



The Town of Barnstable

Office of Town Manager

367 Main Street, Hyannis, MA 02601

Office: 508.862.4610

Fax: 508.790.6226

www.townofbarnstable.us

Citizens' Resource Line: 508.862.4925

Mark S. Ells, Town Manager

mark.ells@town.barnstable.ma.us

M. Andrew Clyburn, Assistant Town Manager

andy.clyburn@town.barnstable.ma.us

September 2, 2025

To: Barnstable Town Councilors

From: Mark S. Ells, Town Manager

RE: Town Manager update for August 20 through September 2, 2025

1. The Town Manager will issue instructions to municipal departments for FY 2027 operating and capital budgets in mid-September. The Town Manager Calendar Year Rate Hearing is planned for mid-October. A workshop with Town Council is anticipated at the September 18, 2025 Town Council meeting focused on fiscal policy and revenue strategy. For information on our fiscal year budgets, please view the Town's Open Budget website at <http://budget.townofbarnstable.us>.
2. The Cape Cod Commission is currently updating the Regional Policy Plan. The public comment period has been extended to September 24, 2025. Based on previous Town Council discussion and public input received through various planning initiatives, staff have drafted a comment letter on behalf of the Town. We have shared the draft letter with Town Council for review and comment. We are seeking feedback from the Town Council on the comment letter prior to the public comment deadline.
3. In prior Town Manager communications, I have reported on the fiscal limitations of the State Revolving Fund. The Cape Cod and Islands Water Protection Fund Management Board continues to closely monitor the progress of discussions by the Mass Department of Environmental Protection on this matter. On August 22, 2025, a letter from Kevin Galligan, Chair of the Cape Cod and Islands Water Protection Fund Management Board, was sent (attached) sharing anticipated Cape project costs for the next five years and seeking information on the anticipated capacity of the 2026 Clean Water State Revolving Fund Intended Use Plan. We will continue to advance strategy discussions with the state on this critical funding source.
4. On Monday August 25, 2025, Olde Barnstable Fairgrounds Golf Course received official Audubon certification. Director of Golf Maintenance James Bentley and his staff began the process in early 2022 with a full site assessment of the course and recommendations from Audubon International. This process aligned with the Town's

“Sustainable Land Care Management Program” and golf staff decided to pursue official Audubon certification. To become an Audubon certified golf course the facility has to successfully implement and document a full range of environmentally responsible management practices across six key areas: environmental planning, wildlife and habitat management, water conservation, chemical use reduction and safety, water quality management, and outreach and education. Golf staff, with assistance from volunteers Bruce McIntyre and James Rahilly, expanded naturalized areas and planted natural pollinator plants including Milkweed and other species, installed numerous birdhouses, a screech owl box, and an osprey nest adjacent to the pond on the third hole. Additionally, we replaced outdated irrigation sprinklers with modernized sprinklers that are more efficient and provide the capability to regulate their pattern. Golf staff also perform testing of ground water and surface water four times annually. We have reduced the quantity of fertilizer applications and utilize organic and carbon-based products in place of synthetic options. Olde Barnstable Fairgrounds is just the third golf course on Cape Cod to achieve this designation, and the first one in 16 years.

5. Due to sustained dry conditions over the southeastern part of the state through the month of July, Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Rebecca Tepper declared the Cape Cod Region in a Level 2 – Significant Drought. Drought is a look back on cumulative conditions over a period of time. The below normal rainfall as well as higher than normal temperatures has led to drought like conditions setting in in our Region. To enhance awareness on the current drought conditions, EEA and MEMA are asking local, state and regional partners and stakeholder groups to assist in disseminating this critical information to residents, businesses and institutions in their respective communities. Although some regions may not be in a drought right now, in light of the low precipitation forecast and rising fire danger, we encourage water conservation all across the state. Attached is a one page “Drought Alert” (in pdf and jpg formats) that provides information on the current drought conditions and how communities across the Commonwealth can do their part to help conserve water, prevent wildfires and prepare for droughts.

