-pump installation driven by people who want to sell heat pumps and put them into houses that are not ready. This makes heating costs go through the roof. Instead of helping people, it puts them behind the eight-ball.
- Kathy added that we will be working with renters, as well, and they aren't going to be putting heat pumps into houses. They might want to do smaller things like caulk around windows and other easy weatherizing.

5. Remembering Holly – Plan for a Plaque
    - Harriet stated that the group had discussed a plaque for remembering Holly, but didn't set up next steps or determine if everyone is in agreement on that, or if there's something else people want to do.
    - Kathy asked if there's any other public place besides the EV chargers where people would see it.
    - Elizabeth suggested the ferry terminal, possibly with a tree.
    - Bill stated he likes the idea of a plaque, and also something that grows. Holly plants would be good. It takes two of them to produce the berries.
    - Harriet stated that someone has arranged holly plants for the library remembrance garden.
    - Kathy suggested that the plaque could go by the holly trees at the library.
    - Harriet asked if someone could take this on. We need to talk to the library, research cost, propose some designs, etc.
    - Bill stated that we could plant holly trees and place the plaque at the ferry landing. She spent a lot of time there and saw a lot of the island people there.
    - Janis stated she talked with Holly's husband Allen Cross. He likes the idea of a plaque, but needs more time to think about it. She will share these ideas with him.

Harriet reported that Ava's father, Jack Schlottman, passed away. Elizabeth passed around a card for members to sign.

6. Island Fellow Update
    - Elizabeth reported that a lot of her work has been on planning the Community Energy Resilience Plan (CERP) workshop #1, which will be November 7th, 11 am – 12:30 pm, at the Community Center (ICC), in Community Hall. ($100)
    - Janis has been reaching out to caterers for food options.
    - Elizabeth and Cressica have been working on slides and content. The focus will be on the concept of a microgrid, community solar models, and the potential overlap of those.
    - We would like to get people's feedback on that because much of the writing of the plan is about engaging in conversation with people in the town who are stakeholders in these projects. After an island leaders meeting, Harriet brought up the idea of having alternative locations for events.
    - Elizabeth stated she spoke with Scott de Grasse, and he would like to collaborate and have a follow-up workshop at the Sporting Club the following Saturday, November 14th, in the evening. This is not finalized yet. The cost of using the space is $250.
    - Elizabeth suggested having an events subcommittee meeting in the next few weeks.

- Elizabeth and Harriet will be away next week for the ETIPP National Meeting. Elizabeth will be presenting on a panel about workforce development, and ETIPP as a means of bringing innovative workforces into communities. She will represent the Island Fellow Program, and will speak about how it acts as a bridge between communities and the regional support of Island Institute.
- Elizabeth will present the CERP overview at the Select Board meeting tomorrow. Harriet and Daniel will also be there.
- Daniel suggested using the word "synergies" instead of "overlap" with town initiatives. One of the things that people see as missing is committees finding synergies among their work. The more that word and "innovation" get used, the more it gets in the parlance.

7. ETIPP Update
    - Harriet reported that last week, ETIPP had a presentation about geothermal energy. That will be available online, as will the presentations they've done on wind, solar, and tidal energy. Once they are officially published, we can use those videos at community meetings.
    - In the meantime, they are collecting data on usage, focusing on this town's Post Office Town Center, because we had requested a model of a microgrid at this location as a starting point.

8. Budget
    - Harriet distributed a worksheet budget report (not an official financial document).
    - Money for the EV chargers and the fire station generator room was carried over from last year. There's about $4,000 left over.
    - For solar arrays, we were allocated an additional $70,000. Added to that was the $28,000 we had leftover from last year, not counting the EV chargers and the fire station generator room. Much of this was savings; we had budgeted more than we spent.
    - We had a surplus from last year's budget, and when we presented this year's budget to the Select Board, we said that we would like to allocate last year's remainder toward the solar panels we had planned for that.
    - $54,798 is the balance left in the Prize money.
    - We spent some of the ETIPP money on one of our events, but we have received all of that now.
    - What's not on here is the balance of the money in the health center budget that's allocated towards the ground solar array. Cressica believes it's $246,000.
    - Kathy asked if there could be a line for Energy Coaching expenses. Harriet replied that that could go in the Events category for now. Another appropriate source could be the Prize balance, which was originally intended for helping individual homeowners.

