



The Town of Barnstable

Office of Town Manager

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November 14, 2023

To: Barnstable Town Councilors

From: Mark S. Ells, Town Manager

RE: Town Manager update for November 1 through November 14, 2023

1. We want to thank Ann Quirk, Town Clerk, along with staff, poll workers and volunteers who participated in the November 7, 2023 election. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.
2. We are proceeding with the budget action calendar for FY 2025. The Town Manager Calendar Year Fee Hearing was held at 11:00 AM on Tuesday, November 14th via Zoom. Please check the Town Website on the Town Manager webpage for notice and details. The proposed calendar year fees have been taken under advisement and comments will be accepted through December 13, 2023. After December 13th, the Town Manager will either approve the fees as proposed, reduce the proposed fee or not approve leaving the current fee unchanged. For information on our fiscal year budgets please view the Town's Open Budget website at <http://budget.townofbarnstable.us>.
3. Mark Milne, Finance Director, and Lane Partridge, Director of Assessing, will present the proposed tax levy shifting options for the Fiscal Year 2024 tax levy to the Town Council at the November 16th meeting. This includes an option to split the tax rate between the residential class of property and the commercial, industrial, and personal property classes (CIP). This option allows for shifting a larger portion of the tax levy to the CIP class from the residential class. The presentation will also include an illustration of the tax levy and tax bill impacts from the adoption of a residential exemption. This option shifts the tax burden within the residential class from owners of moderately valued residential properties to the owners of vacation homes, higher valued homes and residential properties not occupied by the owner, including apartments and vacant lands. After presenting the tax levy shifting options at the November 16th meeting, we anticipate scheduling the votes on both these items on the December 7th Town Council meeting. These votes are necessary to set the Fiscal Year 2024 tax rates and to issue the 3rd and 4th quarter tax bills by December 31, 2023.
4. Eversource Energy is proposing to modify electric infrastructure located in Bourne, Sandwich, and Barnstable, Massachusetts. The following project changes would enable the operation of a previously approved transmission line

between Bourne and Barnstable known as the Mid Cape Reliability Project. The proposed Project includes (a) operating and interconnecting the line between Bourne and Barnstable; (b) expanding the West Barnstable Substation for operation; and (c) constructing a new switching station in Bourne. The Siting Board will conduct a public comment hearing (a meeting where the public may provide input on the Projects) in hybrid format, allowing participation in person or remotely on: Tuesday, November 14, 2023, beginning at 6:30 PM. The in-person hearing location is the Tilden Arts Center, Cape Cod Community College, 2240 Iyannough Road, West Barnstable, MA 02668. The link to the state web site for this hearing is <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/mid-cape-reliability-project-change>. Charles McLaughlin, Senior Counsel for the Town, will be present at this hearing and it is our intent to file subsequent written comment.

5. On November 7th, I met with the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Rebecca Tepper at her request. Barnstable is viewed as a leader in the Commonwealth on issues such as vulnerability preparedness and hazard mitigation planning. Secretary Tepper was seeking our input on coastal resiliency issues. The state office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM), in partnership with Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), is developing a “ResilientCoasts Plan” that will help guide coastal resilience policy and action as part of the 2023 [Massachusetts Integrated State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan \(SHMCAP\)](#) effort. Now known as “ResilientMass,” SHMCAP is the Commonwealth’s strategy for reducing risk and building resilience to natural hazards and local impacts of climate change. A key ResilientMass commitment is for CZM to develop a coordinated, equitable, and effective coastal resilience strategy in partnership with coastal municipalities and other coastal stakeholders that will delineate geographic zones of climate vulnerability, identify climate resilient development standards and best practices for coastal adaptation, and develop management recommendations for these vulnerable areas. Barnstable was recently awarded a FY2024 Coastal Resiliency Grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management in the amount of \$92,579 for the design and permitting of the Sandy Neck Beach Facility Coastal Resiliency Project.

MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

The Town of Barnstable is designated by the Commonwealth’s Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs as a **Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP)** Community. The MVP program provides support for towns in Massachusetts to plan for and implement projects that mitigate the impacts of climate change and natural hazards.

The goal of the MVP planning process is to raise awareness about the dangers posed from natural hazards and identify priority actions to improve resilience to the significant natural hazards that the community faces. On March 29, 2019, during a day-long workshop, community participants worked with local and regional leaders to: characterize the hazards facing the community; identify community vulnerabilities and hazards; identify and prioritize community actions; and identify overall priority actions for the community.

Top Recommendations to Improve Resilience

- Make changes to zoning bylaws and regulations, including to reduce vulnerability of structures in the floodplain, grandfathered pre-1978 structures along the coast, and incentives for economic recovery.
- Achieve consensus on Sandy Neck coastal resiliency analysis and action plan.
- Develop and implement community-based education programs with an emphasis on positive solutions, targeting multiple demographics and seasons.
- Conduct a feasibility assessment for the vulnerable neighborhood of Millway/Barnstable Harbor, including an alternatives analysis for adaptation and retreat.
- Conduct a study to examine retreat or engineered solution to flooding in Hyannis Harbor and hospital area. (IN PROGRESS: FY24 MVP GRANT AWARDED)

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Barnstable adopted the 2022 Barnstable Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) Update on September 15, 2022. The HMP is a planning document that is required by both FEMA and MEMA to be updated every 5 years. The purpose of the plan is to identify and profile the town's risk and vulnerability to potential natural hazards. Specifically, this plan assesses the potential impacts of hurricanes, winter storms, shoreline change/coastal erosion, earthquakes, drought/wildfire, and dam failure and identifies properties, resources, and critical facilities which may be impacted by these hazard events. The plan identifies mitigation strategies and actions aimed at reducing the loss of or damage to life, property, infrastructure and natural, cultural, and economic resources.

We will keep you advised of further participation with the state on this matter.

6. Kelly Collopy, Communications Manager for the Public Works Department, will provide an update on Water Resource Management planning including the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan.
7. Following Ms. Collopy, Elizabeth Jenkins, Director of Planning & Development, will provide an update on Massachusetts OneStop for Growth Award Overview and Associated Initiatives.
8. Following Director Jenkins, Mark Milne, Finance Director, will provide a Review of Fiscal Year 2024 Tax Levy Allocation Options.