



# CLIMATE RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

[www.westport-ma.com/climate-resilience-committee](http://www.westport-ma.com/climate-resilience-committee)

Regular Meeting Minutes of:  
Thursday, June 16, 2022

*John Bullard, Chair*  
*Shana Shufelt, Vice Chair*

CRC & Subcommittee Members present:

- John Bullard, Chair
- Shana Shufelt, Vice Chair
- Michael Sullivan
- Michael Yogman
- Constance Gee
- Mark Rasmussen
- Jake McGuigan
- David Cole
- Jeff Cantin
- Donna Amaral

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

## 1. Introduction:

Members of the CRC and the associated Subcommittees introduced themselves.

**2. Acceptance of 3/10/22 & 4/14/22 minutes:** Mike Sullivan motioned to accept both sets of minutes from 3/10/22 & 4/14/22, seconded by Mark Rasmussen, the motion carried unanimously, therefore both sets of minutes were accepted.

## 3. Subcommittee Reports:

John Bullard mentioned a previous discussion had with the water subcommittee relating to how the final report will be organized (how it gets written/ who does what) and the possibility of the Engagement & Fundraising subcommittee handling this item, since the audience of the Final Report is the Select Board and the community. A draft Table of Contents was put together by Mr. Bullard and supplied to the committee to review between now and the next scheduled meeting.

- **Engagement & Fundraising:**

David Cole stated that Jeff Cantin has drafted strategic planning documents for both communication and engagement, and Mr. Cole has circulated those documents to the committee to review and provide commentary. Mr. Cole mentioned that he has reached out to several groups to see if they would be interested in providing any kind of administrative support to the Climate Resilience Committee as a whole, and SRPEDD has indicated that they are interested. SRPEDD has a Regional Resilience Planning Program lead by Helen Zincavage, and has suggested that they would make available an allotment of 8 hrs. a week of Helens time and 3 hrs. a week of a staff assistant to support the CRC, with a cost of fifty-thousand (\$50,000.00) annually. Mr. Cole stated that this collaboration would be beneficial for Westport's CRC, and would aid in providing SPREDD with practical experience with a community that is aggressively pursuing a resiliency program. Mr. Cole is seeking approval from the CRC to accept the idea of trying to develop the relationship and to enter

into an agreement with SRPEDD and raise money for it. Mr. Bullard opened the discussion up to the other members, which included the following;

- Mark Rasmussen: Supports the idea of SRPEDD helping, and asked if there is an ability to tap into some of the Town's allotted "free" hours (43 hrs. annually) in order to reduce the annual cost of help.
- Constance Gee: expressed that \$50,000.00 annual seems like a large sum of money for eleven hours of work a week, and questioned what the workload and type of work would entail.
- Mike Sullivan: Expressed that the issuance of a report that identifies the problems/issues of Westport with associated tasks and objectives may be a good first step, with one of the objectives in the report being the solicitation of funding for whatever assistance the committee needs. Mr. Sullivan emphasized that asking for funding this early may not be optically beneficial as opposed to asking for funding a few months down the road.
- Mr. Cole stated that the assistance from SRPEDD would not be for the report, it would be for the administrative and consultant assistance for the committees operations.
- Jake McGuigan expressed that he is in agreement with Mr. Sullivan and Mrs. Gee, and that having a foundation of what work is expected from the position would be beneficial before seeking the associated funding.
- Jeff Cantin: believes that once feedback is received from the engagement and communication documents there will be a better consensus of what's known and unknown about the impacts of these areas, what kind of information do we have/don't have/need, which will help the committee determine what kind of report to write, and also what type of assistance is needed.
- Shana Shufelt: expressed that a few months from now would be the better time to check in with the Select Board in order to gather more information and present to the Board related to the project charter, problems, potential approaches, resources needed, etc.

Mr. Bullard expressed that the committee needs staff assistance sooner rather than later, and that the committee should focus on a time limit for making recommendations to the Town, and what the Town should be doing with an end point that focuses our attention. Mr. Bullard envisions someone from SRPEDD talking and listening to members of the various subcommittee's, who then would have the responsibility of writing the chapter for each of the subcommittees. This method of operation would maintain consistency in language, approach and organization while at the same time allowing the subcommittees to control what material is included in the chapter. Mr. Cole reiterated that SRPEDD is initiating a climate resilience planning activity, and he believes that working with SRPEDD as a collaboration can help them while simultaneously helping the CRC. Mr. Cole motioned to ask the Select Board to allocate some part of the share of SRPEDD hours to start this collaborative effort to support the work of the Climate Resilience Committee, seconded by Mr. Sullivan, the motion carried unanimously.

- **Water:**

Mike Sullivan of the water subcommittee that most recently met on 6/13/22, in which the subcommittee put together a spreadsheet of components of risk drivers and forcing factors, including; sea level rise, warming oceans, change in water temp – Gulf Stream, ocean acidification, storm frequency/intensity, increase in Summer/ Winter temps, and local tide differential. Mr. Sullivan stated that the water subcommittee is actively developing a report that will flush out the eleven enumerated risks, try to identify a timeline for each of the problems, and then assess priority/order to the top three or so relating to global warming and climate change. Mrs. Gee mentioned an issue that's currently taking place in Westport, with the rise of the water table near Richmond Pond.

- **Infrastructure & Safety:** No update at this time.

- **Health:**

Mr. Bullard mentioned that he had received a written report from Phil Weinberg. Michael Yogman was present and gave a brief summary of that report which mentioned the adverse effects of extreme heat in Westport on the elderly population, how humans react to extreme heat events, and that number of chronic illnesses are exacerbated by heat (hypertension, asthma, MS, pregnancy and premature birth). Mr. Yogman mentioned that Donna Amaral has done some work with the community about the adverse effects of climate change on mental health, and mentioned the report included the topics of respiratory illnesses from the effects of the air quality and changes to the ozone, along with the effects of changes in insect vectors, such as EEE and Lyme Disease. Mrs. Amaral expressed that the health subcommittee has specifically focused on the health impacts of extreme heat, and what can be done to immediately alleviate those health impacts if needed, such as locating and providing cooling centers for the vulnerable populations. Mrs. Amaral touched upon mental health issues that could arise in the event that people are forced to relocate and/or the stress of changes in climate impacting other aspects of their life, as mentioned above. Mr. Bullard highlighted that extreme heat kills more people each year than any other weather event (hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.), and added that as a committee, looking at the specific locality of extreme heat within the Town of Westport itself can be observed, with the example of north Westport (closer to 195) being approximately ten degrees warmer than south Westport (Cherry & Web), and expressed that recognizing these differences from a socioeconomic standpoint is necessary.

- **Agriculture:** No update at this time.

**4. Other Business:** Mr. Bullard mentioned he has circulated a table of contents out to the members relating to the way of thinking/ organizing when the Committee wants to do a report. Mr. Bullard stated that before any reports are issued, the engagement committee needs to actively engage in the community (public outreach, feedback, etc.), and can be addressed at the next meeting.

**5. Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday, September 1, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Accepted: 9/1/2022