

Islesboro Energy Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, July 12, 2022  
In-Person Meeting at 5:15PM, Town Office

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Bill Thomas, filling in for 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: Bill Thomas, Janis Petzel, Dick DeGrasse, Cressica Brazier, and Melissa Burns.

Members Absent: Myra Sinnott, Jordy Watson, Josh Leach, Holly Fields, Anne McKee, Scott Sienkiewicz, and Toby Martin

Others Present: Shey Conover, Na Fu

3. Introduce visitors

- Cressica introduced her friend, Na Fu, who is visiting from China. They met when they worked together in China. Na is currently working on her PHD in Politics, and visiting Islesboro for the summer.
- Shey Conover was present to speak about her work with the Community Resilience Partnership.

4. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

**Motion: To approve Minutes of June 16, 2022, B. Thomas. No discussion. Motion passed, 4 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.**

**Motion: To take the agenda out of order to allow Shey to make her presentation first, J. Petzel, seconded by B. Thomas. No discussion. Motion passed, 4 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.**

5. New Business

- a. Shey Conover described the work of the Community Resilience Partnership, which is a State-run program that was announced 6 – 9 months ago as a result of the Climate Council, and is run out of the Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future. Shey is working to get Islesboro enrolled in the program. The Partnership was established to get resources to communities to support climate resilience.
  - Reducing energy usage, promoting energy efficiency
  - Sea level rise/coastal planning
  - In order to enroll in the program, communities are required to fill out a self-assessment form provided by the State.
  - The Town Select Board needs to pass a resolution prioritizing climate planning and resilience.
  - There is a list of 72 Priorities that the program has identified that they are encouraging communities to work towards.

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- The program provides Community Action Grants and runs two grant cycles per year at \$50,000 each. If the Town is applying for projects that fit within one of the 72 Priorities that were identified, then no matching funds are needed. Projects that don't fit in with the Priorities are eligible for grants, but require matching funds.
- She believes the work of the Islesboro Energy Committee and Sea Level Rise Committee fit well within those Priorities.
- The purpose of enrolling in the program is to allow Islesboro to be eligible to apply for the grants.
- They also fund Service Provider grants, and we were included for one of those in the first round of funding. Service Provider grants are for individuals or organizations that support communities to help them enroll in the program. Gabe McPhail is a consultant that She is working with. Gabe led Vinalhaven's Sea Level Rise planning efforts. She applied for Community Service Provider grant on our behalf and is supporting Islesboro and North Haven in enrolling in the program.
- Gabe has come out once to meet with the Sea Level Committee, and they started going through the Priorities. Her goal is for us to have all the pieces completed so that we can enroll in the program and be eligible for the Community Action Grant by the September deadline. Part of her role is to write the grant application for us.
- Communities can apply for projects more than once in a year.
- Islesboro is in a good position, as the Energy Committee and Sea Level Rise Committee have already been doing a lot of the work that the Partnership is trying to encourage communities to do. We just need to document what we've done in order to get a grant.
- Bill asked how the Energy Committee can help with this process. She answered that, at the first meeting with Gabe, they got about 1/2 to 2/3 of the way through the list. She will send a link to the website.
- Janis asked what kind of project grant She will be applying for in September. She answered that, from a Sea Level Rise perspective, she may like to get funding to support a more detailed engineering study at the Narrows.
- Bill asked how the Sea Level Rise Committee is setting the priorities, and if the Energy Committee can be part of that discussion. She answered that members of the Energy Committee are welcome to attend the second meeting with Gabe on July 21<sup>st</sup> from 5:30 – 7:30 at the library. She hopes to nail down top 5 – 6 priorities.
- Janis suggested possibly funding batteries for energy storage for the Island Market and Durkee's for power outages, which would provide sustainability for the island's food supply.
- Janis reported that the Energy Committee is nearing the end of the ETIPP process, and in September or October we get our final report with energy audit

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information and recommendations. We will share that with Shey. This should inform a conversation.

- It will be helpful for an Energy Committee member to have a conversation with Gabe, who is currently collecting data for our self-assessment, to help set the priorities.

6. Ongoing Projects/Old Business

a. Status of Evergreen work (Bill)

- Bill reported on two areas of concern: the municipal Building and the Library.
- For the municipal building, the Fire House (Public Safety Garage) concern is unresolved. There has been confusion about our original supposition based on a conversation between Murt, Brian, and Jim Roberts that there would be no impediment to dropping the temperature to 55 degrees. Subsequently, there was some pushback from Fred Porter, who expressed concern about the resiliency about the plastic masks on the Ambulance that need to fit against the face and stay warm to be supple. He wants to keep it at 68 degrees. We will need to resolve this amongst all parties and have a conversation later.
- In the Apartment upstairs, the framing and sheetrock have been done, the painting should have been started today. We now need to get the electrician in to do the wiring above, then the only thing remaining is the insulation. The vapor barrier will not be a membrane barrier, it will be naturally water-impermeant paint on the surface of the taped sheetrock.
- Brian Robinson of Evergreen has given us an updated proposal. It's more expensive than four years ago, but because of the nature of that space, we've become eligible for an occupancy grant from Efficiency Maine, which drops it by \$5500, so it's not that much more than it was four years ago. Brian implemented this on our behalf.
- The Blower Door Test at the municipal building was abysmal. Brian will provide original test data. The flowthrough was so fast, he was not able to maintain the correct pressure for the reading, so the data had to be extrapolated. This was because this whole space is confluent, there are no impediments in all directions. There are many access points where air can infiltrate and come across. The insulating and sealing we've done has greatly diminished the fuel use in this building, but there are many other places to improve. When the building is renovated, that will give us access to parts of the perimeter that we can do better with.
- Janis asked if this is something the architect needs to be aware of for the renovation. Bill agreed that we should give Lauren Bruce this information. We will fix what we get access to.
- The dehumidifier in the basement works. We have been remiss in the maintenance. The filters are dirty and damaged by water. There is no longer any evidence of the pink goo that was there previously. Brian thinks it was

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some kind of fungus or bacteria. Bill has taken the number off the filter and given it to Janet and cc'd Myra. As soon as the new filters get here, we will replace them and set up a maintenance schedule.

- Bill has been encouraging Janet to sign the documents for the work upstairs because Brian knows we want this done prior to the heating season.
- At the Library, the blower door test was good. It was free. The building was leaky, but not terribly so. Brian will give us a proposal for the things that can be done. We will look that over with the Library, the Friends, and the Town, and will decide if we want him or someone else to do that work.

b. ETIPP (Janis)

- Janis reported that the monthly Zoom check-in meeting this week was cancelled. The next one is scheduled for Aug. 1 at 2pm.
- There were four sections to the process: 1.) Getting the scope of work; 2.) data collection; 3.) collating and getting a final report on the energy load; and 4.) their recommendations and working with us on how to notify the community and get community involvement. We are waiting for the final report and going into the fourth section, so we are in the home stretch.
- Bill noted that all the work that's gone into this could inform the conversations with the Sea Level Rise Committee and the Community Resilience Partnership. The timing is perfect.

c. Energy Jamboree (Cressica)

- Cressica reported that she's still doing cleanup from the Jamboree.
- Started doing a mockup for the virtual Jamboree, getting the materials together electronically so we can send it out to more people, and will send it around soon. Just getting in contact with people to get permission to use their videos, etc. Janis got photos from ETIPP.
- Also trying to collect data documents, everything that ETIPP sent, to put together in a data repository, so we can start working on a website.
- Bill suggested we start thinking toward the next Jamboree to build momentum.
- Bill noted that at some point we need to have public communication on the ETIPP goals and findings, and it might be good to weave in the Jamboree with a look to the next one we will do in the light of the ETIPP proposals.
- Melissa suggested we wait until after Memorial Day next year for the next Jamboree, as many of the big proponents who will bring in other people are the summer residents.
- Cressica noted that we're learning from ETIPP that the summer homes are a key ingredient of making sure we can do all the load balancing we need to do.
- Janis suggested that perhaps the Sunday Forum at the ICC would let us do a presentation. Maybe we can do the ETIPP final report there.

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d. Islesboro Electric Department (Dick)

- Dick gave a report on the status of his idea for a municipal electric project. He has been in touch with John King, Larry Hobart, Phil Seymour, and Gabe Pendleton regarding creating the Islesboro Municipal Electric Department, which is more inclined with the Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (VPPSA), than an LLC Corporation would be. Dick and the others support this idea.
- VPPSA has eight different sources of capacity that they are currently analyzing, such as, Hydro, Solar, Niagra Mohawk, Hydro-Quebec. Bill asked if we can specify the mix of providers. Dick answered that VPPSA specifies the mix based on economics, which depend on the load curve. The wood-burning plant would probably be baseload, about 60% of the needs of the island. Peaking capacity is primarily a combined cycle. There's a lot of solar and hydro. They are now analyzing the cost of power for each of them at a particular time of day, and then will look at the wheeling cost, which is how they'll transport the power to the island. Fortunately, one of the hydro facilities is in the State of Maine, and the wheeling cost will be much less for us. The capacity cost looks like it's going to be about 7 cents/kw hour. The standard offer today is about 11.8 cents, so about a 20% savings per month.
- Larry Hobart was the head of the American Municipal Utility Organization, and has been a friend for 30 years. Dick has had a lot of discussions with him and John King, who knows the Chairman of the Maine Public Utility Commission.
- Dick has been in touch with CMP and the Utility Commission, and both are cheering him on.
- Dick would like the Energy Committee to urge the Select Board to proceed with establishing a Department.
- We have no financial obligation at this point and it doesn't look like we will. We may need a phone, but we don't have any distribution responsibility, because that's on CMP. They don't do any generation under the law in Maine.
- Janis asked Dick what the next step will be once the math/analytics are sorted out. Dick answered that as soon as we know the numbers and it looks reasonable, he will make a move to CMP to send the island customer list.
- Dick stated that we should have all this together before we have community meetings.
- Bill suggested getting this process codified, written on paper, with a series of steps that we might follow, so that one can read through it, and we can present it to others.
- Cressica asked about when Dick is discussing these things with the John King, Larry Hobart, etc., if they are talking about different possibilities for executing these options, so that we can start to understand them. Dick answered that there is an understanding among all involved so far that there be no press info until we know exactly how much it's going to cost per kw hour. The Municipal

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Electric Department is the way to go. Once we get those two things in place, then we can tell the world about it. Until we do, we could upset the apple cart, because we are the first municipality in the State of Maine to do this, and we don't want others to jump on the bandwagon.

- Discussion about laws in states that allow for municipalities to do this. We would like to know if this will be more difficult because we don't have the same laws as other states. Dick stated the law is in place in Maine to allow this.
- Members emphasized that they would like this information written down in a way that they can understand, so they can think about it and contribute. The group asked Dick to write up his notes in a report format.

7. New Business/Potential New Projects

a. New Health Center/Municipal Building Project

- Janis reported that she's been attending the MBPC meetings via Zoom, but has been frustrated because it's hard to participate in that format. She plans to attend in person from now on.
- Some of the frustration has been with the proposed Up-island Public Safety Garage and the pitch of the roof, but Janis sent information to Lauren from Revision and SunDog, which Lauren then forwarded to the architect. The plans have been altered to accommodate the new pitch design.
- Janis typed up a scaled-down list of recommendations as a cheat sheet for the MBPC that she shared with the Energy Committee for feedback. The group likes the smiley face idea. Janis chose the ten items from the original lengthy report that the MBPC can focus on for the beginning stages of planning. Janis sent her new list and original report to the Energy Committee members via email for feedback. Bill had some suggestions to consolidate items.
- The MBPC is meeting on Thursday and Janis would like to give the recommendation cheat sheet to the members at the meeting but wants to make sure the Energy Committee is okay with it. Bill suggested ordering them by priority/importance. Cressica suggested grouping items by category. Janis requested suggestions come to her by tomorrow.
- We may want to have a conversation with the architect directly. We should give them goals from an informed perspective. Discussion about the design process and how to be more involved.

8. Coordination/Communication with Other Groups

- None at this time.

9. Homework for next meeting

- Dick will write up a report/info sheet for the Energy Committee.

10. Next meeting, Tuesday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, at 5:15pm.

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11. Adjourn

**Motion to adjourn at 6:30pm, J. Petzel, seconded by M. Burns. No discussion. Motion passed, 4 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Carrie Reed, Secretary