



The Town of Barnstable

Office of Town Manager

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August 18, 2026

To: Barnstable Town Councilors

From: Mark S. Ells, Town Manager

RE: Town Manager update for July 15, 2026, through August 18, 2026

1. At the last Town Council meeting, the Town Manager Mark Ells and Finance Director Mark Milne reviewed with the Town Council several balancing measures to address future budgetary challenges and how to address those challenges, including reducing public services, increasing local fees, or pursuing tax overrides and debt exclusions as potential future strategies. The Town of Barnstable is currently navigating a significant fiscal challenge requiring a shift from the annual use of reserves for operating budgets, as this is not a sustainable strategy, and the generation of additional revenue to create a sustainable fiscal budget strategy. A sustainable operating budget strategy, coupled with a need to proceed with priority capital projects, has resulted in the Town Council needing to examine its fiscal policies and revenue strategy as we proceed to meet the priorities of our community. While the town relies heavily on property taxes, state-mandated caps under Proposition 2 ½ prevent revenue from keeping pace with rising operating and capital costs. To address this challenge, the town must identify new revenue streams, such as the Water Infrastructure Investment Fund and property tax overrides, which our Finance Director plans to address at the first Town Council meeting in September, to bridge the gap between the town's operating and capital needs and available resources. Please follow closely and participate in this matter as examining these critical fiscal management issues is a priority for our community. We anticipate monthly discussions with Town Council as we work toward fiscal policy and revenue strategies that maintain our community's priorities.
2. On July 22, 2026, the Zoning Board of Appeals voted to overrule the Building Commissioner's issuance of Building Permit No. BLDC-25-316, which was the building permit for the proposed homeless shelter at 460 W. Main St in Hyannis. Before the Building Commissioner could enforce the ZBA's vote, the ZBA's decision had to be filed with the Town Clerk. That occurred on August 4, 2026. On August 14th, the Building Commissioner sent notice to the property owner to cease and desist construction work authorized under BLDC-25-316. At this time, all work associated with the construction and redevelopment of the property as a homeless shelter is under a cease-and-desist order. However, portions of the second floor of the building

continue to be lawfully occupied. There are several remaining permits that are associated with the shelter building permit (BLDC-25-316), but which are not directly related to the use of the first floor as a homeless shelter. These permits include building and electrical permits for work related to tenant separation, fire suppression, fire notification and other health and life safety components and systems. The Building Commissioner is working with the Town Attorney's Office to determine which of these permits remain valid and in effect.

3. As our summer team heads back to school, we're making a few adjustments to keep everyone safe. After reviewing our end of season schedule, here are the final days lifeguards will be on duty at each location:

Veteran's Beach: Last day with guards was Thursday, August 13

Kalmus Beach: Last day with guards was Sunday, August 16

Covell's Beach: Last day with guards is Thursday, August 20

We'll continue to share updates as more staff finish their summer season. Thank you for your understanding and please stay safe.

4. The Town of Barnstable has received numerous complaints from abutters about the noise generated at the Osterville West Barnstable Road pickleball facility and have also heard concerns about traffic safety during school hours. Staff have been in discussions with residents, users of the facility, School Department, Barnstable Police and other communities on the Cape to work on potential resolutions. Implementing new hours, securing the facility when closed, installing new signage, planting evergreen trees for sound attenuation and considering the use of newly developed low noise pickleballs are all options being considered. There will be more information to come as we formalize a plan.
5. As I have shared in previous communications, I serve as the Town's representative on the Cape Cod & Islands Bridge Coalition. Please see below for a series of bridge-related updates for this month. The next quarterly CIBC meeting is set for Tuesday, September 8, 2026. We have a full agenda for that meeting. Luisa Paiewonsky and MassDOT will share some major project updates, and Melissa Sherburne with Enbridge will discuss the latest on the parallel pipeline relocation project.

New *Bridge the Gap* Podcast Episode Available Now!

- Episode 8 of our Cape Cod Bridges podcast, *Bridge the Gap*, is now available via the [Chamber website](#), iHeart Media app, and Audible.
- Did you know that a majority of fish and shellfish from the Cape has to travel over the bridges for processing? On this episode, we're joined by Shareen Davis, Marketing and Sales Manager for the Chatham Harvesters Cooperative. Shareen shares how a community of fisherfolk is working to build a healthier, more sustainable seafood economy while navigating the limitations of regional infrastructure and logistics.
- Please listen, share, and let us know what you think! Special thanks, as always, to the Davenport Companies and Matt Pitta for their support of this project.

State Senator Dylan Fernandes to Host Quarterly Public Forum 8/27

- Senator Fernandes will host a Cape Bridges Forum on Thursday, August 27 from 5:30-6:30 PM at Mashpee Town Hall (Waquoit Meeting Room, 16 Great Neck Rd N, Mashpee). This is the fifth in his series of public forums on the Cape Cod Bridges project. See the attached graphic and Facebook page [here](#) for more info, and feel free to spread the word.
- ***In the past, we have had CIBC members attend these forums to speak on the importance of the bridges replacement for our regional economy - please let me know if you would like assistance in preparing comments, should you choose to attend and speak at the forum.***

Cape Cod Bridges Record of Decision Posted to the Federal Register

The Cape Cod Bridges Program Record of Decision on the Final EIS has now been posted in the Federal Register and is available [here](#).

Design Public Hearing Materials Now Available

On July 23, MassDOT hosted a Design Public Hearing at Bourne High School to provide a public update on the replacement of the Sagamore Bridge. The recording of this hearing can now be found online [here](#), and the page includes a comment form to submit your feedback. Bridge renderings shown at the hearing can be accessed [here](#).

6. I am pleased to report that I have been appointed as a member of the Energy Facilities Siting Board as the representative of the Mass Municipal Association.
7. Tammy Cunningham, Assistant Director of Human Resources, will provide an update on the Town Hall elevator repair project.
8. Kelly Collopy, DPW Communications Manager, will provide a Water Resources Update including the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan.