

Islesboro Energy Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 16, 2022
In-Person Meeting at 5:15PM, Town Office

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Interim Chair Myra Sinnott called the meeting to order at 5:15pm.

2. Establishment of a Quorum

Quorum was established with over 4 members

Members Present: Myra Sinnott (via phone), Janis Petzel, Dick DeGrasse, Toby Martin, Bill Thomas, and Cressica Brazier.

Members Absent: Jordy Watson, Josh Leach, Holly Fields, Anne McKee, Scott Sienkiewicz, and Melissa Burns

Others Present: George Bierlin

3. Introduce visitors

4. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

Motion: To approve Minutes of May 10, 2022, as written, D. DeGrasse, seconded by J. Petzel. No discussion. Motion passed, 6 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

5. Ongoing Projects/Old Business

a. Status of Evergreen work (Bill)

- Bill described progress on the apartment upstairs at the Municipal Building. Bill, Cressica, Jordy, and Avery put up plastic to seal the room. Joisting is done and sheetrock will soon be up. Next will be electrical work. Light fixtures have been selected by Myra, Cressica, and Bill, and ordered by Janet. Insulation can be done from outside with no interference to people who live inside. Brian has assured us that as soon as the apartment is ready, he will come and do the insulation before the heating season in the fall.
- We have an appointment at noon this Saturday for Brian from Evergreen to do intermediate blower door test on this building prior to the finishing of the apartment upstairs to measure what we've done thus far. Prior to this appointment, we will go to the library at 8:30 to do blower door test and the IR (?) camera analysis of the library. Melissa will be there to meet us and let us in. Anyone can join us.
- Bill has also spoken with Brian about the dehumidifier downstairs and he will deal with that while he's here on Saturday.

b. ETIPP (Janis)

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- Janis stated that they moved the regular monthly meeting to next Thursday. We haven't had any interaction with them since the Jamboree, except for an email thank you.
 - Two ETIPP people and a photographer from [] came to the Jamboree. Bill asked if we could have access to the photographs, as they can be useful for PR, etc. Janis said that we asked him that and he was going to check, but we haven't had follow-up yet.
 - The next generation of ETIPP award winners was announced. Mt. Desert Island was chosen from Maine. Islesboro was still on the PR materials. Janis posted it on Facebook.
 - The Friday before the Jamboree, a small group met, including the Sea Level Rise Committee with Janet Anderson, Fred Porter, Shey Conover, and the ETIPP people. Andrea did a presentation of the data that they had given us that she had updated. Fred was really interested and said he wants to get an electric ambulance.
 - Myra felt the top takeaways that would be the most impactful for the island include getting people off fuel oil, energy resilience, and electric vehicles. It might help give us direction on where to focus. We also talked about solar storage on the island. Because we have so many summer residents, our peak load is in the summer, which is encouraging for installing a solar array with storage.
 - Ethan & Caitlin Spaulding have purchased the property with the big field from Terry Cowan. They have expressed interest in providing a site for a solar farm. As it slopes down to the eastern shore, it would be a good potential site. Pat Tilden's father's house is for sale across the street, and perhaps the microgrid facility (storage bank) could go there.
- c. Energy Jamboree (Cressica)
- Cressica thanked everyone for helping to make it happen.
 - Cressica sent out a list of what she's going to try to accomplish next. Thanks to Bill and Myra for sending in assessments of the event. Any other thoughts and comments will be helpful in thinking through next steps. We would like to package up materials and narrative of the event to make it available to others. There were a lot of great speakers and great info that flowed through the event. Website is being developed.
 - Next step is direct community outreach, whether with small groups or one-on-one meetings.
 - Toby asked if there is an outline or plan of goals. Toby would like to see the results (what was discovered) from the event. Cressica answered that there is a plan in development on the planning page of the website, and other members can add to that. She will send out website link again. There are two documents that compile what the next steps might be.

