



# Town of Barnstable Infrastructure and Energy Committee

## Meeting Minutes

**Date: Monday, January 22, 2024, at 5:00PM**

*This meeting of the Barnstable Infrastructure & Energy Committee is being recorded and will be posted for future viewing on the Town of Barnstable website. Under MGL Chapter 30A Section 20, anyone else desiring to make such a recording or transmission must notify the Chair.*

### *Remote Participation Instructions*

*The Infrastructure and Energy Committee's Public Hearing will be held by remote participation methods. Real-time public comment can be addressed to the Infrastructure & Energy Committee utilizing the Zoom link and access code for remote access below:*

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://townofbarnstable-us.zoom.us/j/81185779775?pwd=IWwpaqEVRQXL3rbEwApX5INmtAB6b.1>

Meeting ID: 811 8577 9775

Passcode: 568500

### **Infrastructure and Energy Committee Members present: (On Zoom)**

Rob Wilson, Chair; Jane Ward, Vice Chair, Barry Sheingold, John Solomon, Peter Doyle

### **Infrastructure and Energy Committee Members absent:**

### **Others in Attendance: (On Zoom)**

Kristin Terkelsen, Town Councilor; Gordon Starr, Town Councilor; Kelly Collopy, Communications Manager

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### **Agenda:**

- (1) Call to order
- (2) Introduction of committee members and support
- (3) Old Business
- (4) New Business
  - a. Jane Ward's Draft Clarification
  - b. Committee Nominations of 2024 Officers
    - i. Chair
    - ii. Vice Chair

(5) Motion to adjourn

**Call to Order:**

Rob Wilson, Chair, called the January 22, 2024, meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee (IEC) to order at 5:04 PM. The meeting of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee was held remotely.

**Introductions**

Rob Wilson, Chair, opened the meeting with introductions, welcoming the new Town Councilor Liaison, Councilor Kristin Terkelsen, and acknowledging continued involvement from Councilor Gordon Starr. New Staff Support, Kelly Collopy, Communications Manager for the Department of Public Works, was also introduced.

**Old Business**

a. Committee Charter and Mission

Rob Wilson, Chair, begins the Old Business discussion by directing Committee members to Jane Ward's comments on the Infrastructure and Energy Committee (IEC) charter and mission. He acknowledges that the primary focus of the Committee has been on energy and conservation for the last few years and welcomes discussion amongst Committee members as to whether this is still the path the IEC wishes to take. Wilson recaps previous Committee conversations, including the notion to bring this topic to the Town Council as a means to ask for guidance and a path forward for the IEC.

Jane Ward adds feedback, stating 'We feel like we have a good group of energetic volunteers with expertise on various items (within Committee's mission)' but echoes sentiments that Committee members 'don't feel like we have good communication with Town Council'. Ward then asks Councilor Terkelsen how the Committee can be more effective, stating she feels the IEC's 'responsibilities' are too broad and need a better focus in order for the Committee to better assist and guide Town Council on appropriate initiatives. Ward provides a brief overview of recent recommendations from the Committee – including the Commonwealth's Green Community designation and composting.

Barry Sheingold requests that the Committee provide as much background information as possible to assist Councilor Terkelsen who is new as a liaison. Additional context on the Commonwealth's Green Community program is provided – the Town of Barnstable is the only Town on Cape Cod that does not qualify as 'Green Community', which has implications for standards on housing, available funding for projects, standardization for building codes, etc. Next, Sheingold recaps the Committee's work on composting and food waste and the success that has resulted from pursuing food waste initiatives at the subcommittee level. Sheingold also echoes the sentiments of the previous Committee member comments, and states he 'believes we should have a dialogue with Town Council regarding what the Council wants the committee to focus on, as we are just an advisory committee, not a regulatory committee,' he adds that he would prefer the IEC focuses on areas they (as a Committee) really want to focus on, unless there are specific topics Town Council directs the Committee to pursue.

John Solomon speaks next, adding that he agrees with Barry Sheingold, and suggests asking for

Town Council for feedback as to whether IEC topics are topics the Council is interested in hearing about. He feels this straightforward approach and dialogue would provide the IEC with more flexibility, and a quicker way to get feedback rather than the Committee reconstruct its entire mandate/mission statement. "Let's simply identify which topics should be of focus".

