

Wellfleet Energy and Climate Action Committee
Minutes of the Meeting of June 15, 2020
Remote Participation
7:00 p.m.

Present: Richard Elkin, Charles Cole, Lilli-Ann Green, Robert Shapiro, Carol Magenau, Suzanne Ryan and David Mead-Fox

Finance Committee Liaison: Jeff Tash

Chair Elkin called the meeting to order at 7:25 p.m.

This Zoom meeting was recorded and posted on Town website.

BUSINESS

Approval of minutes:

Motion: Cole moved to approve minutes as submitted¹. Magenau seconded. The motion carried 7-0

Joint actions with Truro committees: No action taken. Truro has expressed an interest to work with Wellfleet on the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant. Ryan and Magenau will reach out to see if they will join one of our meetings in the near future.

Discussion of 5 year Energy Plan: Elkin expressed an interest in a plan to push a timetable to 50% of 1990 energy levels by 2030 and net zero by 2050. Tash, Shapiro and Green spoke in favor of realistic goals and to not put in numbers that are not realistic. There are many areas such as building, heating and transportation which all need to have reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. Tash likened it to COVID 19. It is important to demonstrate ongoing reductions, and to measure and set goals based upon actual tangible results.

New High School and how to move project to be net zero: Elkin proposed a campaign for voters of the towns who use the High School (HS) to vote no to the current plan at town meetings and at the 'ballot box' during elections. Mead-Fox proposed educating the HS Building Committee, Superintendent and public that the school needs to be a net zero building. Green stated that it would be important for the SelectBoard or the Town Administrator to endorse any actions taken by this committee especially since the SelectBoard has already voted to endorse the HS as presented. She also suggested we ask the SelectBoard if we can meet with the School Superintendent and HS Building Committee to discuss our concerns and not approach this concept in an adversarial manner. She suggested there may be state monies available for net zero building now, that was not available even 6 months ago. Tash suggested contacting the Town Administrator. He also said that the decisions on the project have been pushed out months into the fall due to the COVID 19 situation. Elkin suggested contacting the energy committees in the HS towns as well as the school committees. Shapiro stated the building is a small fraction of total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on the Outer Cape and our efforts would be better used to educate the public about their personal use of GHG emissions and how to reduce usage of fossil fuels. The consensus was that Elkin will draft a letter to the SelectBoard to discuss this issue and will take individual comments from committee members and revise the letter based upon feedback.

Outer Cape Energize update and further possible actions steps: Elkin talked about 250 low income families that could receive 100% rebates on heat pumps. Mead-Fox will look into state programs and partner organizations for home heating opportunities for low income households. He further talked about creating short webinars on topics such as electric vehicles, energy efficiency and home heating. Tash recommended holding a Forum on the topic through the Library and/or the Council on Aging via Zoom. Elkin and Ryan talked about a media campaign to advertise any opportunities we are able to make available to the public.

Discussion and Review of Grant Application Proposals: Ryan presented an overview:

1. The Green Communities grant recipients will be notified in July.
2. The Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant deadline for low lying roads was June 11. The recipients will be notified in late summer or early fall.
3. Ryan is talking with the Health Agent. The town has received monies from the Coastal Zone Management grants. It was suggested that we invite Ms. Greenberg-Lemos to a future meeting of our committee so we can hear what her department is currently working on and how we can support her efforts. Ryan will extend the invitation.

Committee Liaison: No reports, Mead-Fox will reach out to the Cape Cod Commission (CCC) to discuss the model bylaw on resiliency that is being worked on.

Global Covenant of Mayors status and action: Shapiro is developing a plan to submit with specific proposals. August is the completion date. He will update the vulnerability section with specific proposals being worked on by our committee and the CCC. He is investigating approaches to improve the GHG report in two areas: Transportation and the use of propane and fuel oil for building heating. Elkin will ask the SelectBoard if they will release information about vehicles owned by people in town in the aggregate so an estimate may be calculated regarding gas usage for the town. He will also ask our state Representative and Senator if they can provide information on how to obtain this information and also home heating oil and propane usage in our town.

Collaboration with the CCC where possible. Further discussion. Elkin and Green summarized the hearing of the petitioned proposed changes to the Regional Policy Plan. The summaries were quite different. Green referred the committee to the CCC website and the Zoom recording of the meeting in order to understand the topic.

Large solar array update: The project is still on hold.

Effort for consolidation of billing from town meters: No further information.

Review of implications of new pending state legislation: No further information.

Discussion of the film “Planet of the Humans”, a movie produced by Michael Moore and also the mini-series on Netflix called “Inside Bill’s Brain: Decoding Bill Gates”: Green had asked for the committee members to look at each since she thinks they both have some good points. Some members did watch the programs and shared their opinions.

Request for future agenda topics: No suggestions made.

Old Business: None

New Business: Elkin stated he heard a presentation on 5G low power transmitters. Green stated that a state bond bill has been adopted that supports efforts regarding broadband on the Outer Cape. This is a project the committee has supported in the past in relation to emergency services and vulnerability.

Motion: Green moved to adjourn the meeting. Cole seconded. The motion carried 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lilli-Ann Green, Committee Secretary

¹ Minutes