

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

FEBRUARY 28, 2023

1. THE TOWN OF DENNIS IS HIRING FOR SEASONAL POSITIONS!

Town of Dennis is Now Hiring for summer seasonal positions, including Lifeguards, Police Community Service Officers, Natural Resource Monitors, Golf Rangers and Laborers, Beach Attendants, and Recreation Counselors and Instructors. Applications are open for the 2022 Summer Season.

We also have many year-round full and part-time openings as well.

[View current job openings here.](#)

2. 2023 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING (ATM) –

The Select Board is underway with their review of Town Meeting Articles for placement on the Warrant, the Board will continue their review over the next several meetings. The Finance Committee will soon commence their review of Town Meeting articles. The Planning Board will be meeting on any proposed Zoning Articles. It is anticipated the Select Board will review the final 2023 Town Meeting Warrant at a meeting in early April. All Town Meeting Article/Warrant Review are held in meetings that are available for the public to attend in person or via zoom. Please see the Meeting Calendar on the Town website for dates/times/locations and meeting agendas.

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.

3. CAPE COD COMMISSION MOVING FORWARD WITH THE REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

The Cape Cod Commission is creating a Regional Housing Strategy to address housing supply, affordability, and availability issues by identifying appropriate areas for housing development, along with policies and strategies to further the plan's goals.

This planning process will result in a strategy that includes actionable recommendations responsive to the needs and preferences of Cape Cod and tools and resources such as design guidelines and model bylaws that communities can immediately implement.

The Commission has contracted with Utile and Outwith Studio to support development of the housing strategy. They will work with Commission staff to complete a regional zoning analysis, develop residential

design guidelines, issue a visual preference survey, and complete research on financing mechanisms and potential regional affordable housing entities.

In December 2022, Cape Cod Commission staff began a series of municipal meetings to better understand local housing priorities and goals. During the meetings, Commission staff shared housing, economic and demographic data and engaged in discussions on existing challenges, efforts, resources and support needed.

Staff has also compiled a housing typology outlining the various types of homes in the region. Housing profiles developed by Commission staff for each Cape Cod town and the region are under development, and the results of a housing suitability analysis will soon be available.

The process will continue through the spring and summer, with a draft strategy expected in Summer 2023.

4. BARNSTABLE COUNTY HOME-AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN INVESTMENTS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (HOME-ARP PROGRAM)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING, DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY AND COMMENT PERIOD Barnstable County HOME-ARP Allocation Plan

The Barnstable County HOME Consortium, through the Barnstable County Human Services Department, has prepared a DRAFT HOME-ARP Allocation Plan (“Draft Plan”), which outlines the strategy and planned expenditures of federal HOME-ARP funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This one-time allocation must be used to assist a qualifying population of individuals or households who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, et. seq., and other vulnerable populations by providing housing, rental assistance, supportive services, or non-congregate shelter. Barnstable County was awarded \$1,556,508 in HOME-ARP funds, which will be administered through the Barnstable County HOME Consortium. The Draft Plan outlines the activities (*rental housing development*) and goals planned to address the needs of the qualifying population of Barnstable County. Allocated funds must be spent by September 30, 2030.

COMMENTS on the Draft Plan will be accepted through **March 7, 2023** and will be summarized in the final submission of the plan to HUD. Comments may be submitted **by email to: homeprogram@barnstablecounty.org**.

Or by U.S. Mail to:
Barnstable County Department of Human Services
HOME Program
P.O. Box 427
Barnstable, MA 02630

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING:

The Consortium, through the Barnstable County Human Services Department and its Consultant, Barrett Planning Group LLC will hold a **VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING** to receive public comments on the Draft Plan:

Monday, February 27, 2023 @ 4:00 p.m. (Virtual)

See attached **Notice** for instructions on how to join the virtual public meeting.

The above information may also be found at the Barnstable County HOME-ARP Investment Partnership Program website:

<https://www.capecod.gov/departments/human-services/initiatives/housing-homelessness/home-arp/>

5. MASSACHUSETTS MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION UPDATES ON GOVERNOR’S PROPOSED BUDGET -

With nearly a week left before the administration’s fiscal 2024 state budget filing deadline, Gov. Maura Healey released critical local aid account information today.

Healey’s proposal would increase the main discretionary local aid account by 2% over fiscal 2023 levels, while increasing Chapter 70 school aid by \$586 million, honoring commitments made in the 2019 Student Opportunity Act. The governor also released her proposed numbers for charter school reimbursements, special education, school transportation accounts, rural school aid, library aid, and other local programs.

- [See Division of Local Services preliminary fiscal 2024 Cherry Sheet aid amounts for individual cities and towns](#)
- [See Division of Local Services preliminary fiscal 2024 Cherry Sheet aid amounts for regional school districts](#)

At the MMA Annual Meeting on Jan. 20, Healey recognized the importance of getting local aid information to municipal officials as early as possible, as communities are already well into their local budget process. The governor’s full budget proposal, known as House 1, is due to be filed by March 1.

“Gov. Healey and Lt. Gov. Driscoll have kicked off the budget season with a fiscal blueprint that recognizes many of the challenges facing cities and towns,” said MMA Executive Director and CEO Geoff Beckwith. “Local officials look forward to working with the Healey-Driscoll administration and the Legislature to build on this proposal to secure vital investments in our schools and essential municipal services, and continue a strong state-local partnership.”

The governor’s budget proposal is the first step in a months-long process. The House and Senate Ways and Means committees are expected to host a budget hearing in mid-March on municipal and school aid for fiscal 2024, and the House will debate its budget bill in April, with the Senate deliberating its own bill in May. The Legislature will work to get a final budget bill to the governor by the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1.

Unrestricted general government aid

Healey is proposing a \$24.6 million increase (2%) in the Unrestricted General Government Aid account, slightly higher than the 1.6% consensus forecast for state tax revenue growth announced in January. The MMA will be working closely with lawmakers to build on this proposal and secure a higher level of UGGA aid to maintain essential municipal services.

“With inflation running far higher than 2%, communities will need a larger increase just to maintain existing programs and services,” Beckwith said.

Chapter 70

The governor’s budget recommendation would continue implementation of the funding schedules in the Student Opportunity Act, bringing Chapter 70 school aid up to \$6.58 billion. The majority of the funds would implement improvements to the foundation budget, adding weight for low-income students, English language learners, special education costs, and school employee health benefits.

An initial examination of the proposal, however, indicates that 119 of 318 operating districts (37%) would receive only the minimum \$30 per-student increase in the Student Opportunity Act. The Legislature set minimum aid at \$60 per student in the fiscal 2023 budget, and the MMA will continue to strongly advocate for minimum aid of \$100 per student to ensure that all districts can at least keep pace with inflation and maintain their school services.

Healey's proposal includes a special \$10 million reserve fund to provide relief to districts whose municipalities have been disproportionately impacted by increases in required local contributions under the Chapter 70 formula.

- [See DESE's calculation of fiscal 2024 Chapter 70 aid and Net School Spending requirements for individual cities, towns and regional school districts based on House 1](#) (including preliminary fiscal 2024 charter school assessments and reimbursements)

Charter school reimbursements

The governor's budget would level-fund charter school reimbursements at \$243 million, intended to meet the state's statutory obligation to mitigate Chapter 70 losses to charter schools as outlined in the Student Opportunity Act.

While the proposed budget may meet the requirement, the MMA maintains that it does not solve the serious flaws in the overall charter school finance system.

"Charter schools will continue to divert a high percentage of Chapter 70 funds away from many municipally operated school districts, and place greater strain on the districts that serve the vast majority of public schoolchildren," Beckwith noted. "Major problems will continue unless a true resolution of the charter school funding problem is achieved, which is a top MMA priority."

Special education circuit breaker

The governor's budget would add \$63 million to fund the Special Education Circuit Breaker program at \$503 million. The Student Opportunity Act expanded the special education circuit breaker by including out-of-district transportation, an important enhancement for cities and towns. With concerns rising about a 14% rate increase for out-of-district special education providers coming on July 1, the administration is continuing to examine funding options to assist local school districts, and the MMA will continue to work with the Executive Office for Administration and Finance and with lawmakers to address this challenge.

Rural school aid

The governor said her budget would provide \$7.5 million for Rural School Aid, providing assistance to eligible towns and regional school districts. The grant program helps districts facing the challenge of declining enrollment to identify ways to form regional school districts or regionalize certain school services to create efficiencies.

The MMA sees this as a promising step for rural school aid, and will continue to advocate to build on this progress.

Regional school transportation

The governor would increase funding for regional transportation reimbursements by \$14.9 million, or about 18%, to \$97 million for fiscal 2024, which would reimburse districts for approximately 90% of local costs.

Out-of-district vocational school transportation

Reimbursements for transportation of out-of-district vocational students would see a significant boost, with the governor's budget proposing \$5.2 million. The same account in fiscal 2023 was funded at only \$250,000. The governor's proposal would reimburse districts for approximately 90% of local costs. This account has been a priority for the MMA.

McKinney-Vento

The governor's budget would fully fund reimbursements for the transportation of homeless students under the federal McKinney-Vento Act, increasing the account to \$28.7 million in fiscal 2024. The impact of this funding level would vary from community to community, depending on the number of homeless families that remain sheltered in local hotels and motels.

PILOT

The governor's budget would increase payments-in-lieu-of-taxes by 14% to \$51.5 million, which would benefit communities with large amounts of state-owned land. This increase is intended to ensure that no municipality sees a decrease in its overall PILOT payments due to recent valuation changes.

Public libraries

Local aid accounts for public libraries and regional libraries would each receive a 10% increase in the governor's proposal, bringing public libraries to \$17.6 million and regional libraries to \$15.9 million.

Shannon grants

The governor's budget includes \$12.3 million for the Shannon Grant program, which provides grant funding for cities and towns to respond to and suppress gang-related activities.

Municipal regionalization efficiencies incentive reserve

The governor said her budget would include \$20.5 million for a Municipal Regionalization Efficiencies Incentive Reserve, which would double the funding for the Community Compact Program. Part of the reserve would be used to support emergency public safety staffing grants (\$5 million), the District Local Technical Assistance Fund (\$3 million), the Efficiency and Regionalization competitive grant program (\$2 million), and the Local Finance Commonwealth Fellowship Program (\$500,000).

Municipal transportation grants

The governor said her budget will recommend \$100 million for a new Massachusetts Department of Transportation Municipal Partnership grant program. The proposal is a response to calls from municipalities for state support with the design and development of key transportation-related projects. The grants would help communities prepare for or apply for state and federal grant programs, fulfill local match requirements, begin construction, or leverage outside funding sources.

The Municipal Partnership grant account would be funded with a portion of the \$1 billion in new revenue generated by the voter-approved 4% tax on incomes above \$1 million.

Written by [Jackie Lavender Bird, Senior Legislative Analyst](#)

6. DY MIDDLE SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT JANUARY/FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES

- Temp Certificate of Occupancy received (2/16/23)
- Punchlist ongoing for entire building
- IT dept setting up teacher computers
- FFE/IT equipment delivered and installed

- Gym basketball hoops moved and line striping complete
- Owner trainings ongoing
- Traffic light cameras installed and programmed
- Commission ongoing
- Auditorium curtains and lighting installed

Look ahead Schedule

- Work to complete list
- Punchlist work
- Finish commissioning
- Owner training
- Teachers coming back (2/27-2/28) • First day of school (3/1/2023)

7. VETERAN TRANSPORTATION

The Cape & Islands Veterans Outreach Center is offering Transportation to Veterans (with a true need and no vehicle of their own) by appointment with 48 hours" (2 business days) notice given. The Veteran will be required to produce a copy of their DD214 form.

Mail To: C/O Angela Welch
Cape and Islands Veterans Outreach Center
247 Stevens Street Suite E
Hyannis MA. 02601

Transportation will include to local Grocery Stores, Bourne National Cemetery, Labs for Bloodwork, Validated Medical appointments (including local MD appointments on Cape Cod as well as to the Providence V.A. and its affiliates).

Request a Ride: 508-778-1590 Ext. 9
2 Business Days before the ride is needed
Monday through Friday 8am-4pm.
Questions: Angela Welch 508-778-1590 Ext. 9

To learn more about the programs offered by Cape & Islands Veterans Outreach Center please visit their website <https://capeveterans.com/programs/>

Have a great week everyone!

Respectfully,

Elizabeth C. Sullivan
Town Administrator