Jane Ward agrees, and states the most important questions for Town Council are, "how can we be most useful, where do you want us (IEC) to focus?"

Rob Wilson also directs the Committee to consider membership and recruiting, asking "how do we make the committee more attractive to volunteers from the community?" Wilson notes the staffing and quorum issues the Committee has faced of late.

Barry Sheingold further expands on the topic of Town Council feedback, adding that the IEC should have the opportunity to proactively bring time-critical topics to the Council; an example of this could be the Commission on Clean Energy Infrastructure Siting and Permitting, this could be a vehicle to raise issues such as this, state mandates for offshore wind, is there more that the State can do that makes this more attractive to the Town – wasn't sure if this was appropriate for this committee to tackle?

Peter Doyle agrees that this is an issue that's important. He expands by stating that, "with this Committee one thing we really had success with is with John and his composting efforts, leading the subcommittee and effecting change at Solid Waste. This Committee is not big enough to have people just come in and 'hope', everyone must help and have a topic and passion to follow." Doyle reinforces that this is an "advisory committee" where the "goal is to get them (Town Council) to move and think." Doyle suggests utilizing DPW as an avenue, leveraging the new Communications Manager to bring ideas and topics to DPW leadership.

Jane Ward shifts to Councilor feedback, asking Councilor Gordon Starr what takeaways or advice he has from his tenure working on the IEC.

Gordon Starr agrees that one of the hardest parts has been getting enough people involved in subcommittees. We need to get more people involved. He suggests the Committee take one of two approaches, either (1) develop a list of topics, present that to leadership, and ask for direction. (i.e. topics could include green vehicles, wind, clean energy) or (2) just allow the Committee to drive itself. Starr acknowledges that he and Councilor Kristin Terkelsen could meet with Town Council leadership to give them a sense of where the Committee is and where they want to go. John and Gordon continue to discuss the process for seeking feedback from Town Council on topics of interest; the most prominent topics being: Green Community and Wind.

Councilor Kristin Terkelsen is then invited to provide background on herself. Terkelsen shares thoughts on how she can support the IEC. She reminds the Committee that there are now a lot of new members on Town Council and suggests the Committee revisits and re-educates this new Council on issues such as Commonwealth's Green Community designation. She supports the idea of the IEC as a whole selecting a handful of initiatives they want to bring forward over the next year, while identifying areas where IEC can provide additional information/advice to help move certain initiatives forward – "sink your teeth into something measurable, something the Committee can accomplish, an injection of something that everyone can get behind and galvanize

the group.”

John Solomon circles back on the topic of Green Community designation, “I would put Green Communities at the top of the list, it’s something that would make a big impact on the Town if we could achieve that.” Jane Ward also supports revisiting that initiative and provides suggestions on how to bring new educational material from the State forward to help achieve a positive vote.

Rob Wilson, Chair, wraps up next steps with agreement that IEC should work towards getting the Commonwealth’s Green Community designation process started again.

John Solomon motions to create a Subcommittee on Green Communities; Peter Doyle seconds with approval and willingness to join as a subcommittee member.

b. Additional Comments Re: Previous Discussion Items

Rob Wilson, Chair, asks if there are any other comments or topics for discussion. The Committee discusses the status of the current wind project – Vineyard Wind – stating that the first wind turbine is generating energy.

c. Food Composting Program

John Solomon discusses the Food Composting Program, stating it would be good to get more feedback/direction from Town Council. Solomon speaks about the importance of providing more direction for Solid Waste/Transfer Station on how to better engage users on food composting, the need for more signage, etc.

Councilor Kristin Terkelsen asks the subcommittee how the food composting program has been rolled out to the residents, and what the perception has been, how many people have we converted to get them to compost, etc.

John Solomon provides additional background, stating he “would like to do more to reach a larger percentage of the residents”. Solomon suggests development of a public awareness program; i.e. social media, better signage, message board as you enter the Transfer Station, updated rack card, etc. He adds that the initiative would need additional support from Town Council and suggests utilizing the Department of Public Works Communication Manager for assistance.

