

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

JANUARY 24, 2023

1. SNOW & ICE REMOVAL

It looks like we're finally getting some wintry-type weather around here! When weather events hit that put Dennis on the rain/snow/ice line, residents may see little in terms of accumulation, but these storms require significant resources from the [Department of Public Works](#). For extended duration storms, the Department operates two rotating salt shifts to manage storms. These lingering storms can be challenging and can mean long hours for staff who work to keep the streets safe.

The Town is committed to ensuring roads are safe and passable. Please give the DPW trucks and staff the space to do their work on the streets and in parking lots. Thank you to everyone for their patience during and after these events. After a storm has ended calls and/or messages can be made to the Department of Public Works at 508-760-6220. When leaving a message please be as brief as possible leaving your name, address, phone number and reason for calling. We will make a list of the concerns and address them systematically.

2. TOWN OF DENNIS RECEIVES GRANTS TO STUDY REPLACEMENT OF CULVERTS - WEIR CREEK

We found out today that we received a second grant (through the Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC)), to study the replacement of the culverts along Weir Creek and restore the salt marsh area associated with the creek to the north of Lower County Road.

The grant, awarded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), will expand on the work already funded through a Southeast New England Program (SNEP) grant awarded in October (also through APCC). The grants will pay for a Hydrologic and Hydraulic (H&H) study that will analyze the impacts associated with the replacement the culverts and change in flow through the salt marsh area. The grant will also pay for 30% and 60% design plans of the culverts. The grant amounts are as follows:

SNEP Grant	\$138,616
<u>NFWF Grant</u>	<u>\$279,300</u>
Total	\$417,916

APCC prepared and submitted the grants on behalf of the town. Based on the projects that were awarded funds (see attached NFWF Notice of Awards), the APCC submission was a strong one. APCC will also be managing both grants, with their efforts helping to provide matching funds and reduce the amount of matching funds required by the town.

Engineering and Natural Resources have been working with APCC for a number of years to identify projects that would have positive ecological impact. With the recent influx in infrastructure funding, the timing was right to look into grants funding design in hopes of getting a project far enough along to be considered near "shovel ready", as these projects tend to be the ones to receive construction funding. You may recall that Weir Creek was one of the projects identified in our request to reserve ARPA funds for such water quality projects.

3. GOVERNOR HEALEY OUTLINES KEY PRIORITIES AT MASS MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE –

In an address to more than 1,000 local leaders in Boston this morning, Gov. Maura Healey outlined some key priorities — housing, economic development, and local aid topped the list — and promised that municipalities will be notified about key local aid accounts even before she files her first state budget on March 1.

“Today, as our teams are crunching all those numbers, we don’t have exactly what those figures are,” she said during the Opening Session of the MMA Annual Meeting. “But I promise you, as soon as our team has them, you will have them, and you will have them in advance of our filing.

“Know that we are big time committed to making sure that we are doing everything that we can to support local aid for our communities.”

Governors typically file their state budget bills in late January, but new administrations are granted an additional five weeks to file their spending plan.

Healey highlighted her administration’s first bill, [a \\$987 million “immediate needs bond bill”](#) filed yesterday that includes \$400 million for the popular [MassWorks Infrastructure Program](#) and \$9.3 million for broadband infrastructure, among other economic development and housing programs.

“This is just the start – immediate needs – more to come,” she said. “We’re going to continue, I promise, to work with our municipalities, to work with businesses, to work with the Legislature and other critical stakeholders to develop larger housing and economic development programs that will see their way to a bond bill for introduction later on in the session.”

Also yesterday, the governor filed a two-year, \$400 million Chapter 90 bond bill to fund improvements to municipally owned roads and bridges across the Commonwealth. A multiyear bill has long been a priority for the MMA in order to help communities plan effectively and optimize the impact of the funding.

On education, Healey said she’s “committed to fully funding our schools as outlined by the [Student Opportunity Act], along with meeting the needs of charter school reimbursements, and you’ll see that in my budget.”

She said her administration will help districts with the costs of student transportation and would fully fund the McKinney-Vento program for transporting homeless students.

“We’ll support special education, particularly the circuit breaker program, to help maintain funding to help all school districts with the cost of these critical services,” she said. “And when it comes to welcoming migrant families with children in our communities, I will also file supplemental funding to ensure that they have access to the education and the support they need to learn and thrive, and that communities have the resources to make that happen.”

Healey said she wanted to work to improve the competitive position of Massachusetts and its communities to fight for federal dollars, and said the administration would be offering technical assistance to municipalities to help them win federal grants.

On housing, Healey said she would be filing an executive order today to create a working group, chaired by Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll, to determine how to set up a secretariat devoted to housing, and that she would soon file legislation to create a housing secretariat. (Healey is seeking to divide the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development into two distinct offices.)

“There are no easy solutions,” she said regarding the state’s housing crisis. “We need your partnership. We need your best ideas. And frankly, we need your courage, too. ... We’ve got to be aggressive.” Citing her connection to local government through her family, and Driscoll’s experience as a mayor, she stressed her administration’s commitment to working in partnership with cities and towns.

“We do want to do great things,” she said. “I just want to begin with a recognition that I know things are challenging out there right now. Our job in government is to be great partners with all of you, as we work through those challenges.

