

**CLIMATE CHANGE TASK FORCE**  
**Town Of Stonington Meeting Minutes**  
**Special Meeting**

September 16, 2021 - 7:00 pm

Location: District Office (former Pawcatuck Middle School)

Present: Susan Hibbard, Rick Newton, Julia Parry, Lyndsey Pyrke-Fairchild, and MaryEllen Mateleska

Absent: Dennis Unites, Sharon Lynch

Guests: June Strunk (BOS liaison), Members of the Public

Call to order at 7:03pm

- July meeting minutes approved
- Review of correspondences:
  - email to Selectman Strunk from CCTF chair providing initial views on budget items. Requesting additional funding for climate change resiliency related projects and staff.
  - email from First Selectman Chesebrough to CCTF chair forwarding list of items in Senate Infrastructure Investment and Jobs act.
  - email from First Selectman Chesebrough stating that all attendees of town meetings must be masked. Accommodations were made at the task force meeting to remove masks due to adequate ventilation and ample space for social distancing.
  - email from Patti Burmahl as requested by Selectman Strunk regarding Town of Stonington Capital Improvement Program.
- Selectman Strunk reported that climate change related correspondences and climate change task force updates are included during the comments period of Selectmen meetings. Efforts will be made to ensure that these comments are included in future meeting minutes. Priority list of climate resiliency related actions will be discussed extensively at a future meeting.
- Information on Flood, Erosion and Control Board is being reviewed by the town attorney. Decision on whether the board should be populated by volunteers from the town, or the Selectmen will be made following feedback from town attorney.
- Task Force members voted to recommend a Climate Specialist or Environmental Engineer position to be added to the Town budget. Towns including, Middletown, Milford and Branford have this position and it has benefited them when acquiring grants and matching funds for projects. Task Force members will submit a letter on the benefits of this position, including financial and town resiliency benefits, to be submitted under the operations budget. The Task Force will hold a special meeting on September 30, 2021, at 5:00pm to review and approve the letter.

- Selectman Strunk clarified that per the town attorney's report in 2018, the Climate Change Task Force reports to the Board of Selectman.
- Discussion and review of list of requested actions for the task force submitted by Selectman Strunk.
  - Information on how to access the necessary data to create a Climate Action or Climate Energy Plan will be shared as soon as it is available.
  - Julia Parry reached out to Branford town employees on assistance on producing the requested plans. She was put in contact with organizations, including PACE, that could support the process. Julia will provide a summary of her conversations and contacts to Selectman Strunk.
  - Climate resiliency focused educational outreach, events and materials can be accomplished by partnering with local non-profits that have the expertise and potential matching funds to support these efforts.
  - Request for a member of the task force to work with the consultants who are working to update the planning & zoning regulations.
  - Task force members will review grant opportunities that are best fits for town priorities and forward along recommendations to the Selectmen. List of town priorities will be forwarded to the Task Force once they have been reviewed and finalized.
- Review of public awareness, outreach and conference updates
- Comments
  - Recommendation on broader discussion on the benefit of ordinance on idle-free areas of the town. It is better for air quality, climate emissions, and for cars. Information will be shared at the upcoming special meeting.
  - Clarification that a caucus can be held to discuss climate related issues. Unaffiliated task force members can choose which party they would like to caucus.
  - Selectman Strunk is requesting Task Force guidance on the following three priorities:
    - Zoning regulation updates
    - Budget suggestions
    - Grant prioritizations
- Special meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 30, 2021 at 5:00pm at Milne Ocean Science and Conservation Center at Mystic Aquarium. Meeting will be planned to be hosted outdoors but moved indoors in the event of inclement weather.

Meeting adjourned at 8:53 PM

*Mary Ellen Matelska*