Kelly Collopy, Department of Public Works Communication Manager, provides background on communications process; explains the Town-wide Communication Department and her DPW-centric communications role.

Councilor Kristin Terkelsen asks additional questions regarding the subcommittee’s current communications strategy; inquiring about in-person outreach at events, literature/materials available while Transfer Station passes are being sold, onsite education at the Transfer Station, etc.

John Solomon adds that while some of that activity is occurring, “we could do more”. He acknowledges that like all Town employees, Transfer Station employees have full time jobs, we can’t just ask for/tell them to do more.

Jane Ward reminds the group about John’s presentation to Town Council, and the importance of

putting the numbers into context, 39-40% of food waste and how much this costs the Town to ship this waste off Cape. Ward recommends that DPW hire somebody at Solid Waste that can manage composting full-time, “everything that can be composted on Cape should be composted, we need a full-time recycling position”. Ward acknowledges that group “can’t tell them how to do it, but we can tell them here’s the opportunity, and here’s the savings and costs”.

Rob Wilson, Chair, references the barriers food composting has faced, including the fact that recycling on a per unit basis is more costly to compost currently.

John Solomon moves to sum up the discussion, reinforcing that yes, there is more the IEC can do regarding composting. Solomon suggests developing a list of specific recommendations related to the composting program that can be brought forth to Town Council, who in turn can help guide and make decisions on how to move forward, what Town departments may need to be involved, etc. Discussion is had about the process in which to bring these recommendations to Town Council, in which Councilor Gordon Starr recommends that conversations begin with Town Council leadership. He offers support in partnership with Councilor Kristin Terkelsen to bring the conversations and recommendations they have heard tonight, to the Town Council President for discussion.

## **New Business**

### **a. Open Discussion of New Topics**

Rob Wilson, Chair, inquires about the status of the Town’s sewer expansion program. Department of Public Works Communications Manager, Kelly Collopy, provides a brief update:

- Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan is a 30-year plan, broken into (3) 10-year phases
- 17 individual sewer projects make up this first 10-year phase
- The Strawberry Hill Road Sewer Expansion Project construction has been completed; first connections into the new system are anticipated this Spring 2024; Board of Health has voted on and finalized their Sewer Connection Policy in preparation
- Route 28 East Sewer Expansion Project is near completion, with remaining sewer construction in progress on Phinney’s Lane, between Strawberry Hill Road and Wequaquet Lane, and on West Main Street. Work anticipated to be completed late Winter/early Spring, with final paving restoration to follow.

### **b. Committee Nominations for 2024 Officers**

John Solomon nominates Barry Sheingold for Chair, Jane Ward seconds. Passes unanimously; Barry Sheingold is named Chair of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee for 2024.

John Solomon nominates Peter Doyle for Vice Chair, Jane Ward seconds. Passes unanimously; Peter Doyle is named Vice Chair of the Infrastructure and Energy Committee for 2024.

### **c. 2024 Meeting Schedule and Process**

The group discusses the process for upcoming meetings; second and fourth Monday of each month. Barry Sheingold, as the new Chair, presents a few questions about procedures, sending documents, etc. Jane Ward thanks Rob Wilson for his service as Chair, seconded by John Solomon.

Rob Wilson calls motion to adjourn at 6:03PM, moved by Jane Ward, John Solomon seconds. Passes unanimously; the meeting is adjourned at 6:03PM

Next Meeting: February 12, 2024, at 5:00PM

Upcoming Zoom Meetings: February 26, 2024, at 5:00PM

Upcoming Agenda for February 12, 2024

1. Call to order
2. Approval of January 22, 2024, Meeting Minutes
3. Old Business
  - 3 a. Review of Infrastructure and Energy Committee Proposed Areas of Activity
4. New Business
  - 4 a. For Proposed Areas of Activity, discuss next steps, assignments, and action items
  - 4 b. Establish 2024-2025 meeting schedule
5. Motion to Adjourn

**Respectfully submitted by Kelly Collopy, Communications Manager, Barnstable Department of Public Works.**