“We know that Massachusetts cannot move forward until and unless all of our cities and towns are strong, our families and our residents are supported, and our main streets are vibrant.

“I know that you’ve navigated seemingly insurmountable challenges the last few years, and you’ve pushed your way through to protect constituents, to rethink completely the way government services are provided. I have been so inspired by the resilience of all of you.”

Written by [John Ouellette, Publications & Digital Communications Manager Mass Municipal Association](#)

4. JOIN THE TEAM - TOWN OF DENNIS IS HIRING!

Do you know someone looking for work? The Town of Dennis is hiring! Full and part time positions available. [View current job openings here.](#)

5. TRANSFER STATION FEE INCREASES –

On January 10, 2023 during the Select board meeting, the Dennis Select Board voted to increase certain transfer station fees to adjust for market pricing. Fees were raised to cover direct costs in comparison to other communities and vendors. The new fees will be effective as of January 13, 2023.

The new fees are as followed:

- Mattresses and box springs: \$30 EA Residential, \$50 EA Commercial
- Brush: \$8 Barrel MIN, Pick up/Trailer \$60, & \$70 per ton Commercial
- Asphalt, Brick, Concrete: \$20 Per Ton
- Construction and Demolition: \$10 MIN. \$225 Per Ton
- Tires: \$10 Per Passenger Tire/ \$30 Per Truck Tire.

The Town of Dennis will no longer accept manure. No-cost options are available locally. See the town website for a complete [price list.](#)

6. FY 2024 BUDGET

Strategic and conservation budget planning efforts have placed the Town in a much better financial position than many other towns in the Commonwealth. The challenge will be to maintain service level expectations within the desired funding parameters and retain our excellent AAA Bond Rating in accordance with the municipal guidelines used by rating agencies. We are entering that point that a dialogue needs to happen as to how we continue to sustain the salaries and benefits of the employees and retirees - because that is the majority of the budget. We provide services to our residents through administration and finance, education, public safety, public works, health and human services, and culture and recreation. Presenting a balanced budget for FY2024 in Dennis has not been easy. As previously noted, there are still cost items and final

figures needed at the time of this budget submittal. We await the formal transmittal of the Education budget recommendations by the Regional School Committees.

We remain committed to meeting the expectations of the Dennis residents. The FY2024 Recommended Budget is reflective of our collective efforts to provide exceptional services and of our commitment to continue working towards improving the community. The Administration and Senior Management Team will continue to work collaboratively to develop creative approaches that will position the Town to effectively confront our complex challenges and to improve and enhance services within the constraints of our available resources.

General Fund budget recommendations to the Board commenced in late November and were made in several meetings throughout December and a final budget meeting was held on January 10th with the Select Board. The budgetary focus was mainly to continue the core services we have and address initiatives contained in the Select Board's Goals. Other priorities include staffing resources, and increased funding in the operating budget in response to growing issues, such as stormwater management, facility and infrastructure maintenance and solid waste and recycling. The Select Board has approved the FY24 operating budget and has formally transmitted the budget to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee begins its review of the proposed budget on January 25th and during the month of February, and will finalize their recommendations for the 2023 Annual Town Meeting in May. All meetings at which the budget is discussed are open public meetings please follow the Town Calendar for upcoming Finance Committee meeting dates or you can also view on Channel 18 video on demand.

7. 2023 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING (ATM) –

Pursuant to the Code of the Town of Dennis, By-Law:

Chapter 40, § 1, the Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, the Select Board Opened the Town Meeting Warrant at their meeting held on Tuesday January 10th.

Chapter 40, § 2 and under the MGL ch. 39, § 10, the Annual Town Meeting Warrant & Election Warrant will be posted no later than Tuesday, April 25, 2023.

Chapter 40, § 8, Citizens Petitions are due to the Town Clerk's Office no later than 4:00 pm on Tuesday, March 14, 2023.

Pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 51, §§ 26, 28, the last day to register to vote at both the Annual Town Meeting and the Annual Town Election is Friday, April 21, 2023.

Throughout January and February, the Board will continue its discussions about potential articles for the Annual Town Meeting. Zoning articles are currently under review with the Planning Board, Town Administration will begin to assemble the town meeting warrant, for review by the Select Board. It is anticipated the Select Board will review the final 2023 Town Meeting Warrant at a meeting in early April.

8. ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION –

The Town of Dennis will be conducting the Annual Town Election on Tuesday, May 9, 2023. Polls will be open from 7:00 am until 8:00 pm. The last day to register to vote at both the Annual Town Meeting and the Annual Town Election is Friday, April 21, 2023 and the hours on this day will be from 8:30 am until 5:00 pm.

Nomination papers are available at the Town Clerk's office and will need to be obtained by no later than Friday, March 17, 2023 at 4:30 pm and returned by Tuesday, March 21, 2023 by no later than 5:00 pm.

Vacancies for the Annual Town Election are as follows:

2	Select Board Member	3 years
1	Select Board Member	1 year
1	D/Y School Committee Member	3 years
2	OKHRHDC Member	4 years
1	Dennis Housing Authority Mem.	5 years
1	Water District Commissioner	3 years

For more information about the Nomination process, please contact the Town Clerk's Office at (508) 760-6112.

Have a great week everyone!

Respectfully,

Elizabeth C. Sullivan, Town Administrator