

Islesboro Energy Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 17, 2024
In-Person and Zoom Meeting at 5:15 PM

APPROVED

10/8/24

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 5 members

Members Present: Chair Harriet Bering, Holly Fields, Dick DeGrasse, Janice Petzel, Monica Mullins, Myra Sinnott

Members Present via Zoom: Vice Chair Bill Thomas, Cressica Brazier

Members Absent: Trevor Blackford, Melissa Burns, Ex Officio

Others Present: None

3. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

Dick commented on the discussion of Cressica's math for the energy savings at the library.

Motion: To approve Minutes of August 13, 2024, as written, M. Mullins, seconded by H. Fields.

Discussion about minutes reflecting what was said at the meeting. They cannot be changed for disagreement about the issues. Roll Call. Motion passed, 7 yes, 1 no (D. DeGrasse).

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

a. Town Office update

- Bill reported that everything seems to be working fine.
- There were concerns about how the heat pumps might function in the case of a power outage. A while back, an old heat pump would not work and needed a reboot. It was probably the result of a power outage and a surge when the power was restored. There was a question about if this would happen with the new heat pumps. Bill reached out to Rob Jenkins [at Revision?] and is waiting to hear back. He expects to hear that this issue is not relevant to the new system. He will share the results when he hears back.
- Holly asked if the heat pumps go off when the power goes out. Bill answered that the generator kicks in, and the heating system is carried by the generator, which has the capacity to cover all the needs of the building. This explanation is in an email he sent to everyone recently as a result of Fred Porter's question.

b. Library update—heat pumps and solar (Cressica)

- Cressica reported that we are contacting heat pump vendors. We hope to update on this next month.
- We are going forward with the solar panel installation. We've scheduled the re-roofing with Long Hill Construction. John Appelquist will be reusing shingles, so there won't be significant waste.
- Dick asked about data on size of the solar array, and the monthly output expected. Cressica answered that Harriet sent that information in an email several months ago.

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- Bill responded to Dick. He stated that the data in question don't matter. The roof is saturated with a solar array, and will produce the maximum that can be produced with the solar panels currently available. All that production will go to the benefit of the Town at large. Whatever it produces is a positive for the whole Town, and this should be done as soon as possible without delay.
- Harriet can resend the information to Dick.
- Dick stated that he would like to know the output by month, if possible, because it affects the Maine Power Options rate for next year for the municipality. He will be discussing this with Constellation and Maine Power Options.
- Bill asked Cressica if she's had a conversation with CMP to make sure the output of the solar array will be incorporated in the distribution plan for the rest of the solar production from the two arrays, and allocated in comparable way. Cressica stated that we haven't started the interconnection application yet; we will include that in our request.
- Dick stated he did some mathematics for the heat pump, and would like the math to be on the record. He handed out copies of his calculations. Most members were unable to read this, as the copies are very light.
- Monica asked Dick to put this in an email in detail, explaining the equations and what he is calculating. Dick replied that when you have fuel consumption data, you can calculate the heat loss of the building using degree days and temperature differences in the library. With that data, you can create the total electric consumption for electric heat.
- Bill explained that Dick needs to take the committee through the math.
- Janis asked Dick what the bottom-line conclusion is. Dick stated the cost of electricity for the heat pump is about the same price as oil. He feels there's no great savings.
- Myra explained to Dick that we have only one year of data after insulating the building. Dick was using Bill's data from before the insulation.
- Bill explained that the data cannot be used in totality. We can use only the data from pre-insulation to show the baseline against which we have made improvements by insulating the building. We have one-year's data to calculate the efficiency after insulation. Bill stated Cressica is correct; it's the 750 gallons of oil. There's no way that it will not be beneficial to have a heat pump rather than a fuel-driven system.
- Dick questioned the responsibility of the Energy Committee in regard to the calculations. Harriet answered that it's our responsibility to make sure what we're installing makes economic sense. Right now, we're in the process of getting estimates and designs. She agrees with Bill that only one year of data is actually relevant. We will come back to this next month.
- Dick asked how much is coming out of our budget for this. Bill answered that we don't know yet. Harriet explained that we have \$40,000 in our budget. Our plan was to include the rebates through Efficiency Maine. It turned out that their original calculation of the rebate was incorrect. We are going back to the drawing board and getting additional proposals from different heat pump suppliers.

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c. Municipal Building Project Update

- Cressica stated the contractor was able to install the base of the EV charger and conduit from the new Health Center building. The relocation of the EV Charger will possibly need to be the Energy Committee's contribution. The second part of that will be the installation of the wiring and the EV Chargers themselves. That funding is supposed to come out of the Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Grant.
- We just received our notification of award for the CDS Grant today, so we're moving forward with being able to access that funding as soon as possible. This is for all of the Health Center-related costs that we planned, mainly for energy, including the EV Charger, possibly the generator, and the solar array.
- MBPC will be meeting this Friday to discuss other matters publicly.
- Monica asked if there's been any discussion about the Up-Island Fire Garage. Cressica answered that this will be the main point of discussion on Friday. They have put on the agenda that they would like to get permission to move forward with construction. They have identified a Construction Manager.

d. EV Charger update

- Monica reported that Murt received some of the fire suppression items. There are still a few items on back order. We haven't opened any of the items, because he is in contact with the vendor and another fire safety training company. He will be holding an EV fire suppression training class for use of the equipment, sometime in October. The Energy Committee is invited to attend. Monica will speak with Murt and update the committee.

e. Maine utility policy/rates update (Dick)

- Dick stated that he needs another month or two of data on the 10 municipal meters that are being served by Maine Power Options.
- It's still the Standard Offer, although he's had discussions with the state energy office about Time of Use rates and how that would be effective in Maine, particularly on this island, which would give us power much cheaper off-peak, and we would avoid demand coincidence.
- Monica asked about the bar graphs in Dick's packet. It seems that the insulation at the library has made a great difference.

5. Prize Activities update

- Cressica reported that the main activity has been organizing the WindowDressers Community Build. We had our window measuring training last Saturday. Harriet, Bill, Janis, Trevor, Carrie, Cressica, and Kizzi were all in attendance. We will be measuring until the September 30th deadline. The Community Build will be at the end of October into early November.
- Our NREL contact has suggested we apply for two grants for field deployment of the backup energy systems. These grants would pay for equipment, not just technical assistance. These are the Critical Facility Energy Resilience Grant and the Energy Storage Pilot Demonstration Grant.

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He thinks we have a good chance of getting one of these grants. Their deadlines are in 3 weeks and 4 weeks respectively. Cressica will be looking at the grant requirements in the next couple of days and will follow up via email with what we might need to do.

- NREL will help with these grants, in contrast to the Clean Energy to Communities Grant, which they couldn't help us with, because that was administered by NREL.
- We were asked to be one of three communities that are in the process of completing the ETIPP program, to be in a film that NREL is now filming. They would like to visit us at the end of October. They'll be filming a number of sites and doing interviews around the island.
- We're in the process of identifying sites and whom they might want to interview for the film.

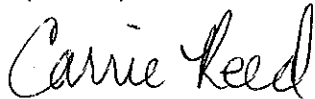
6. Discussion of Community Event

- Harriet stated we had planned \$5,000 in our budget to have a community event. She spoke with the people working on the Prize, and discussed a small event, such as a film and discussion, but she would like to plan a larger event for later in the year. This is an open discussion.
- The Sporting Club Old Home Day event happened this past summer. Cressica and Kizzi were there with handouts. This was from last year's budget.
- Janis stated that the Energy Hub discussed doing some of the insulation at the Sporting Club when the film crew is here, but that's only a month away.
- We'd like to plan a larger event, maybe in spring. Someone had suggested doing it toward the end of June when many of the seasonal residents are here.
- Dick suggested exposing energy scams at an event. Harriet stated that perhaps we can put together an informational flyer that we can send out on Constant Contact or put in the paper. Dick will collect solicitations and write something up.
- Myra suggested having a discussion at library about the scams. We can post information on the Hub website.
- Monica suggested a winter potluck of information for the year-round residents. People can have discussions, learn more about energy, and ask questions. People could write questions at the tables, and then we can have 10-20 minutes of discussing the questions. A lot of people are anti-solar because of the political race going on now. If we separate this from politics, we could give better information. We can make it fun with games.
- Bill agreed that it's a good idea to have something in the winter. It's an opportunity to reach people.
- Bill added that it's important to involve the summer people in this conservation, because they represent a significant use of energy on the island. We have some inroads through the ICC, but it's still a population we don't have good connectivity with. We should target them directly.
- Janis stated that the Forum is well attended by summer people. We've had local presenters. Maybe we can talk to the Forum people about having a presentation about what we're doing. Bill suggested we can make a donation to the Forum, and we might be able to change the format a little, extend the time somehow.
- Harriet stated that the Farmers' Market is another venue that gets a lot of seasonal residents.
- It's the consensus of the group to focus on a winter event for now. We can discuss details via email and at the next meeting.

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- Bill stated that the Energy Hub website is a good place to request the energy solicitations that people are getting, and then share info.
7. Other business
 - Harriet stated that in addition to the library heat pumps, we had planned in our budget for the Firehouse insulation. Our first step will be to reach out and find out exactly what is needed.
 8. Next meeting Tuesday, October 8th, at 5:15pm.
 9. Adjourn
Motion to adjourn meeting at 6:12 pm, J. Petzel, seconded by B. Thomas. Roll Call. Motion passed, 7 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed, Secretary

