



CLIMATE RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

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

Regular Meeting Minutes of:
Thursday, April 14, 2022

CRC Members present: John Bullard, Chair
Shana Shufelt, Vice Chair
Jim Whitin
Jake McGuigan
Mike Sullivan
Ray Raposa
Phil Weinberg

Subcommittee Members Present:
Tanja Ryden
David Cole
Michael Yogman

John Bullard called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM

1. Introduction:

Members and attendees from the public introduced themselves, non CRC members that introduced themselves included the following; Courtney Rocha; Dale Weber; Laura Hadley; Michael Yogman

2. Acceptance of 3/10/22 minutes: This item has been postponed to a future meeting.

3. Subcommittee Reports:

- **Water:** Mike Sullivan summarized the latest subcommittee meeting, which included the creation of a chart to help categorize the impacts and risks of climate change that Westport may be faced with. The water subcommittee specifically focused on categorizing those impacts and risks, and placing them into the appropriate category of driver forcing factors (ex. sea level rise as a driver of warming oceans). After categorizing, priority will be assigned, which will narrow the focus of the items of the most importance (urgency, severity, what can be addressed locally).
- **Infrastructure & Safety:** John Bullard gave a brief update and stated that the infrastructure & safety subcommittee is looking at low laying roads that are critical for evacuation routes and utilities. Relating more to safety, Mr. Bullard mentioned that Bob Daylor had reached out to the fire chief for the Town's emergency response plan, which lays a great foundation and gives the ability to look at risks within Westport. This plan can serve as the framework for the committees
 - **Health:** Phil Weinberg summarized the latest subcommittee meeting held on 3/7/22, which included discussions with focus on extreme heat, air quality degradation (asthma & allergies), infectious vector-borne diseases, mental health impacts, updated emergency response protocols (related to health impacts) and how to fund their efforts.

- **Agriculture:** Ray Raposa summarized the latest subcommittee meeting that was held the 4/13/22, which included discussions on how the industry has adapted to changing of crops as a result of climate change, as well as entities that can serve as resources- such as USDA and MDAR.
- **Engagement & Fundraising:** David Cole stated that there was a preliminary meeting that served as a brainstorming session, and stated that the subcommittee is contemplating filling out an application for an MVP Action Grant to fund support for the entire Climate Resilience Committee. Mr. Cole recommended organizing a series of public meetings in the fall, in which each of the subcommittees makes a presentation of what the impact of climate change is going to be in Westport, and what can be done about it. Courtney Rocha, (MVP Coordinator for SE Region) was present on the meeting, and clarified that the NVP Action Grant cannot fund municipal staff time, however, it can fund activities by the CRC (funding volunteers that aren't municipal staff that are part of the community, technical assistance, site rentals). Mr. Cole mentioned that he has been in communication with the environmental committee of the middle and high school, and is awaiting their response on whether they would like to be engaged with the engagement & fundraising subcommittee, as they are already working with Mass Audubon and the Westport River Watershed Alliance on some projects. Mr. Cole also mentioned that he has reached out to UMass Dartmouth, and is also awaiting a response. Jim Whitin stated that the members of the Planning Board have met Joe Costa of the Buzzards Bay NEP and Sam Haines of CZM, which both suggested that Westport should pursue a grant to do a Hazard Mitigation Study, which would enable the Town to look at and focus on climate issues. Furthermore, Mr. Whitin explained that if Westport were to have a certified Hazard Mitigation Plan, it would qualify the Town to be eligible for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, which offers significant funding, as well as qualifying Westport for the Federal BRIC Program (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities), which provides funding for climate adaptation and mitigation.

4. CRC Overload, Schedule & Roles: John Bullard expressed a concern about the main committee becoming too large, however, he is not concerned about the sizes of the subcommittees, since more resources are needed and welcome at the subcommittee level. Mr. Bullard touched upon the concern raised by David Cole questioning if subcommittee meetings are subject to the Open Meeting Law, and stated that Mr. Cole has reached out to the Attorney General, and is awaiting a response. Mr. Bullard explained that if the subcommittees are subject to the Open Meeting Law, it would create a burden to the Planning Board staff due to required postings and their associated timelines. Mr. Whitin recommended that Ms. Messier look into TeamUp.com, which offers multiple calendars that could be used efficiently for all of the subcommittee meeting scheduling, as well as the general CRC meeting schedule. Ms. Messier will create an account, and email the CRC and subcommittee members on how to navigate the calendars for future scheduling. Mike Sullivan reiterated that the CRC is an advisory committee that makes no decisions, and just offers recommendations to the Board of Selectmen, and the subcommittees purpose is just to gather information to bring to the CRC.

5. Other Recommendations of New Members:

- Laura Hadley expressed her desire to join the water subcommittee.
- Ray Raposa recommended that Lydia Silva, a professor at UMass Dartmouth that teaches agricultural sustainability be considered, and thanked Mrs. Shufelt for the original recommendation. Mr. Raposa has reached out to Lydia Silva, and is awaiting her response.
- Tanja Ryden mentioned that she has reached out to Peter Defusco, who is a Westport resident who has experience with environmental planning, and would be interested in joining the committee towards the end of April.

6. Date of Next Meeting: June 9, 2022 unless otherwise noted.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.

Accepted 6/16/22