



# The Town of Barnstable

## Office of Town Manager

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February 13, 2024

To: Barnstable Town Councilors

From: Mark S. Ells, Town Manager

RE: Town Manager update for February 1 through February 13, 2024

1. The Town Clerk's office will be open on Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 AM to 5 PM for Voter Registration only. Early Voting in person begins on Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup> from 8 AM until Noon at 200 Main Street, Hyannis. The full Election Calendar may be viewed under the IN THE NEWS section of the Town's website.
2. We are proceeding with the budget action calendar for FY 2025. We have completed the review of the CIP Taskforce ranking on capital projects submitted for FY25. As per the budget action calendar we plan to submit the recommended FY25 Capital Budget to Town Council on Monday, March 4, 2024. Departments have prepared FY 2025 proposed changes to fiscal years fees and submitted to the Town Manager for a public hearing on Tuesday, March 19, 2024. For information on our fiscal year budgets please view the Town's Open Budget website at <http://budget.townofbarnstable.us>.
3. Governor Maura Healey [signed an Executive Order creating the Commission on Clean Energy Infrastructure Siting and Permitting](#) (CEISP) in an effort to meet the emissions limits outlined in the Clean Energy and Climate Plans (CECP), Massachusetts will need to site a significant amount of new energy infrastructure, including new solar and wind generation, storage, transmission, and distribution infrastructure. The CEISP is a Commission that is described as one that will bring together stakeholders to swiftly remove barriers to responsible clean energy infrastructure development. The CEISP will be tasked with reducing permitting timelines, ensuring communities have input in the siting and permitting of clean energy infrastructure, and ensuring that the benefits of the clean energy transition are shared equitably. The Commission is chaired by Secretary Rebecca Tepper of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. The Secretary will order every relevant agency housed within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to evaluate existing permitting processes impacting energy infrastructure and identify potential areas of improvement. The Commission will also be instructed to make recommendations on administrative, regulatory, and legislative changes to existing permitting and siting procedures by Spring 2024. Barnstable has requested a seat on the Committee but it does not appear that we shall receive that appointment. We were informed on February 1, 2024 that the Commission has only

had internal meetings as they get themselves organized. They are working to get something for the public to engage with very soon. It was suggested that we direct any comments through the appointed representatives from Massachusetts Municipal Association, Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, or the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission. We are preparing a letter to all of the above and copying the Governor and Cape Legislative Delegation requesting adequate time to review and provide input on any proposed recommendations. We will keep you advised of our progress on this effort.

4. On January 18, 2024 the Executive Committee of the Cape Cod and Islands Water Protection Fund (CCIWTF) Management Board voted to endorse the (four letters attached) strategy for meeting the Funds financial needs. Letters have been sent to the State Treasurer, Secretary of Administration and Finance, and the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection requesting consideration of the proposed strategy referenced in each letter. A separate letter was sent to Chairs of the Joint Committee on Housing to support the proposed strategy as well as the need for wastewater infrastructure and housing are directly linked. We are preparing a letter for Town Council consideration regarding the attached strategy as the principle subsidy provided by the CCIWTF is an opportunity for Barnstable to receive a larger subsidy from the CCIWPF toward the cost of wastewater infrastructure. We will keep you advised of our progress on this matter.
5. I was recently asked the question, “Is Barnstable a pollinator friendly community?” I responded as follows: Through the National Wildlife Federation's [Mayors' Monarch Pledge](#), communities across the country are committing to creating habitat for the monarch butterfly (and other pollinators) in addition to coordinating educational outreach to inform members of their community of the importance of pollinators and how to make a difference. The Town of Barnstable officially took the pledge to become a Mayors’ Monarch community in March of 2023. Each year, the Town must commit to implementing at least (3) [Action Items](#). Below are the actions that the Town has implemented to date.
  - a) Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar producing plants in community gardens. The Planning and Development Department, in coordination with the Town’s Structures & Grounds Division, coordinated to identify locations to enhance existing gardens, on Town-owned properties, with pollinator species. A Planting Plan was developed and implemented to improve garden beds within Aselton Park with pollinator species to replace invasive vegetation.
  - b) Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.
    - a. Our Conservation Division developed the attached pamphlet entitled *“Help Support Monarch Butterfly Conservation in Barnstable”* which defines the Town’s commitment to the Mayors’ Monarch Pledge, current threats to the monarch butterfly, and suggested native plant species to be incorporated within pollinator gardens. Staff distributed the pamphlet to local garden groups. The pamphlet is also posted on Conservation’s website.

- c) Engage with developers, planners, and landscape architects to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.
  - Our Conservation Division additionally distributed the attached pamphlet to consultants, Engineers, Landscape Architects and local landscape companies to prioritize incorporation of pollinator gardens. Of note, staff noted that at least three consultants started to incorporate pollinator gardens into their Landscape Plans.

Related, but not specifically for pollinators: Barnstable is recognized as a Tree City and we are hosting annual events. Plus the “Greening the Gateway” project (to plant 2400 trees in Hyannis’ environmental justice areas) is well underway: <https://greeninghyannis.com/>. Funding to plant 2,400 trees has been provided through the State’s **Greening the Gateway Cities Grant Program** with a goal of covering 5% of the Town’s Planting Zone in new tree canopy over the next three years through summer 2026. The 966-acre Planting Zone includes residential homes and businesses located in Hyannis, south of Route 28/Falmouth Road and north of West Main Street, including the neighborhoods north of downtown Hyannis and west of Sea Street.

Each of these efforts support quality habitat, biodiversity, protect our water and natural resources in Barnstable.

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