

Oak Bluffs Climate and Energy Advisory Committee

Friday February, 26, 2021 3:00-4:00

Via Zoom

MINUTES

Attendance: Marilyn Miller, Simon Shapiro, Craig Saunders, Peter Meleney, Bill Cleary

Absent: Gino Mezzaferro

Invited Guest: MVC Climate Coordinator Liz Durkee

Topic 1: Discussion of The Vineyard Sustainable Energy Committee meeting of February 17, 2021 and its request to individual Island Town's Energy Committees for the development of a template for Town-level 5 year energy strategies/plans. Funding to help implement these plans will be forthcoming from the Vineyard Wind project, distributed by The Vineyard Power Cooperative. Regional projects will be funded first and then individual town projects. How to develop this plan and who will work on it were discussed. Our committee's recently expanded role to work on Climate issues was discussed. We all agreed this will be a big job. Whether a committee of volunteers will have the time or expertise to do this adequately was discussed. With the help of our guest Liz Durkee, former Conservation Agent for Oak Bluffs a list prepared for a 2019 municipal vulnerability Preparedness workshop was discussed: These include: the harbor, the Hospital, drinking water supply, emergency preparedness, the town's ocean facing roads. Other issues to consider, Sea-level rise, more intense storms, wildfire, pond water quality, an Aging population.

Topic 2: We discussed who to reach out to for help moving forward on these important issues. Having Liz available at the MVC will be crucial. Their Climate page on the MVC's website is easily available with all the current data listed by towns. It was decided we should invite the newly hired Oak Bluffs Conservation agent and Environmental Planner to our next meeting along with the asst. Town Manager. Roles and goals will be discussed. Other important town dept. heads to talk to will be: Shellfish Constable, Harbor Master, Highway Dept. Water Dept. and Wastewater. We also plan to reach out the Cape Light Compact for guidance and funding.

Topic 3: Current work. We are anxiously awaiting the votes we need at Town Meeting to qualify to become a Green Community. Bill Cleary and Marilyn filled us in. We discussed the possibility of asking voters to join the rest of the Island in agreeing to becoming 100% fossil free/100% renewable by 2040, but decided we need to first get the support needed to become a Green Community. The status of CVEC solar projects planned for Oak Bluffs were discussed. All are on hold pending issues with Eversource and the impacts of Covid 19.

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 4:00

Next meeting scheduled for March 12, 2021 at 3:00 via Zoom