

EDGARTOWN CLIMATE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF ZOOM MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 29, 2024

Julia Livingston, the chair of the committee, opened the meeting at 4:02 PM.

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

Jennifer Blum
Peter Kirn
Julia Livingston
Kevin Loughlin

In addition, Alan Strahler, Ellen Price, Jack Connell, Bruce Fowle, Alan Feldman, and David Lindheimer were present on zoom as invited guests.

The first order of business was a motion to approve the minutes of the January 3 meeting, which had previously been emailed to all committee members. There was a motion duly seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Julia encouraged the members of the committee to do Town department interviews in March. She reported that she and Peter had spoken with Rob Morrison, the Shellfish Constable. Kevin has left a message with the Chief of Police. Julia has a meeting scheduled with the Beautification Committee. Jennifer asked if it's okay to do the interviews on zoom. Julia said that would be fine as long as it's fine with the department leaders being interviewed. Peter reminded the group that it's good to get these interviews done early so they can be included on our 2024 rack card.

Julia reported that she had spoken with the Tisbury Printer, and our printing cost for the rack card will be less than \$1,000, which is the limit put forward by James Hagerty.

Julia mentioned the Climate Action Fair scheduled for May 19 at the old Agricultural Hall in West Tisbury. Ellen and Jennifer both said they would be there and could switch off with Julia to help staff the Climate Committee table. On our table, we will have our banner, the report to the Select Board about our 2023 activities, and the rack cards from 2022 and 2023, even if the 2024 card is not yet ready.

Julia reported that the February 27 public hearing about the zoning bylaw changes that will be voted on at the April town meeting was long, and unfortunately there were two differences between the versions of the proposed bylaws that were posted online and available to the public for the public hearing and the versions approved by the Planning Board on January 2. Julia said that emails have been flying back and forth among herself, James Hagerty, and Planning Board representatives to find out what versions are in the draft warrant for the town meeting, whether there are mistakes in those versions, and whether those mistakes can be fixed before the warrant goes to the printer. Julia explained that the versions printed in the warrant for the town meeting have to conform to what was approved by the Planning Board on January 2. Any changes beyond that, whether as a result of the public hearing or otherwise, have to be made by a floor vote at the town meeting.

The February 27 public hearing will be continued on March 26, and it is possible that the Planning Board will decide at the March 26 meeting to put forward some changes for a floor vote at the town meeting.

Alan Strahler commented that it's not a good idea to amend stuff on the floor unless it's something pretty important. Jennifer said it was good to hear Jeff Agnoli and others

commending the Planning Board and the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee for listening to public concerns and putting forward these proposed changes. She felt there was a high level of appreciation even from people who expressed questions, concerns, and opposition. Peter agreed that the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee had done a great job. Julia, Peter, and Jennifer all expressed admiration for the way Lucy Morrison moderated the public hearing.

Julia said her next step is that she will prepare a chart for Lucy summarizing the comments made by members of the public. Julia will send the chart to the lawyer who has been advising the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee for her comments, and the chart may be helpful to Lucy for the March 26 meeting.

Julia acknowledged that the proposed tree protection bylaw seemed to be the most controversial one, but she is guardedly optimistic about the town meeting results. She said she believes zoning bylaw changes require a 2/3 vote at town meeting, and she also said all of us should encourage our climate oriented friends to come to the town meeting on April 9.

Julia said that the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee will continue for another year.

The next topic was the forest fire risk from lack of maintenance in the State Forest. Julia asked Kevin to renew his contacts with Alec Scicchitano from the office of Representative Dylan Fernandes and Michael Holcomb from the office of Senator Julian Cyr about this. She also asked Kevin to make contact with the MVC Wildfire Mitigation Committee.

Next, Julia reported that the main topic of the recent CAP Community Coordinating Committee meetings has been the efforts to coordinate work on a NOAA grant application and the upcoming Commonwealth of Massachusetts MVP 2.0 program. Both projects require town representatives on committees to bring underrepresented groups into the planning process. Julia said Edgartown is going to need to appoint somebody, and Julia has been talking to a few people about it at Liz Durkee's request. Julia asked the group to let her know if they have any suggestions. Alan Strahler and Julia both thought Kara Shemeth might be a good person for this role because of her work as an EMT and her work for the Conservation Commission.

Kevin reported that he attended a meeting organized by Liz Durkee and Megan Gombos about trying to institute a resilience fee, a source of funds for climate resilience projects. Kevin will be the Edgartown representative in this effort, and he will keep us informed.

Next was a Chappaquiddick update. Alan Feldman said they are closer to getting the FEMA grant for the solar panels on the roof of the Community Center. Also, the tick data collection in 2023 was very successful, and there are plans to continue in 2024. Alan said there is a study in Connecticut of a new chemical that can be put in the feed for deer to destroy the ticks without harming the deer. He hopes a study of that kind might get going on Chappaquiddick after the 2024 data collection.

Bruce reported that he has talked to the Chair of the Chappy Ferry Committee, Rick Schifter, who said not much is happening, and he needs to get in touch with James Hagerty about the funds needed for the naval architecture consultant. Bruce said they are definitely going to consider electrification of the ferry. They are also awaiting the report of the consultant hired to make a recommendation about how the ferry should be owned.

Bruce recommended an upcoming talk on emergency preparedness. It will be on Saturday at 1:30 in person at the Oak Bluffs library and on zoom. It's part of a series sponsored by the Oak Bluffs Climate & Energy Advisory Committee. Jennifer noted that the Oak Bluffs Climate & Energy Advisory Committee series at the Oak Bluffs library has had good attendance, and she suggested that the programs might be repeated at the Edgartown library or we might consider

ways to reach out to Edgartown residents to attend in Oak Bluffs. Julia said she would speak to the Oak Bluffs Committee about this.

As to the Harbor Management Plan, Peter reported that it's close to final, but not quite there, and he needs to check with Juliet Mulinare.

Julia reported that the update on the Edgartown Master Plan is exactly the same as the update on the Harbor Management Plan.

Julia reminded the members of the committee to do their annual Massachusetts conflict of interest training.

Bruce reported that he made contact with Peter Meleney of the Oak Bluffs Climate Committee, and Peter will keep Bruce updated as Peter's new tree committee takes shape.

Julia, Jennifer and Ellen congratulated Kevin on his newspaper article mentioning Jimmy Cagney. Jennifer added that the staff at the Vineyard Conservation Society really enjoyed the article.

Julia mentioned Susan Solomon, an atmospheric chemist at MIT. Julia said she is an engaging speaker and has a book coming out in June called Solvable: How We Healed the Earth and How We Can do It Again. Her early work was on the ozone hole in the atmosphere. The group expressed general enthusiasm for trying to get Professor Solomon to come to Edgartown for a book talk.

Julia reported that, as she did for 2022, Jennifer has prepared two reports summarizing what the Climate Committee did in 2023 - one to be printed in the Town's Annual Report and one to be delivered to the Select Board by Julia on Monday, March 4.

There was a unanimous vote to adjourn at 4:52 PM.