

**Block Island Utility District**  
**Meeting of the Board of Utility Commissioners**

**Monday, November 13, 2023 @ 4:00 PM**

In attendance: Barbara MacMullan, Tom Risom, John Warfel, Ken Lacoste, Jeff Wright, Dick Martin, Tony Pappas, Tracy Fredericks, Jim Stockman, Tom Durden, Sven Risom, Carlos Salinas, Clair Comings, Neal Murphy.

Barbara called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm

- 1. Introduction of Energy Transitions Initiative Partnership Project (ETIPP) Team**  
**Jamie Cook, Island Institute. John Daniel, Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, Pete Cappers, Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, Kate Klibanski, Island Institute.**

Jamie Cook explained that he works at the Island Institute in Rockland ME, and is now working with ETIPP With the Department of Energy, and has broadened their scope to include Block Island and Shelter Island, NY.

ETIPP-headed by DoE, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy and NREL (National Renewable Energy Lab) helps the administration of the ETIPP program. Island Institute helps to connect communities interested in the project. Energy transitions and goals. One of the goals of the project is to create a network of communities that can work together and learn from each other on what did and didn't work.

Pete Cappers explained what ETIPP does: provides technical assistance to communities that may not have the technical capabilities and works with communities to make more informed decisions about energy transitions. This assistance includes assessments, resilience planning, capacity building, and facilitation.

John Warfel added that we've discussed energy resilience, what would we do if there was a long-term cable outage? How can we do more for our members, more electrification? More solar? Disaster preparedness.

Regional Lead helps to bring the data analysis and apply it to the community. -Jenny Wiegele (NREL) is the coordinator, and John and Pete are the technical guides. They will help us develop a statement of work--what are we going to do, when are we going to do it and the logistics. The goal today is to hear more about the energy concerns of BIUD and its members.

- 2. John Daniel and Barbara MacMullan discussed the history of the island. John said he and the team found that BI is in the forefront of power transitions in the country. We are on the "cutting edge," noting the NOAA wind turbine, the transition to a utility district, and the offshore wind farm. The inevitability of continued electrification of the island, increased energy usage and the vulnerability of the cable was discussed.**

Jeff Wright said we never had to worry about the electrification of the island before and expressed that this meeting is about where you want your energy to come from, what do you want us to do if the cable completely fails what are your worries and concerns. ETIPP is here to work with the BIUD BOD and the community. They are here to help us as a community make some decisions. They are here to listen to our ideas, and concerns. Jeff encourages everyone to speak up. This is the members meeting.

JohnDaniel continued that ETIPP was started 3 years ago and now 28 communities across the country are in the various stages of their projects. John said he feels BI is one of the more sophisticated remote, island communities regarding energy resilience and systems. John feels we are a model for other communities to learn from.

### 3. **Receive ETIPP Presentation and Discuss Stakeholder Participation**

Dick Martin asked What happens with a long-term cable outage, and if ETIPP is here to help us? Could we use some of the wind energy to provide backup power to the island if there is a cable outage?

Pete Cappers discussed that he has heard that this is a concern for many members, and there us a need for a contingency plan for short or long-term outages. Are there cost effective back up plans that we could explore? Pete said from an analytical standpoint, ETIPP is here to help figure out what those plans could be. Both questions should be on the table for the analysis.

Tony Pappas asked if it would be it possible to have all energy come from the Island, to eventually become 100% renewable.

Jeff Wright explained, last week we filed our 2024 power supply plan to the PUC, proposing a portfolio funded by our members to meet the state standards of 28% renewable. The Solar Initiative is funding a bridge grant to reach a goal of 100% renewables. We want ETIPP to help us do this efficiently, and correctly. There are many technical challenges they can help us with.

Sven Risom stated that the more incentives we can get to fund solar the better, and we need to find other sources than the Solar Initiative. Are there other renewable resources we can investigate? How do we get funding for these analyses?

Pete Cappers responded saying we can talk with BIUD about how to create positive incentives without large cost shifts, different resources, value propositions, reliability, and resilience options. We can work to find some of the technologies, engineering, and economic analysis to make these things happen. We have found that some renewables are very expensive, some prohibitively so. It is essential that we make decisions now that we won't regret, identify what we shouldn't do and reassess down the line.

Jeff added we are looking into a company in MA called Trashology, as a possible new energy source along with other different organizations.

Carlos Salinas expressed concern about community input because there were not a lot of

community members present.

Pete said this meeting is the first step, this is the time to find out what direction the community wants to go. There will be steps along the way for community engagement.

John Warfel asked Carlos to help with community engagement.

Tom Risom asked where do we fit in the island spectrum? Are we small to mid-utilization. We are a unique community “ripe” for emerging technologies and experimental projects.

Jamie and Jeff--we are on the small to mid-size utilization scale. Block Island is one of the larger communities that ETIPP supports.

Ken Lacoste- suggested we set up a “kit” of energy sources for us if the cable and or generators go down.

John-- look into help from companies to test out their new energy sources, could help with the costs of new energy sources. How do we advertise (to the world) our willingness to try out new technologies.

Other suggestions:

Community Solar, Carbon savings

Look into new and better EV charging technologies

Look into seasonal changes in population.

Carlos Salinas asked about the community input level going forward. Barbara and Jeff offered that we would continue this discussion at additional ETIPP meetings and at regular BIUD board meetings.

Barbara made a motion to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Tom Risom, and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:32.

**APPROVED JANUARY 25, 2024**