



# The Town of Barnstable

## Office of Town Manager

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April 14, 2026

To: Barnstable Town Councilors

From: Mark S. Ells, Town Manager

RE: Town Manager update for March 25, 2026, through April 14, 2026

1. We have commenced review of the FY 2027 Capital Budget and continue with the preparation of the Operating Budget for FY 2027. We remain on schedule with the budget action calendar. Town Council hearings on the recommended FY 2027 Capital Budget commenced March 26, 2026. The [Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Improvement Plan](#) is available on the Town's website at the link provided and printed copies have been provided to the Town Council. On April 1, 2026 the School Committee voted to adopt their proposed FY2027 School Operating Budget, and their proposed operating budget shall be included in the Town Manager proposed FY 2027 Operating Budget scheduled to be submitted to Town Council on May 13, 2026. The Town Manager Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Fee Hearing was conducted on March 17, 2026. The proposed FY 2027 fees are posted on the Town Manager's webpage. Comments may be submitted by Thursday, April 16th. For information on our fiscal year budgets, please view the Town's Open Budget website at <http://budget.townofbarnstable.us>.
2. On April 10, 2026, I submitted a letter to the President of the Massachusetts Senate (attached) in support of S.3050, An Act to Build Resilience for Massachusetts Communities, which provides for a program of climate change adaptation, resiliency and the preservation and improvement of environmental and recreation assets of the Commonwealth, including, in particular, a \$450 million bonding authorization (Section 2E Line Item 0640-1008) for clean drinking water and wastewater infrastructure.

As I have explained in previous communications, the capacity of the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) to support projects through the Clean Water Intended Use Plan (IUP) is of critical concern on Cape Cod as any decrease in funding capacity will significantly impact the ability of our communities to implement priority water quality projects. The SRF is facing real challenges. The 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Job's Act (IIJA) provided unprecedented levels of federal funding for the SRF, resulting in a spike in projects supported through the program. However, IIJA funding is set to expire in 2026, and federal base grants have continued to decrease; this will result in a decrease in the amount of funding

the SRF will be able to offer to communities in future IUPs. Additionally, a significant portion of the SRF's capacity will be allocated toward previously approved projects moving through their multi-year project delivery process in the upcoming years. With more resources needed to support these continuing projects, there will be less capacity available to fund new projects in subsequent IUPs. Further, increasing project costs and larger, more complex projects, such as nitrogen remediation on Cape Cod are placing additional pressure on available resources.

I note that I also serve on the board of the Cape Cod and Islands Water Protection Fund (the "Fund"), which was established by the Massachusetts Legislature in 2018 to help Cape Cod and Islands towns to pay for necessary wastewater infrastructure and water quality remediation projects. Since its inception, the Fund has awarded more than \$300 million in subsidies to wastewater and water quality projects in 13 of the 15 Cape Cod communities. However, access to the 25% subsidy provided by the Fund is contingent on SRF financing; therefore, the negative impact of limited SRF capacity is amplified on Cape Cod, and its effect on the ability of Barnstable and other Cape towns to advance water pollution abatement efforts cannot be overstated. I will keep you advised as this bill moves out of the Senate to the House for further consideration.

3. On April 13, 2026, the Executive Committee of the Cape Cod and Islands Water Protection Fund, on which I serve, submitted a letter (attached) to the President of the Senate in support of the authorization included in S.3050 for the State Revolving Fund (SRF). As explained above, these funds are critical to sustaining the capacity of SRF in the future.
4. I have recently been asked questions by our residents regarding why the Town is implementing a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP). The Town website has a Barnstable Water Resources webpage full of information regarding the CWMP along with many other water resource related issues. The CWMP is a regulatory requirement of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to address nutrient loading to our coastal embayments. The primary nutrient of concern to saltwater bodies is nitrogen. The primary source of nitrogen is human urine. The primary method of disposal of human urine in Barnstable is through Title 5 septic systems. Title 5 systems do not remove nitrogen from our urine to a level that keeps our saltwater bays healthy. Therefore, the CWMP is a Town- and State-approved plan to restore our saltwater bodies over a 30-year period. To remain compliant with State regulations we need to proceed with the CWMP. For more information, please visit the Town of Barnstable website.
5. I have also been asked if the Town Manager has commenced renegotiation discussions with Park City Wind regarding their proposed offshore wind project. I have not engaged in renegotiations nor will I without authorization of the Town Council. I will keep the Town Council and public advised if any future requests or information is provided relative to this proposed project.