

**Wellfleet Energy and Climate Action Committee  
Minutes of the Meeting of January 14, 2021  
Remote Participation  
4:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Richard Elkin, Lilli-Ann Green, Charles Cole, Robert Shapiro, Carol Magenau, Suzanne Ryan, Gorham Brigham, David Mead-Fox, John Cumbler and Jeff Tash

Chair Elkin called the meeting to order at 4:13 p.m.

This Zoom meeting was recorded and posted on Town website.

**BUSINESS**

**Review of rules for remote participation under open meeting law (OML):** Elkin gave an introduction to Open Meeting Law and Zoom meeting remote participation. He stated a role call vote must be taken.

**Approval of minutes:** NA

**Discussion of Planning Board letter:** Mead-Fox gave an overview to the committee.<sup>1</sup> He wanted the Planning Board (PB) to adopt a specific project but there was push back. He wrote a letter to the Selectboard from the PB that specifies adding resources, more people and more visibility. Ryan said there was the need for a better communication network among town departments and committees as regards climate related issues. A wide ranging discussion was held with different opinions expressed. During the conversation it was stated that if the town hires someone to be a town planner who focuses on climate action, this person could write grants to bring money into the town for projects. Ryan stated she would welcome someone who has expertise in grant writing for resiliency grants and in her opinion this would be prudent. Magenau questioned if a new position was realistic although presumably it would bring in more money than the position cost. A further discussion was held about the concept and feasibility of a paid permanent position and what the job description may be, could it be a position shared with another town, or could it be a consultant position. Green suggested a sub-committee be formed to look into these details, talk with the Town Administrator (TA), write a draft job description and report back to the whole committee at our next meeting. Mead-Fox, Ryan and Magenau volunteered to be on the sub-committee. The other aspect in the letter was to create a task force. Elkin and Green questioned Mead-Fox about this request of the SelectBoard. They said that the WECAC has been functioning in that role and examples were given, however with the pandemic it has been challenging to move forward with any initiative. They expressed the opinion the committee will move forward with work in this direction once other pressing issues are alleviated.

**Community Liaisons:** See above.

[5:02 pm, Cumbler left the meeting]

**Discussion of PV array on landfill and other possible PV installations:** Elkin updated the committee. Eversource has agreed to a temporary license agreement. A license agreement has been sent to the TA to be reviewed by town counsel and signed by the Selectboard. Once signed, the PV array will be connected.

[5:06 pm, Shapiro left the meeting]

**Global Covenant of Mayors/Green Community Act reporting:** No news

**Discussion and review of grant proposal status:** No news

**Effort for consolidation of billing from town meters:** Brigham had continued conversations to try to straighten out the situation so it is seamless once the PV array is connected. He will continue to work with the solar vendor, the electric company and the town. He will also ask the new accountant about the consolidated billing once that person is hired. He will add data for the Elementary School, which is in a different account. Adjustments to the allocations can be made every 6 months.

**Discussion of fuel-efficient automobile policy for town:** Selectboard member Curley is working to advance said policy. The item will be on a future Selectboard meeting. Elkin will reach out to Curley to discuss the status.

**Discussion of committee input to the local comprehensive plan:** Magenau will email the committee members with the draft approved at the last meeting. She sent it to Suzanne Thomas who is in charge of the Local Comprehensive Planning Committee but has not heard back yet. The last time they met was March 2020. Elkin suggested that we use the Local Comprehensive Plan draft as the basis for a more detailed Climate Action Plan.

**Review state legislation:** The Climate Bill is on the Governor's desk.

**Discussion of town-wide Climate Action Network:** No information

**Discussion of new Nauset Regional High School (NRHS) building:** No news

**Request for a motion from the SelectBoard favoring all-electric building NRHS:** Elkin has not drafted a letter yet requesting this. Tash updated the committee as to the March vote for all towns to accept the school plan. The vote being proposed would not go to Town Meeting for approval.

**Discussion of community outreach program for 2021 – Outer Cape Energize and joint possible actions with other energy committees:** Mead-Fox updated committee. There is a commitment from the Cape Light Compact (CLC) to work with a team but not until 2022. Mead-Fox talked about adding the technology of air source heat pumps to the list of technologies available for further discounts. There is a discussion of limiting the solar vendors to on Cape vendors. They are also talking about financing options to help with low income situations and plan to speak with CC5 and with CLC regarding any upcoming federal and state help. They have also been discussing if the whole Cape version of Energize can't get off the ground until 2022, should the program be offered to the Outer Cape in 2021. Brigham spoke about battery storage and PV upgrades being coupled with that technology. Green spoke about offering discounts for multiple purchases of EVs as well. Mead-Fox said they are talking with an EV dealer to open a dealership on Cape Cod.

[5:41 pm, Ryan left the meeting]

**Discussion of and possible motion to support for specific goals for GHG reductions: NA**

**Old Business: None**

**New Business:** The next meeting will be held on February 16 at 4:00 pm. Brigham spoke about air source heat pumps. Tash talked about the possibility of asking a teacher at the CC Tech School to speak to the committee or for a public Zoom meeting to educate the public about air source heat pumps. It was decided that the committee would like to be educated first about the technology before there is a public education outreach. Green will follow up and try to line up a speaker for the next meeting. She will begin by contacting CC Tech. Tash spoke about street lights that have been upgraded to LED and those that have not. He suggested outreach and education regarding the savings for private light owners including home owner associations and businesses. He suggested an article in the local paper about the topic. Elkin will check with CLC to see if businesses, home owner associations and private citizens can obtain a discount for switching private street lights to LED lights. Brigham questioned the lights at the DPW building. He asked Elkin to ask CLC if there are equivalent LED lights available and if there is a grant to replace the lights if so. Brigham asked about Open Meeting Law training. Elkin said there is an online training.

**Motion:** Elkin moved to adjourn the meeting. Brigham seconded. The motion carried 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lilli-Ann Green, Committee Secretary

<sup>1</sup> Planning Board Letter



## DRAFT

Dear Selectboard and Town Administrator Broadbent,

The Planning Board has had several discussions about the issue of climate change. The Board recognizes that this is a fundamental issue for the town to address. We believe that climate action is a crucial set of highly complex activities that must be approached comprehensively with care, thoughtfulness, and all due speed.

Based on the nearly unanimous passage of the Climate Emergency declaration at the most recent Town Meeting, the Board understands that this is an issue the citizens of the Town want to see addressed as a top priority:

*"The Town of Wellfleet recognizes that the climate emergency, driven by human activity including energy consumption and land use practices and leading to global warming, rising seas, deadly storms, dangerous heat waves, acidifying oceans, and melting ice sheets, poses an imminent threat to the health, safety and economic security of the residents of the Town. The Town of Wellfleet therefore adopts as its policy the objective of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions from human activity within and by the Town to zero at the earliest technically and economically feasible time, and directs that all officers and departments of the Town take such measures within the scope of their respective responsibilities and authority as may be necessary and prudent to facilitate such policy and objective."*

There are two basic categories of efforts: Adaptation and Mitigation. The Board is not specifically advocating for the following in this letter but we do believe they are worthy of study and consideration by responsible Town departments and Boards/Committees.

Adaptation is reacting to climate change through activities such as raising roads, revising zoning by-laws and building codes, increasing drainage requirements, restricting renovation and building in newly flood-prone areas, and general retreat from sea level rise.

Mitigation is essentially reducing our carbon footprint through activities such as adopting a net-zero stretch code, increased energy efficiency town-wide (municipal, residential, business), and developing local renewable energy production.

As a result of the scope of these and other challenges and given our responsibilities defined in the Wellfleet Home Rule charter Section 8.6.2:

"The Planning Board shall make recommendations to the Town Meeting and to the Town Administrator on all matters concerning the physical, economic, and environmental development of the town"

we urge the SelectBoard and Town Administrator to address these issues as a top priority.

**We recommend that the Selectboard and Town Administrator establish a high level and meaningful town-wide mechanism to plan for and institute a comprehensive approach to address climate change. This might take the form of a standing Climate Action Task Force or another Town body. We also believe that the Town should consider creating a new position that is responsible for overall Town Planning and Climate Action coordination.**

We are aware that climate action work is currently underway by the Energy and Climate Action Committee, the Conservation Commission, and several town Departments. These are all excellent activities, but we believe that the deep and broad nature of climate change affects everyone in town, all town departments, and is very likely the most complex challenge the town has ever faced. Simply put, we need to do more and do so with pace in a coordinated way.

We appreciate your consideration of this proposal and look forward to additional discussion.

Sincerely,

Wellfleet Planning Board

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