

Community Preservation Committee

Meeting Minutes for 06/23/2026

YouTube Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuFtYNspGZY&list=PL49sKqpy7VAgNqvUrCmKyflEPFjn75blS>

Meeting Opening and Agenda Approval

- The committee convened remotely with a quorum and welcomed a new select board representative, Dawn. The minutes from previous meetings (May 1 and May 19) were reviewed.
- Minor edits to the minutes were noted and incorporated prior to approval.
- The committee unanimously approved the minutes with amendments.

Public Comment – Maria Mitchell Association

- No public comments or correspondence were presented at this time.

Funding Approvals and Financial Updates

- Several grant applications were discussed and approved for fiscal years 2024 and 2026. These reflect ongoing support for various community projects and organizations. (Nantucket Island School of Design & Arts, NISDA Heifer Barn, Nantucket Racket Sports Association (NRSA), & Interfaith Council.

Organization | Fiscal Year | Cash Appd. | Project/Notes

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NISDA		FY2024		\$42,514.33		Structural roof and foundation	
Heifer Barn		FY2024		\$24,757.36		Structural & roof support	
NRSA		FY2026		\$250,000.00		Nearly finalized funding	
Interfaith Ccl.		FY2026		\$23,695.00		Rental assistance	

- Some applications were initially incorrect but later corrected for approval.
- Motions to approve the above funds were passed unanimously.

Staffing Challenges and Office Management

- Two candidates offered the part-time administrative position declined due to low hours (offered at 18-19 hours/ week) and unsatisfactory pay rates.
- The committee has been requesting a minimum of 30 hours/ week and a pay increase to attract and retain qualified staff.
- Essential tasks include scanning and organizing files, managing over 50 ongoing fiscal year projects, tracking grants, and managing correspondence.
- The role requires expertise in **Munis (financial software) **, **Excel**, and strong public communication skills.
- Current staff shortages force committee members to manage multiple projects directly, which is unsustainable.
- Despite ongoing efforts and communication with town administration, no resolution or concessions have been achieved.
- The committee is concerned about the lack of dedicated staff for 8 months, jeopardizing timely grant management and applicant support.
- Ongoing staffing issues that are impeding the CPC's operational effectiveness.

Grant Tracking and Financial Oversight

The committee detailed that there remain dozens of lingering grants, some going back to 2002, with unclear balances or unspent funds.

- A comprehensive spreadsheet of all past grants and warrant articles has been compiled but lacks real-time financial tracking.
- The finance office has promised to assist with creating a current, detailed grant balance spreadsheet.
- This oversight is critical to reclaim unutilized funds and avoid repeating placeholder articles like the recent \$40,000 for Mariah Mitchell.
- Without proper staffing, managing these grants and pursuing funds recovery is not feasible.

Preservation Easement Fee Dispute

- Two candidates were interviewed for an open staff position; one declined due to housing issues, and the offer will be extended to the other candidate.
- The anticipated start date is mid-June, accounting for notice periods.
- Interviews highlighted the need for expanded office hours beyond the current 19.5 hours/ week to handle workload adequately.
- Efforts are underway to digitize and organize extensive paper records, including scanning and cleaning out duplicates or junk files.

- Communication with town departments and HR have improved, acknowledging the office's needs and facilitating smoother operations.

Preservation Easement Fee Dispute

- Concerns were raised about the **sharp increase in preservation easement fees** charged by Nantucket Preservation Trust (NPT).
- NPT reportedly increased fees from \$3,000–\$5,000 to \$25,000 per easement, which significantly impacts funding available for project implementation.
- This fee hike affects 501(c)(3) non-profits like Mariah Mitchell that rely on CPC grants and cannot absorb such costs.
- The committee is exploring alternatives such as:
 - Finding other lawyers or pro bono state attorneys to handle easements.
 - Using standard modifications instead of new easements where possible to reduce costs.
- Correspondence has been initiated with state officials and NPT but no resolution is yet achieved.
- The committee firmly rejected absorbing the \$25,000 easement fee into their grant budgets going forward.

Project Manager Assignments and Workflow

The committee emphasized the need to assign project managers for a growing number of grants spanning fiscal years 2024 to 2027.

- Currently 17 projects require direct management, but only a few committee members can contribute time.
- Traditionally, project managers send letters about funding availability and serve as contacts for grantees. Without staffing, project managers must default to committee leads, straining resources.
- Coordination and assigning of project managers will require an in-person meeting for better organization.
- Updating and correcting information on the town's website related to application deadlines and project contacts is urgent.

Application Submission Deadlines and Annual Public Forum

The committee discussed adjustments to the grant submission deadline and scheduling of the mandatory annual public forum.

- The submission deadline for fiscal year 2028 was moved to **Friday, September 18th, by 4 p.m. (end of business) ** unanimously.

- This change aims to ease applicant burden by moving the deadline away from early September and after the summer fundraising season.
- The annual public forum will be held on **August 18th**, maintaining the recent format:
- Presentation by a representative from each grant category.
- Question and answer session for prospective applicants.
- Forum will be held in the select board's community room and recorded for public broadcast.
- The committee stressed the importance of adequate staffing to manage advertising and coordination of the forum.

Signage Compliance

The committee briefly addressed the need to enforce signage requirements at funded historic sites and other projects.

- Although a simple placard template exists citing "Courtesy of CPC Funding," over **90% of grant recipients currently lack proper signage**.
- Site visits and documentation need to be conducted to assess compliance.
- Due to lack of staffing and coordination, this effort has been deferred until more members are available.

Next Steps and Closing Remarks

- The next scheduled meeting is on **July 21st**.
- Committee members expressed the need for more positive developments, particularly regarding staffing.
- There was a consensus to distribute an updated project list to assign management responsibilities.
- Members were encouraged to share their current project assignments to update records and facilitate coverage.
- The meeting adjourned with thanks and holiday wishes, highlighting the difficulty but commitment to progress despite challenges.

Key Insights:

- **Severe staffing shortages and limited funding for administrative support are the largest operational bottlenecks for CPC. **

- **Grant tracking and financial oversight are critical but under-resourced tasks risking financial inefficiencies. **
- **Fee increases by external entities (e.g., NPT's preservation easement hike) are threatening grant program funding viability. **
- **Organizational improvements such as deadline adjustments, assignment of project managers, and enforcement of signage requirements are underway but hampered by staffing. **
- The committee employs **proactive communication and coordination efforts** with town administration and external bodies but lacks authority or resources to resolve core issues unilaterally.

This summary captures the comprehensive discussion of the CPC meeting held June 23, 2026, highlighting key administrative, financial, and operational issues strictly based on the transcript content without extrapolation.