



# The Town of Barnstable

## Office of Town Manager

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April 2, 2024

To: Barnstable Town Councilors

From: Mark S. Ells, Town Manager

RE: Town Manager update for March 20 through April 2, 2024

1. This is a reminder to residents who are registered voters that might be interested in serving the Town of Barnstable as the Cape Cod Commission representative to submit a letter of interest to the Town Manager by April 5, 2024, for consideration. Cape Cod Commission members are citizen volunteers who receive and evaluate information from the Cape Cod Commission's professional staff, consider policies to guide the agency's activities, and make regulatory decisions about development proposals under the agencies jurisdiction. The next appointment of a three-year term will commence on April 24, 2024. Thank you for your consideration of this volunteer position.
2. We are proceeding with the budget action calendar for FY 2025. A public fee hearing was held on March 19, 2024 and the proposed changes to FY 2025 fees are posted on the Town website and comments will be accepted through April 19, 2024. The FY25 proposed capital program and FY25 to FY29 Capital Plan has been submitted to the Town Council and is available on the town's website for viewing. Finance Director Milne will provide an overview of the proposed FY25 CIP at the April 4 Town Council meeting and CFAC will provide an overview of their report. Public hearings on the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) orders are scheduled to begin April 25, 2024. The School Committee held a public hearing on the proposed FY25 school department operating budget on March 20, 2024. A copy of the proposed budget is available on the school's website. The School Committee is expected to vote on the proposed budget at their April 3, 2024 meeting. For information on our fiscal year budgets please view the Town's Open Budget website at <http://budget.townofbarnstable.us>.
3. As previously reported and in response to requests by Town Council and the public regarding monitoring the activation of the Vineyard Wind cable landing at Covell's Beach, I continue discussions with Vineyard Wind and requested regular communication with Barnstable Officials and our public regarding the safe and compliant operation of their system. Vineyard Wind is developing informational signage to be installed at the site to illustrate location and other project information so that those who visit Covell's Beach may have access to such information. The informational signage will be installed in Spring 2024. They are preparing a means

of public access to information regarding issues of concern such as Electromagnetic Frequency (EMF) as well as other safety compliance aspects so that the public will know that the system is functioning in a safe and compliant manner. The Town of Barnstable has met with an independent third-party expert to assist in verifying such safety issues. We will keep you informed of the progress on this matter.

4. Since our presentation on Groundwater 101, I have received several questions from the public as to whether the Town has concerns about existing and proposed substations relative to water resource protection. My response has been that all land uses in Barnstable are of concern because we live on top of our water resources. In the case of electrical substations, we are absolutely concerned and continue to try to understand the potential impacts of such a land use as the Town of Barnstable does not approve such uses. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts under its Executive office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Department of Public Utilities Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB) issues such approvals. Most recently, we have identified the need for additional information related to the proposed expansion of the Oak Street Substation (Mid Cape Reliability Project) in an effort to better understand the potential down gradient impacts of a release from said substation and await review by the EFSB regarding that request for information. We plan to share additional information on water resource management planning with the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) regarding ongoing efforts in Barnstable, specifically in West Barnstable.

A second question focuses on, who is the compliance officer for the wind and substation projects? We know that the Town does not have authority in this area and the information below will point inquiries in an appropriate direction. For now, we suggest the following for safety and compliance issue:

- a) If the inquiry concerns VW, PCW or the Eversource West Barnstable substation (Mid Cape Reliability) and its safety and compliance with its EFSB/DPU siting decision, we suggest that the person is referred to the EFSB. They can email their concern to Andrew Greene, Director at the EFSB, at [Andrew.Greene@mass.gov](mailto:Andrew.Greene@mass.gov) and perhaps copy [DPU.efiling@mass.gov](mailto:DPU.efiling@mass.gov). We think copying the DPU filing room may be helpful because the EFSB/DPU may be more likely to respond to a concern that lands on the public docket. In order to make sure that their email gets filed properly if they copy the DPU filing room, they would need to add the EFSB docket number as part of what they write in the email's subject line.
  - a. For Mid-Cape Reliability, the docket number is EFSB 19-06A, for Park City Wind it's EFSB 20-01, and for Vineyard Wind it's EFSB 17-05.
- b) If the inquiry concerns whether a substation is complying with applicable law or may have an unsafe condition, we suggest the person email the DPU at [DPU.Legal@mass.gov](mailto:DPU.Legal@mass.gov) and [DPU.Adminstration@mass.gov](mailto:DPU.Adminstration@mass.gov).

We plan to request direct contact information for safety and compliance officer(s) from the Secretary (EEA) in our continued efforts to insure safe and compliant projects.

5. On March 28, 2024, the Town of Barnstable received notice from the Cape Cod and Islands Water Protection Fund Management Board (Management Board), pursuant to its authority under M.G.L. c. 29C, §§ 19 and 20 and through the Cape Cod Commission, notifying Barnstable that the Management Board, at its meeting on March 22, 2024, voted to approve contingent commitments for subsidies from the Cape Cod and Islands Water Protection Fund (CCIWPF) to fund Qualified Projects listed on the 2024 Clean Water State Revolving Fund Intended Use Plan (IUP). These commitments represent a 25% principal subsidy for eligible projects. On March 26, 2024, The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection announced the Final 2024 Intended Use Plans (IUPs) detailing the projects, borrowers and amounts that will be offered financing through the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan programs for this year's financing cycle. Barnstable's 2024 (proposed FY 2025 projects) projects received eligibility and therefore are eligible for the 25% principal subsidy from the CCIWPF referenced above. You may access the IUPs by visiting MassDEP's website at:

CWSRF: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2024-final-clean-water-intended-use-plan/download>

DWSRF: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2024-final-drinking-water-intended-use-plan/download>

It should also be noted that the action by the Management Board, though subject to annual approval, anticipates a 25% principal subsidy for eligible projects into the foreseeable future. We will keep you advised as we progress on this matter.

6. Elizabeth Jenkins, Director of Planning and Development, will provide an update on Barnstable Housing in the Regional Context and the Local Comprehensive Plan. (attachments)