



CLIMATE RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

www.westport-ma.com/climate-resilience-committee

Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday

January 18, 2022

Conducted via Google Meet

Members present: John Bullard, Chair
Shana Shufelt, Vice Chair
James Whitin
David Brown
Constance Gee
Sean Leach
Jake McGuigan
Ross Moran
Mark Rasmussen
David Sprogis
Michael Sullivan
Robert Daylor
Raymond Elias
Ray Raposa

Members absent: Brian Valcourt
Tony Vivenzio

1. Introduction:

Jim Whitin opened the meeting at 3pm, all of the members in attendance introduced themselves.

2. Discussion of structure of the committee:

The second item on the agenda was discussion of the structure of the committee, in which John Bullard read the letter from the Planning Board that was sent to the Select Board in September that outlined the potential make-up and charge of the committee. Mr. Bullard motioned to accept the items outlined in the letter to be the focus and charge of the committee seconded by Bob Daylor. The following comments were made by members relating to the motion;

- Mr. Whitin suggested to amend the motion to incorporate the first MVP grant the Town was awarded for assessing the whole Town in item number ten;
- Mr. Whitin suggested that the letter read by Mr. Bullard be amended so the focus and charge of the committee is the first item, with the structure of the committee to be discussed separately
- Shana Shufelt suggested that the letter to the Select Board omit the composition of the committee

With no outstanding comments from the committee, Mr. Whitin stated he would like vote on defining the charge as specified and sending the amended letter to the Select Board for reconfirmation, with no members in opposition, the vote carried unanimously.

3. Vote to establish structure/ 4. Elect officers:

Mr. Whitin read the letter that was previously submitted to the Select Board that proposed co-chairs of the committee, with one co-chair from the Select Board and the other from the Planning Board. Mrs. Shufelt stated that a Chair and Vice-Chair would work for the structure of the committee. Mr. Whitin motioned to appoint John Bullard as Chair and Shana Shufelt as Vice-Chair of the committee, seconded by Mr.

Daylor, with no members in opposition, the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Whitin suggested that subcommittees be established for particular interests that would ultimately be brought back to the full committee on a regular basis. Mr. Whitin also suggested that subcommittees meet monthly or every other month, with the executive committee to meet less frequently (every 3 or 4 months). David Sprogis suggested that the various topics placed on a list, which would then dictate how often the subcommittees need to meet to address the items, as some may be seasonal, slow or fast moving. Mr. Bullard suggested that the heads of the subcommittees along with the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee make up the executive committee. Mr. Bullard also detailed four areas that need to be addressed by the committee with possible subcommittees, which include the following;

- water related issues (fresh & salt)
- health related issues
- agriculture related issues
- issues of both communication and fundraising

Mr. Whitin suggested that infrastructure (relating to roads, utilities, bridge, Head of Westport, flooding, mitigation strategies for septic/sewer) be included as a topic of interest to be addressed by the committee. Mrs. Shufelt suggested that the next meeting of the committee be on the second Thursday of the month.

5. MVP EOI:

Mark Rasmussen of Buzzards Bay Coalition stated that over the past year a lot of time has been spent looking over the possible alternatives for a shared wastewater system for the “Let” neighborhood (1st, 2nd, 3rd Streets & Bayside Restaurant) due to many failed septic systems, high groundwater, flooding, coastal storm risks. The members of the “Let” neighborhood were interested in seeking information and alternative designs to improve the area related to the issues mentioned above, and the MVP grant last year allowed for a thirty percent design on a wastewater system, which included identifying ideal locations and rough cost estimates. Mr. Rasmussen stated that this years MVP grant would allow for a one-hundred percent design, detailed costs and considerations. The neighbors voiced that they would like the project expanded to include stormwater flooding & treatment, drinking water, underground utilities and well viability. Mr. Rasmussen voiced that the MVP EOI is due on 1/21/22, and that he would be writing and submitting the interest letter for the grant, as long as the Select Board votes to accept the recommendations from the Planning Board and Climate Resilience Committee to do so. Mr. Whitin motioned to forward the recommendation that Buzzards Bay Coalition draft and submit the MVP EOI pre-app for the design and construction of a possible shared community sewer system and stormwater control structure for the ‘Let’, seconded by Mr. Daylor, with no members opposition, the motion carried unanimously. Sean Leach questioned whether this project is financially feasible for the Town and if there are any other projects the grant money could go towards that are a higher or equal priority to the Town. Mr. Rasmussen spoke on the financial feasibility aspect of Mr. Leach’s question and stated that the project is financially feasible, and the goal of this year is to acquire the one-hundred percent design on a wastewater system and accurate cost estimates in order to re-apply next year to build the design. Mr. Whitin voices that there are other items within the Town that need to be addressed, however is unsure if the other items could be funded by the MVP grant due to its specificity of needing to be a holistic approach to climate change. Mrs. Shufelt stated that there are currently a lot of ARPA / Federal stimulus monies that are available for narrowly focused categories, such as water, wastewater and fiber-optics that are being actively looked at by other committees.

6. General Discussion/ 7. General Areas to be Addressed & Discussed/ 8. Subgroups:

Mr. Bullard voiced that for the next meeting on 2/10/22 at 5pm he would like members to think of the following;

- what are very important issues that should be addressed by this committee
- what subgroup group would the issues most likely belong in
- who would be involved in those subgroups

- what resources are there to help the subgroups understand the impacts and possible opportunities

Michael Sullivan suggested that committee members submit the items listed above to Amy Messier prior to the next meeting in order to disperse amongst the members. Ross Moran voiced that public safety and infrastructure is an important issue that he would be interested in participating in a subgroup within that direction.

Mrs. Shufelt motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, the motion carried unanimously.
The committee adjourned at 4:45 pm.

Accepted 2/10/22