

Minutes

Martha's Vineyard Commission Climate Action Task Force (CATF)

Friday, January 17, 2020

at the Olde Stone Building, Oak Bluffs

Members and staff: Cheryl Doble, Liz Durkee, Alex Elvin, Rob Hannemann, Tristan Israel, Bob Johnston, Joan Malkin, Erik Peckar, Ben Robinson, Alan Strahler, Noli Taylor, Richard Toole, Kate Warner

I. MVC Climate Coordinator position

The task force discussed a revised job description for a proposed MVC Climate Coordinator, based on changes that Kate Warner and Ben Robinson made prior to the meeting. The job duties had been reordered and a requirement for candidates to have planning experience was changed to add environmental experience, among other revisions.

Ben said the goal was to fill the position by May, but he also noted that the retirement of Coastal Planner Jo-Ann Taylor in the spring will leave a gap in coastal planning at the MVC.

Noli Taylor said she anticipated the proposed job will require many hours per week, which raised questions about ensuring a salary that is commensurate with responsibilities.

II. Organizational structure, communication and outreach

Members discussed whether to reduce the number of monthly Task Force meetings from two to one, since most of the work appeared to be happening in the adaptation and mitigation subcommittees. But after further discussion, members agreed that more work was still to be done, including the clarification of tasks related to the Steamship Authority, MVY Airport and Eversource. To that end, Cheryl Doble asked that future agendas clarify that the CATF is working towards identifying what additional groups or subcommittees are needed.

Looking ahead, Bill Straw suggested starting a CATF blog to organize priorities and facilitate communication once the number of meetings is reduced, and Noli Taylor suggested starting a Slack account that would allow for an ongoing conversation among members. Alex Elvin agreed to look into Slack and report back at the next meeting.

III. County Commission update

Tristan Israel said he planned to advocate for climate initiatives in his role as chairman of the Dukes County Commission this year, including drafting a letter to support the 100% Renewable warrant article and the MVC Climate Emergency Resolution. He also planned to ask Vineyard

SSA governor candidates about their views on climate change, during interviews slated for Feb. 5 and 19. He expected the County to make its appointments by March 4. He also expected an opportunity for questions from the public, in regard to both the SSA candidates and those for MVY Airport Commission. Joan Malkin suggested reaching out to the MVTimes to have them include those meeting dates in its newsletter. Noli also offered to help spread the word. Ben suggested inviting the new SSA governor to a future meeting of the CATF.

IV. Discussion of CATF priorities

Bill inquired about the CATF's top 10 priorities, and Rob Hannemann stated that such a list will take more time to develop. Other suggested drafting a list of items the CATF is currently working on, including why they are critical and how they fit into a long-term process. Items that were mentioned included the SSA, transportation, microgrids and disaster recovery. Rob agreed that such a list would be useful, and he pointed to a need to create small teams to address those areas. Ben stressed that the goal was to have organizations such as the Joint Transportation Committee and MVY Airport adopt climate change philosophies of their own, with help from the Task Force.

Members had various suggestions for top-10 lists, including the CATF topic areas, and things organizations should aim for in terms of achieving energy and resiliency goals. Rob argued that such an effort should be framed more as a query than a set of prescriptions, in part because stakeholders may have more expertise in their fields than CATF members. 9

V. Discussion of CATF's role in stakeholder outreach

In light of the MVP Action Grant that was awarded to Oak Bluffs and the MVC, Liz Durkee asked if outreach will be handled by the CATF or by the consultant(s) for the MVP process. Ben argued that public outreach would relate more to adaptation than mitigation, although Noli saw it as more inclusive, and she urged against going to the same stakeholders twice. Erik Peckar pointed to a need for general talking points that can apply across the board. Alex suggested that a proposed outreach committee focus on both mitigation and adaptation, but Liz said the need for such a committee was unclear. Alex also noted that outreach begun by the CATF could eventually be passed on to the MVC Climate Coordinator.

Members agreed to come up with talking points broad enough to apply to all stakeholders, and covering both adaptation and mitigation. Then individual CATF members will be able to meet with stakeholder groups. Alex agreed to distribute a stakeholder list to members, and to draft a set of talking points before the next meeting. Members also requested a list of top-10 climate facts, and Liz said she had such a list and would send it around.

Kathy Newman suggested having a CATF team begin outreach on a pilot basis and report back in two weeks, but Joan argued that the CATF wasn't ready yet. Ben recommended identifying people within each stakeholder group to serve as contacts. Liz suggested that the next CATF meeting function as a working session on stakeholder outreach. Noli added that there was

already a long list of sectors, so the CATF will need to prioritize them. She pointed out that a Slack channel could help facilitate the process. Alex added that the CATF will need to document its outreach and feedback to hand off to the MVP consultant(s). In terms of prioritizing the stakeholders, members agreed to begin with public schools, builders and grocers.

Members began to outline the agenda for the Feb. 7 meeting, which they planned to focus entirely on the outreach process:

- Decide which CATF members will approach which groups
- Discuss whether to focus only on leadership positions (i.e. Island schools superintendent)

Bill pressed for outreach to begin soon so that some items might be brought to the annual town meetings in the spring, but Rob argued that advocating for the 100% Renewable warrant article was as much as the CATF should be doing in regard to the town meetings. Bill disagreed, saying opportunities such as Green Communities funding this year would be missed. Rob said that particular effort should be taken on by town energy committees.

VI. Other business

Liz reported on her recent meeting with the Dukes County Health Council, where it was suggested that a member of the Island medical community serve on the CATF or adaptation master plan committee (AMPC). The Health Council had also mentioned the importance of a health care vulnerability assessment as part of the adaptation planning process.

Liz also summarized the results of a joint meeting of the AMPC and energy master plan committee (EMPC), which clarified that the two groups are not far enough along to begin collaborating, but that they will remain in contact.

Erik noted that the Cape Light Compact is looking for representatives from Tisbury.

Rob said he has identified the correct contact person at Eversource, which has agreed to come speak on the Island, although he said the intended audience was unclear. Rob noted that as a provider of services, rather than a user, Eversource is somewhat unique as a stakeholder, and he emphasized its importance to energy resiliency. He planned to keep the CATF updated on his work with Eversource through the Slack channel.