9. Community Action Grant—establish subcommittee and discuss plans for position
    - Harriet stated we were awarded the Community Action Grant, effective October 1st. This is a state grant; the proposal was for a planner who would help us move the ETIPP projects forward.
    - Cressica circulated a list of tasks for the planner, including grant administration and reporting, coordinating with ETIPP, and working on the community energy project business models. We

also included the transportation fuel issues, and help with looking at that problem. We had a meeting last week and included Tom Tutor of the Islesboro Economic Sustainability Corp (IESC).

- Between the grant and the money we have left from the Prize, we have enough to fund a planner for one year, or 700 hours from a consultant.
- Cressica added that this person could benefit other groups, including the Select Board and other committees. The energy planning component of this grant could become the basis for that kind of larger role. We are exploring possibilities for proposing a longer-term position. This could include resilience planning, comprehensive planning, and incorporating the hazard mitigation plan. Integrating all these parts into one process could be done through this planning position. Having only one year of funding might make posting for this job challenging. We will attempt to secure another year of funding as we go along, and we would have to encourage either the Town or other groups to buy in.
- Harriet stated that we need to put together a proposal to take to the Select Board. They can think about whether any funding could be incorporated into next year's budget.
- Daniel reported that he has spoken with Peter Rothschild in the past. Recently, he spoke with Steve Pendleton, Amy Mulnix, and Pete Anderson, and told them that the Energy Committee needs 1,500 hours over two years. If we had a full-time person, that would leave 2,500 hours in the first two years for other committees. If we hire a full-term person, we might get a better-quality person who can devote more focused attention to our work, so we could get a better outcome, potentially quicker, but not pay more for it. The Select Board members were enthusiastic about the idea and are looking forward to seeing a concrete proposal. Money could come from IESC. Daniel had spoken with Tom Tutor previously about $75,000 to fund a community planner for a potential sustainability committee. Tom said he would be happy to propose it to IESC. They have a broad mandate for how they can use their funds.
- Harriet stated she is dubious that IESC would fund this position.
- Janis stated she doesn't see a problem to getting started with this position. We have a year's worth of funding, we always have leftover funds at the end of every fiscal year, and historically, the town has let us put $50,000 - $70,000 into our yearly budget. If worse comes to worse, we can fund this ourselves. We need to get going with the search for the right person.
- Harriet added that we can't wait on the Town to take action. The budget process is finalized in June for the following year. The alternative is to hire a consultant, like the Sea Level Rise Committee has done. Our funding would provide 700 hours.
- Daniel stated that, beyond the concrete benefits that he is happy to lay out in a document, this is an opportunity for the committee to lead by example, to show the community what we can accomplish through innovation and synergy. If we can get someone into this role, it benefits the whole town. It shows that by working together and cross-pollinating, we can come up with something more than the sum of its parts.
- Kathy asked for clarification on how the expertise of this planner could help us move our projects forward in a way that the committee can't do on its own. Cressica replied that this person would have some level of experience in planning or managing projects, but mainly would have capacity, to figure out all the moving parts, rather than what we've been doing so far. Any person that we engage would be developing expertise along with us.

- Janis added that, in our previous discussions, we felt strongly that it was better to have someone here all the time, rather than a consultant.
- Harriet stated that there seems to be consensus that we should move forward with creating the job description and the job posting. We'll have to be honest about the one-year funding, and that we are planning to make this a two-year position by finding more funding. Harriet asked if we should look at consulting firms as a backup.
- Members agreed that we should focus on hiring someone who is invested in the community.
- Harriet stated we need to finalize a proposal to take to the Select Board in two weeks. We can try to get other organizations to get behind this.
- Daniel stated he would put something together and circulate it within the next week.
- Bill stated that it seems that we're sidling up to a structural change in the organization of the governance of the town. If we end up with a planner who is involved with multiple committees and trying to work on the synergy issue, we have put an effective arm into the governance of the town, over and above what our specific role is.

10. Next Meeting Date
    - November 10, 2026, 5:15 pm.

11. Adjourn

    Motion to adjourn meeting at 6:10 pm, B. Thomas, seconded by D. Frohling. No discussion. Roll Call. Motion passed, 7 yes, 0 no. Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carrie Reed

Carrie Reed, Secretary