



The Town of Barnstable

Office of Town Manager

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July 20, 2023

To: Barnstable Town Councilors

From: Mark S. Ells, Town Manager

RE: Town Manager update for June 16 through July 20, 2023

1. Some of the preliminary Fiscal Year 2024 tax bills recently mailed to Town of Barnstable taxpayers were incorrect. The Fiscal Year 2024 preliminary tax bills should equal one-half of a taxpayer's Fiscal Year 2023 tax but in some cases it was more or less for approximately 1600 real estate accounts; with a majority of them being under billed. This appears to be associated with taxpayers that either received an abatement or exemption against their Fiscal Year 2023 tax bill or some other adjustment. Town staff is working with our software vendor to identify the issue. There will be no fees or interest charged to taxpayers impacted by this matter on the preliminary tax bills if paid by 11/1/2023. The Town's Tax office mailed letters to impacted taxpayers on July 19th indicating the correct amount of tax due by November 1. Additionally, town staff will provide mortgage escrow companies with the corrected tax bill information so that escrow accounts are not impacted. In the meantime, anyone who thinks their preliminary tax bills are incorrect can contact the Tax Collector's office at 508-862-4054 for further guidance.
2. The Town Manager's Office held a second public hearing on proposed Grant of Location regulations on July 12, 2023. The regulations address procedures and standards for the placement of wireless communication facilities in the public rights of way. The full text of the proposed regulations, revised to address comments submitted in connection with the first public hearing on March 23, 2023, and a recording of the July 12th hearing is available on the Town of Barnstable website at <https://townofbarnstable.us/Departments/TownManager/Projects/Draft-Grant-of-Location-Regulations.asp>. Written public comments on the regulations will be accepted through close of business on Friday, July 28, 2023. Submit comments in writing to: Elizabeth Jenkins, Director of Planning & Development, elizabeth.jenkins@town.barnstable.ma.us 367 Main Street, Hyannis, MA 02601.
3. On July 14, 2023 Nina Coleman, Director of Natural Resources, notified me that the draft Beach Management Plan for the Protection of Piping Plovers at

Craigville and Covell's Beach for Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) had been returned to the Town of Barnstable for review.

Upon approval, the permit will be good for 5 years and will allow such activities as:

- i. The town could rake for seaweed/debris removal before April 1.
- ii. The town could rake for litter control bi-weekly starting July 1st.
- iii. The town could remove excessive storm wrack for "health concerns" at any time of the year.
- iv. The town could install beach amenities and host special events.

All these activities will require Natural Resources staff to monitor Piping Plovers and report to Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) at the end of the season. Director Coleman will provide an recorded update regarding this draft plan. Staff will also proceed with Beach Management Plans for other areas requiring MESA permits in Barnstable.

4. Discussions continue with state officials on the regulatory changes to Title 5 and Watershed Permit and state funding support to communities for the implement the regulations. The regulatory changes have been approved and did go into effect on July 7, 2023. We continue meetings later this week with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to discuss the application process for approval of Barnstable's Nitrogen Management Plan. Separate discussions are continuing with the State regarding funding assistance to communities that are proceeding with implementation of their Nitrogen Management Plans. We will keep you advised of our progress on this matter.
5. Comcast recently informed the Town of upcoming channel lineup changes. All Comcast customers will receive notice of these changes but as the changes will affect our Government Access Station as well as our Public Access Station. Starting on or around August 17th the Town of Barnstable's Government access channel will no longer be found on Comcast Channel 18. It will be on channels 8 or 1070 after August 17th. As previously reported, recent upgrades to the Town's Government Access television station programming can be found in high definition on Comcast Channel 1072. As always, government access programming can be accessed 24/7 on the Town website via the livestream or our video on demand archives. Other changes include our Public access channel, otherwise known as the Cape Media Center, which will be able to be viewed on Comcast channel 9 after August 17th.
6. We have had a successful launch of *My Barnstable*, a push notification mobile application powered by [GOGov](#). The app is a great source of information for town news, events, service interruptions and updates, and important links to the town's website. Town staff can streamline important community communications and information to citizens in more efficient ways. The addition of this app to the Town's communications tools is in direct response to requests through last winter's Communications Survey. To date there have been almost 2,500 downloads of the app.

7. The town is pleased to announce that modifications have been made to a hiking and biking trail that starts behind the US Custom house property in Barnstable village and travels south through the abutting properties. A new boardwalk relocated the trail away from a wetland habitat and allows the public to enjoy this trail minimizing impact on this sensitive area. In the spring this habitat area is very wet, which resulted in limited travel through the area on the old path. The trail relocation and wooden boardwalk construction was completed in cooperation with the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA), who provided the labor. The Town handled the Notice of Intent, design and materials. Special thanks to Lev Malakhoff and his team of NEMBA volunteers for their labor and construction skills allowing this project to be completed.
8. People of Action, the Barnstable Police Department and the Town of Barnstable are proud to announce the 7th Annual Barnstable Unity Day Celebration on the Hyannis Village Green, 367 Main Street, Hyannis on Friday, August 4, 2023, from 4:00-7:00 PM. The event is intended to welcome and engage the community and local police together in a fun, inclusive, and memorable celebration. Come show everyone that Barnstable is a special and unique place with strong and caring community bonds. We are excited that the Breakaway X-GRILL will be on hand again this year to cook up burgers and hot dogs. The event is free and open to all and will include food (and ice-cream!), music, dancing, and fun activities for all ages. Please bring your own chairs and blankets and join us for a beautiful summer evening on the Hyannis Village Green.
9. Elizabeth Jenkins, Director of Planning and Development, will provide an update on the Local Comprehensive Plan.
10. Kelly Collopy, Communications Manager for the Public Works Department, will provide an update on Water Resource Management planning including the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan.