

CLIMATE COMMITTEE  
TOWN OF EDGARTOWN

MINUTES OF ZOOM MEETING HELD ON MAY 23, 2023

Julia Livingston, the chair of the committee, opened the meeting at 4:14 PM.

The following members of the committee were present on zoom, as follows:

Kevin Loughlin  
Peter Kirn  
Julia Livingston  
Cari Williamson

In addition, Alan Strahler, Bruce Fowle, and Alan Feldman were present on zoom as invited guests.

The first order of business was a motion to approve the minutes of the April 26 meeting, which had previously been emailed to all committee members. There was a motion duly seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

The next order of business was an update on the 2023 card, which is now in the hands of our graphic designer, Julia's daughter, Katy Tassmer, and should get to the printer in a week or so.

Next, Alan Feldman reported that the plans for the Chappy Ferry are moving along, but slowly because of the need to coordinate with the plans for Dock Street and the creation of a tax exempt corporation to own the ferry operations. Julia said the construction of the ferry landings might also depend on the design of possible new electric boats. Peter asked whether the Chappy side construction could proceed first, before decisions are made about the Edgartown side. Alan said there was some discussion of moving the ferry landing on the Edgartown side to a new location and also some discussion about planning for the construction to be done in stages, something like the stages planned for North Wharf and Memorial Wharf.

Alan Feldman also reported that ticks are worse than ever on Chappaquiddick and the University of Massachusetts study seems to be getting underway. He reported that the next step for the Chappy CERT is a meeting with the Edgartown Fire Chief. Alan is optimistic that the CERT will be operational before the 2023 hurricane season.

Julia reported that there has been no progress on the Edgartown Master Plan; Peter reported that there has been no progress on the Harbor Plan; Alan Strahler reported that he has not heard anything about the Woodwell study.

Next, Julia reported on the May 18 Tisbury Water Resources Committee hybrid meeting led by Ben Robinson, where there was discussion of how to address the nitrogen getting into the ponds and groundwater from home septic systems. Tisbury is mapping each watershed and identifying groups of homes that could have one shared nitrogen removal system as well as individual homes that will need individual enhanced nitrogen removal systems. In the Climate Committee meeting with the new Edgartown Health Agent, this Tisbury planning process should be discussed. Dukes County is making some funds available to help homeowners install enhanced nitrogen removal, and the Edgartown Health Agent should make sure Edgartown benefits from this program.

Julia reported on the May 19 Cape Cod hybrid meeting about floodplain building regulations. It was a very technical meeting about how to satisfy the State regulations that govern building in

the floodplain A zones and V zones. Basements are not allowed in V zones, but swimming pools are allowed. The presenter explained that this is because the regulations are about making buildings that will withstand storms. The presenter was named Eric Carlson ([eric.carlson@state.ma.us](mailto:eric.carlson@state.ma.us)), and he may be helpful as the effort to amend our zoning bylaw moves forward.

Julia reported that the Planning Board is starting an RFP process to hire an expert to come up with proposed revisions to the zoning bylaw. The process will involve putting together a "statement of work" with Jennifer Smyth, as purchasing agent in the Town Hall, and asking at least three possible consultants to bid on the work.

Next was a discussion of how to get our messages out to more Edgartown residents. Alan Strahler reported that the West Tisbury Library's book club discussion of Greta Thunberg's book attracted 7 or 8 people. Peter asked whether we've given up on the newspapers. Julia will put this subject on the agenda for our next meeting.

Julia reported that the offices of both Julian Cyr and Dylan Fernandes responded to the letter the Climate Committee sent about the State Forest. Kaylea Moore of Dylan Fernandes' office mentioned pending legislation that would give the DCR supervisor in charge of the forest recurring funds from easements. The Supervisor, Conor Laffey, told Julia in a phone call that he wanted permission to do controlled burns and timber harvesting. All three invited follow up from the Climate Committee.

Alan Strahler gave a report about the Steamship Authority Strategic Plan meeting held earlier today at the Oak Bluffs Library. The statements the public was asked to respond to were very unspecific, so the meeting was an opportunity to make some specific comments. Among the comments were the importance of not locking into new diesel boats that will last for 30 years and the need for electrification, better maintenance and reliability, more car space reserved for Vineyard residents, and the possibility of some passenger only boats.

Julia reminded the group about the pot luck gathering to be hosted by Ellen and Richard Price on May 30.

There was a unanimous vote to adjourn at 4:58 PM.