

AUGUST 25, 2014 WCOB MEETING

- **Associations represented:**
 - **District of Chapman Beach**
 - **Grove Beach Point Association**
 - **Grove Beach Terrace Association**
 - **Old Kelsey Point Association**
 - **Pilot's Point Association**
 - **Old Salt Works Road Beach Association**
 - **West Beach Association**
- **A motion was made and approved to call the meeting to order.**
- **No Treasurer's Report was given.**
- **Steve Smith was nominated and approved as Treasurer.**
- **Maggie Treichel of CT Solar Challenge presented a discussion on the new town-wide solar program:**
 - **She stated that saving money and helping the environment is a town initiative to promote solar energy and that credits, incentives, rebates, lease programs, and loan programs are available. She said that the prerequisite is that a resident must have a home energy audit, a 640 minimum credit rating, and a debt to income ratio check. The last 12 months of energy usage will be reviewed and analyzed as to amount of kilowatt hours used. Presently, the cost is \$3.50 per watt with half being reimbursed by rebates. Rebates will eventually be phased out. In the future, trade tariffs will be imposed which will increase solar panels by 50% and meter fees are going up. All other fees are eliminated by Solar Challenge. The time frame is approximately two weeks from assessment to proposal. There is \$0 yearly maintenance cost. The solar lease comes with a 20-year warranty on the panels. If solar panels are destroyed in a storm crisis, the resulting damage would be covered under the home owner's insurance. She stated that the solar panels are sustainable up to a 55 mile per hour wind and 1 inch hail.**
 - **She stated that solar panels add value to property and is property value tax exempt. She said that every site is specific to production hours and solar energy can substantially decrease or eliminate your bill. She stated that a system could pay for itself in five to seven years.**

- **Solar electricity generated is put directly into your electrical panel and any excess goes back to the electric company. She said that panels go on the roof and nothing would change in the way that power is used. Whatever is not being generated from solar power is generated by the utility company. Roof orientation needs to be between due east to due west and that the biggest obstacle is tree shade. Connecticut is considered to be a very good state for solar radiation and generation hours. Ongoing solar workshops will follow.**
- **Three points are awarded per house in Westbrook that goes solar. After 100 points are awarded, the Town receives a free solar panel. The goal is to become a twenty percent clean energy community by 2018.**
- **Diana McCarthy, Home Energy Solutions presented the following:**
 - **She stated that Home Energy Solutions is a clean energy company working with 144 communities. She said that the goal is to educate all as to programs available. She stated that solar energy helps to take stress off of the grid.**
 - **She said that an analyst from Home Energy Solutions inspects your home for air leaks, will switch out existing light bulbs for LED bulbs, provide water saving measures, and wrap hot water tanks. The fee is \$99.00, the inspection takes about three to four hours, and she stated that one receives about \$1,000 in work. They will provide a booklet with coupons for rebates for geo-thermal and solar thermal. She said that 25 CFLs and 4 LEDs are included in the program. If a home owner qualifies for the income-eligible program, the co-pay is waived.**
- **Craig, Lantern Energy, presented the following:**
 - **He stated that the average savings per year after the energy audit is done is \$250.00 per year for electric and natural gas and \$300.00 to \$400.00 per year for oil and propane.**
 - **He said that the rebate for insulation is about 50 percent of the cost.**
 - **He is making a presentation at the Senior Center on September 17.**
- **Proposed Blight Ordinance (report from Ann Mazur):**
 - **She stated that obtaining petitions from beach associations would be beneficial. The Board of Selectman meeting regarding the blight ordinance is scheduled for 9/25/14 at 7:00 PM. She said that many towns have blight ordinances and that blight brings down the value of other property (i.e. abandoned property and property in disarray). She stated that Westbrook is the only town between Branford and Lyme that does not have a blight ordinance. She recommends requesting the media to attend the Board of Selectman blight meeting and for petitions to drive to**

create a Town meeting. Ann Mazur will talk with Becky at the “Harbor News” and invite her to attend the 9/25/2014 meeting. She stated that fines should be imposed and extensions should not be given.

- **She reported that there is a common law of nuisance which allows for the State to step in and take action. She recommends contacting Land Use and speak with Public Health.**
 - **Noel Bishop wants comments by 8/31/2014. The WCOB recommends the vote to be in the summer of 2015.**
- **A motion was made and approved the meeting.**