The Barnstable Water System which services the Hyannis area, through its Water Board, put in place restrictions around non-essential outdoor water use. Per regulatory compliance, these restrictions were published on August 20th and shared on the Town website

(https://tobweb.town.barnstable.ma.us/Departments/watersupply/News_and_Updates/-State-of-Water-Conservation---August-20-2025.pdf), Town mobile app, social media, e-News, and published in the Cape Cod Times.

Mandatory restrictions include:

- a. Outdoor Watering (by hand only) Restricted to Two Days or Fewer per Week

- b. Outdoor Watering Hours (permitted from 5:00 PM to 9:00 AM)
- c. Washing of Vehicles prohibited (with exceptions, i.e. commercial car wash, for operator safety, etc.)
- d. Washing of Exterior surfaces prohibited (with exceptions, i.e. when applying paint, stucco, cement, etc.)
- e. Filling of Swimming Pools prohibited

With continued guidance from EEA, we will continue to share the materials again via social and digital channels. For more information on the current drought conditions, technical guidance regarding drought management actions and for drought-related tools and outreach materials, please visit www.mass.gov/ma-drought-management; for water conservation information, go to www.mass.gov/conservemawater. We have also developed two short videos that cover the topics of why drought gets declared even when there has been recent rainfall and why water suppliers sometimes have to implement water use restrictions when there are no immediate supply constraints on their systems. Both videos are available at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drought-tips-tools-resources>.

- 6. On August 21, 2025, I had the honor of introducing Governor Maura Healey, EEA Secretary Rebecca Tepper, and Department of Fish & Game Commissioner Tom O'Shea for a Biodiversity announcement regarding the Administration's commitment to conserving nature for people and wildlife. The Biodiversity Announcement took place at the Massachusetts Audubon's Long Pasture Wildlife Sanctuary, in Barnstable Village. Governor Healey launched a new effort to rebuild biodiversity and invest in nature to sustain our health and well-being, food security, economy, and way of life. A full summary can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/biodiversity>.
- 7. At the June Annual Meeting of the Wequaquet Lake Protective Association (WLPA) the Town was asked to send a letter to lake front owners as a reminder of the Town of Barnstable's Fertilizer Ordinance. The letter is attached and provides important information to assist the Town in its ongoing efforts to improve water quality. The Town of Barnstable has over 180 ponds and lakes. The information in this letter is of value to all properties who use fertilizer. It was sent to a specific area because the WLPA requested that we prepare such a letter. We are available to work with all in our community to advance this information.
- 8. Appropriation Order 2025-184 is on the Town Council agenda in the amount of \$2.9M for the preservation and restoration work at the Hyannis Armory located on South Street. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) voted unanimously to recommend to Town Council that the Town Council approved the funding for undertaking work on the exterior building. The link to the Town Architect's presentation to CPC <https://youtu.be/sNF4Q2p5UxU> provides an overview of the

project. The building's condition is such that the exterior requires repairs to stop continued deterioration. The building has reached the end of its useful life. Attached is also a written outline regarding the history, acquisition, and Town investment in this facility. In review of the years of discussion and financial investment in the facility the Town wants to maintain the facility as a structure in its inventory. If that is correct, then we should proceed with the recommended improvements to the exterior. If the Town Council does not approve the exterior improvement, we should examine what is required to demolish the facility.

9. Kate Maldonado, Planning & Development Department Senior Planner, will provide an update on the Local Comprehensive Plan.

Local Comprehensive Plan

On **Thursday, September 4th**, the Local Comprehensive Planning Committee will present the Draft Local Comprehensive Plan (LCP) to the Town Council. The Local Comprehensive Plan is a long-term vision and growth policy that will guide Barnstable's future over the next ten years with topic and location specific goals and actions. The LCP was coordinated through a collaborative public process that identified a community vision, defined key issues and opportunities and developed actionable actions. The draft Plan is accessible for review from the project website BarnstableLCP.com via the Document Library tab.