

Truro Climate Action Committee – Minutes Wednesday, May 7, 2025, 10:00 am

Town Hall, Type: In-person (Zoom provided for members who could not be in person)

Attendees: In person: Lili Flanders, chair; Mark Gebhardt, vice-chair; Alex Limpaecher, member; Georgia, Neill, volunteer; Chris Palmer, Climate Action Coordinator in person. By Zoom: Benoit Allehaut, Paul Holt, Chip Cornell (new members).

Assign note taker: Gebhardt

Public comment: – none

Introduce new members: Benoit Allehaut, Paul Holt, Chip Cornell (all by video).

Paul: wants people in town to be educated in solar, recycling. Did similar programs in Newton.

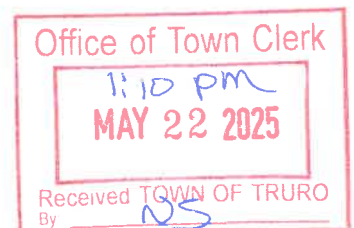
Benoit – career in energy transition: solar and wind. Also transportation, affordable housing, food production.

Chip Cornell – Interested in climate change, public health impacts.

Approve minutes: from 4/23/25 3/3 voted to approve (new members were not present at the prior meeting, so did not vote).

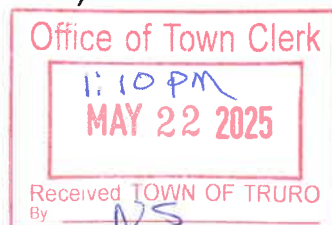
Climate Coordinator Update:

1. Town meeting passed solar project on landfill. Concern for length of time for approval of RFPs, but RFPs should be written and approved by Legal and Kelly and be ready to go out by June. Biggest time hurdle is Eversource connection. Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) is likely to persist, but not certain (some Republicans support it). Tariff effect, but some materials and solar patterns are made in the USA. Community solar is a state program (other states, too). Homeowners can join at no additional cost. Better deals than Sun Run PPAs (and others). Community Solar is true social equity across the town.
2. Climate Leader – Truro became one of the first 19 towns in the State. We passed the highest bar – we are the smallest town and the only one on the Cape. We are eligible for \$1.5M in grant funds. Jerod Cabral deserves credit, as does the EC. Deadlines for other grants occur every 6 months. (e.g., for decarbonizing or solarizing public buildings).
3. Applied to several grants for the Truro Central School for HVAC etc., totaling around \$5 million, including one large \$3.5 million grant.



Discuss Climate Action Plan (CAP) & Climate Summit:

1. We (the Town of Truro) are doing well on municipal emissions, but less well on other aspects (~5% on electricity) and transportation (mostly personal car travel) accounts for 55% of emissions. Need more charging stations. Waste management accounts for very little, but 2 trucks/day of trash being trucked off Cape. Trash on the roads, water continues to be a problem, as is an increase in drought periods.
2. We should rename the CAP to the **Climate Action and Resilience Plan** so that water and trash are included prominently.
3. Ponds: what has been done and what needs to be done to preserve them (e.g., effects of fertilizers)? APCC has good information on this. Marshes and culverts also. Would be good topics for Library educational sessions.
4. Want to complete the Climate Action and Resilience Plan within the year and plan a summit
 - a. Process for writing the plan. We write it and get buy-in from other committees.
 - b. Climate summit – whole government approach.
 - c. Public hearings and input.
 - d. Align with nearby towns.
5. Melissa Hoffer – top climate official in MA: All towns should align CAP plans with our capital plans (e.g., culverts, new DPW)
6. Website on what other towns are doing.
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1IAJ1l3Btvr6prBgkiKqiGhN-FZHpuudW>
7. We are similar to other towns (although we don't have community resilience). Adaptation is town-to-town. Comparisons to Lexington difficult (we have beaches). Other towns have more industry.
8. There are lots of climate actions plans (Mass Action, some specific town plans, and Cape Cod Action plans) we could adopt – so which one should we do? Maybe take one topic at a time: e. g., Start with transportations and then go on to others. Read other plans ahead of the next meeting and then discuss. We have transportation in our CAP. Guiding plans that we like or don't like.
9. Climate summit: we brought it to the Select Board 2 years ago and approved. Day-long event where town staff, Planning Board and Committees get together to discuss climate change and plans to mitigate the changes. Keynote speaker (Melissa Hoffer?) would be good. Local sources (e.g., Fire Chief).



Themes. Do one-on-one meetings with other committees first. Training the staff about climate change also.

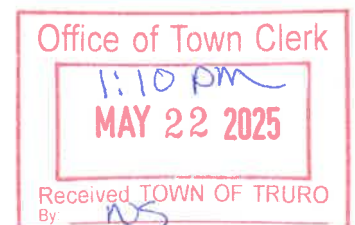
Discuss communication/community building:

1. Building consensus around climate change and discuss how we should address it. Most in a community like this are in favor of remediating climate change effects, but they haven't been asked to do so. (like getting Cape Light to assess their home or adding solar/heat pumps).
2. Solarize program for homeowners – get groups of homeowners to do this. Can reduce the cost to each household. Mass Save.
3. Meet with folks at post office and transfer stations
4. How to deal with “blocks” of townsfolk who might oppose some of these issues due to cost or tax increases.
5. Create Climate Outreach newsletter with our email list to educate folks.

Discuss chair positions: Lili Flanders was thanked for her excellent job as Chair of CAC and nominated to the Chair position for next year by the committee. It voted unanimously to elect her to continue as Chair of the CAC (4/4 voting members approved – note 2 of the new members have not yet been sworn in). We will vote on the Chair position on yearly basis, following town elections in the spring.

General Updates:

1. Library sessions – 2025:
 - a. next: May 20 – Cape Light Compact – electrification and rebates
 - b. June 17 – Fire Chief Jim Collins, Josh Nigro, fire warden for dept. conservation – topic: how we can make our homes more safe from fire and risk of fire in Truro?
 - c. July and August – draw in vacationing and part time people. Education session on what aquifers are? Salt intrusion into the water supply. Infrastructure of wells, etc. Repetition of these issues is good.
 - d. Splice and focus some of the recorded library meetings to provide shorter versions of the sessions for townsfolk to watch if they want to review a Library session they missed.
2. Truro talks Articles – good through this month – Fire article for May or June? Lili will check.
 - a. New article about electrifying (based on May library session). Chip will be a case study on electrifying a home.
3. Ongoing projects – not discussed



Next steps:

- Send out info on next library meeting and Climate Leader designation
- Notify that we have vote on the Solar project next week.
- Read town docs on transportation: what is good, bad and suggest steps for individual townsfolk to do. Chris supplied the following websites:
 - a. Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Action Plan for 2025 and 2030
 - b. Cape Cod Commission Climate Action Plan
 - c. Folder with about 20 MA town/city Climate Action Plans – Committee members pick any one that they like!
 - d. Truro draft Climate Action Plan – It's still a bit unorganized, but it's a start. Transportation starts on page 8.

Adjourn: 12:04 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Mark C. Gebhardt

Vice-Char CAC