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- Janis asked Toby if the Energy Team is going to be doing a conference anytime soon. Toby said it depends on what's going on here. He would like to determine how the two programs will work together so that they might complement each other and not duplicate efforts.
 - Janis asked Cressica if there were any kind of common themes from the surveys that attendees filled out. Cressica answered that the pre-event survey brought out a lot of things that people were interested in, but the surveys at the event were not very successful because no one wanted to take time to fill them out. Cressica has also been talking with people since the event. Overall, the key items were insulation, and community solar, both subscription and ownership. Heat pumps are far down the list. In terms of getting people off fuel oil, we have a lot of work to do. Discussion about how to approach achieving goals, bringing in community members for direct discussions, as well as group visioning sessions, perhaps at end of summer or in the fall.
 - Toby expressed concern that the Committee may be taking on too much with not enough people to manage such events.
 - Myra stated she felt that the Jamboree was successful and fun, and a great info sharing event. It was a little hectic to plan due to Covid, but if we continue to do events such as this, it will get easier and smoother.
- d. Islesboro Electric Department (Dick)
- Dick gave a report on the status of his idea for a municipal electric project. He presented his research to the Select Board at their meeting on June 8, and they voted to authorize Dick to proceed with getting bids from potential wholesale power suppliers. Dick is now working on getting bids.
 - In order to get wholesale power, the whole island has to buy the power. It would be approximately 7 cents/kw hour vs. 11.8 cents/kw hour. The savings go directly to the island.
 - Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (VPPSA) would negotiate for us. They have Fox Island here in Maine and they are willing to help us.
 - We have the potential to establish an ability to change the rate structure to time-of-use rates eventually, which would vary with solar and wind and other uses that are not 100%. CMP has a time-of-use rate called a load-management rate. CMP would supply copies of billing records from all island customers to VPPSA on our behalf. VPPSA says 7 cents/kw hour is a reasonable estimate. Peak use is in winter at dinnertime.
 - Dick got positive feedback from Chris at the Maine Public Utility Commission this morning.
 - CMP is in favor of this because of the deregulation law in 2000, when they had to divest of generation of power. They now only supply distribution and transmission. Their relationship with customers will not change. Instead of Standard Offer, it will list the supplier.

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- Discussion about how to let customers know, and how to opt in or opt out. CMP can't broker because of deregulation.
- Myra suggested that once we have some offers on the table, we have community meetings.
- Bill said he sees a potential challenge in people who already buy power from alternative sources such as solar and are getting a discount.
- Cressica expressed concern about a municipality having the authority to sign up all residents for a particular supplier. We have retail choice.
- Bill stated that we just need to have a large enough group to make it lucrative for the supplier. The question is how many people we would need.
- Bill asked Dick if he needs help working on this. Dick answered that probably after the next meeting he will need help. He would like to publish something that outlines what we are talking about and tell the town what we are doing. Janis suggested not putting this out to the community until we get ready to do the information sessions. We need to be closer to implementation and have something real to share. We have to be able to explain this to people, and we are still learning.
- Myra suggested the next step would be to create a fact sheet, once we have firm bids and info. Discussion about ways to present information.
- Discussion about deregulation in other states and how they operate. We may set an example in the State of Maine. Janis suggested creating a small sub-committee to figure out a roll-out for this.

6. New Business/Potential New Projects

a. Community Resilience Partnership (Janis/Myra)

- This project has been on hold. The Sea Level Rise Committee is meeting now with a grant organizer. Janis has let Shey know that we are available to assist and asked if there's anything she wants us to do. We are waiting to hear back.

b. New Health Center/Municipal Building Project

- Janis reported that the MBPC hasn't yet determined a location for the new building. Still in beginning stages of planning.
- Janis will discuss with Lauren how the Energy Committee can help. It's not clear whether or not they are concerned about energy at this stage.

7. Coordination/Communication with Other Groups

- None at this time.

8. Homework for next meeting

- Dick to let us know when he might need help with the electricity project.
- Cressica to let us know when she needs help with next steps for the Jamboree and Energy data.

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- Bill—after the library evaluation, turn attention to the lighting in the municipal building.
- Bill added a report on the temperature monitoring in the Public Safety garage. Concerned that we don't know what the temperature has been in there. Bill wrote to Janet explaining 55 degrees was the right temp, which had been discussed several years ago. Fred Porter called Bill and seemed disconcerted about all this. Fred is responsible for the ambulances in the garage. His major concern was not the temperature dependent medicines, but with the plastics on the masks that had to mold to the responders' faces. He was open to the idea of putting in a panel to create an area of the garage that has a warmer temperature.

9. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 6:27pm, J. Petzel, seconded by B. Thomas. No discussion. Motion passed, 6 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carrie Reed, Secretary