

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

NOVEMBER 16, 2021

1. SPECIAL TOWN ELECTION, BALLOT QUESTION FOR FIRE STATION 2 BUILDING

On Tuesday, November 2, 2021, Special Town Meeting voters supported and approved the construction of Fire Station II. A corresponding 2 ½ debt exclusion vote is required as outlined below. The Special Town Election is scheduled for December 7, 2021.

Town Meeting Motion - Approved

That the sum of \$14,946,500 is appropriated to pay costs of designing, constructing, furnishing and equipping Fire Station 2 to replace an existing Fire Station 2, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto, and that to meet this appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, is authorized to borrow said amount under and pursuant to G.L. c. 44, §7(1), or pursuant to any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the Town therefor. Any premium received upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with G.L. c. 44, §20, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount. No amounts shall be borrowed or expended hereunder unless the Town shall have voted to exclude the amounts necessary to repay the borrowing authorized by this vote from the limitation on property taxes set forth in G.L. c. 59, §21C (also known as Proposition 2½).

Ballot Question

Shall the Town of Dennis be allowed to exempt from the provisions of proposition two and one-half, so-called, the amounts required to pay for the bond issued in order to pay costs of designing, constructing, furnishing and equipping Fire Station 2 to replace an existing Fire Station 2, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto?

Town Clerk Terri Bunce has outlined the following important information regarding the upcoming Special Town Election:

Date of the Special Town Election: **December 7, 2021**

Polling Hours: **12 noon – 6:00 pm**

Precinct Locations are as follows:

Precinct 1: Carleton Hall, 1006 Old Bass River Road, Dennis

Precinct 2: Dennis Senior Center, 1045 Route 134, East Dennis

Precinct 3: Dennis Public Library, 5 Hall St., Dennis Port

Precinct 4: 1867 West Dennis Graded School House, 67 School Street, West Dennis

Precinct 5: Dennis Police Station, 90 Bob Crowell Road, South Dennis

Choices for Voters:

- 1.) Vote at the Polls on Election Day.**

- 2.) Absentee Vote at the Town Clerk's office in person until 12 noon on Monday, December 6, 2021.
- 3.) Apply for a Vote-by-Mail ballot until 4:30 pm on Wednesday, December 1, 2021.

Vote-By-Mail & Absentee Ballot applications: are available on the Town Clerk's Department page on the Town of Dennis Website and Vote-by-Mail applications are also in front of the Town Hall.

Track my Ballot: This is now available for the Vote-by-mail process through the Secretary of State's Office as a Track-my-ballot system for Local Elections. The website is: www.trackmyballotMA.com

This website will show:

1. That the application has been received.
2. When the Ballot has been mailed from the Town Clerk's Office.
3. When the Ballot has been received by the Town Clerk's office.

Also, Vote-by-Mail & Absentee ballots will be processed at the 5 Polling Locations on Election day.

Should you have any questions, please contact the Town Clerk's office at (508) 760-6112.

2. PINES GOLF COURSE CLOSED FOR THE SEASON

Due to the ongoing tree cleanup efforts, and the dangerous conditions on the course, the Pines will be closed for the season effective immediately. As you may be aware typically the Pines closes for the season with the Thanksgiving Day Holiday.

We appreciate your understanding and we thank you for another outstanding season!

We ask you to keep off the Pines grounds as they are dangerous in a lot of areas. For everyone's safety, no one should be walking the property at this time. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

3. MASS MUNICIPAL UPDATE - CONGRESS PASSES \$1.2 TRILLION INFRASTRUCTURE BILL

Following weeks of negotiations, the House of Representatives last Friday passed a \$1.2 trillion infrastructure package to make new federal investments in a wide range of public systems over five years.

The bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act had passed the Senate in August and now goes to President Joe Biden for his signature.

The package includes \$550 billion in new spending for public transit, passenger rail, bridges, water and sewer systems, high-speed internet, electric vehicle infrastructure, and investments in the electric grid to support the expansion of renewable energy.

The bill would provide infrastructure support to municipalities in the form of direct grants as well as funds that would pass through existing state programs. New programs that would provide direct funding to municipalities include \$5 billion for a Safe Streets for All program and \$5 billion for a

competitive National Infrastructure Project Assistance program to allow communities to complete critical large projects that would otherwise be too expensive.

Two existing formula programs, the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, would each receive \$11.7 billion over five years (49% for principal forgiveness and grants, 51% for loans). The White House has released a fact sheet about what the bill would mean for Massachusetts.

4. SPECIAL/ FALL TOWN MEETING COMPLETED

Special Town Meeting was held on Tuesday, November 2, 2021, at 7:00 pm in the Nathaniel H. Wixon Innovation School Auditorium. Here is a summary of the actions taken by Town Meeting voters:

#	Article Name	Results
1	Amend Budget - Insurance	Passed
2	Amend Budget - Golf	Passed
3	FY 22 Budget Supplements - Treasurer/Collector (HOLD)	Passed
4	Transfer from Barrier Beach Protection Stabilization Fund for Barrier Beach Utility Vehicle	Passed
5	Transfer from Barrier Beach Protection Stabilization Fund for Seasonal Staffing	Passed
6	Construction of Fire Station 2	Passed
7	Police Department Interior Camera Surveillance System Replacement	Passed
8	Police Department Radio System Replacement	Passed
9	Amend Zoning By-Law	Passed
10	Community Preservation Committee – Tobey Woods Land Purchase Debt Retirement	Passed
11	Community Preservation Committee – Help Restore the Columns, 401 Main Street, West Dennis	Failed
12	Citizen’s Petition – Partially Elected Finance Committee	Indefinitely Postponed

5. SELECT BOARD GOAL - WILLIAM CROWELL ROAD SURVEY

William Crowell Road Survey- the Select Board placed an article at the May 2021 Annual Town Meeting for funding to conduct a survey and complete an existing condition plan of the town area on William Crowell Road. The Town has contracted with BSC Group to complete this project, work has commenced on the monumentation reconnaissance and over next couple weeks will include a delineation and final survey work. In keeping with the Boards goal, town staff including Engineering, DPW, Natural Resources will coordinate once the survey work is complete to review what access may

be available for a public overview area or pathway to the coastal beach in this location. We anticipate the survey work being completed this month and a final plan from BSC by September.

Update – The Town Engineer has informed me that the survey work has been performed on William Crowell Road and they are finalizing the delineation of resources areas to overlay on the plan. We anticipate the work being completed this month and per BSC Group, a final professional land survey plan in two weeks. More updates forthcoming as this is an active project.

11-16-21 Update

BSC has completed the survey and submitted a draft plan, Engineering is reviewing the plan with BSC and will provide a final plan in the next week or two.

6. ASSOCIATION TO PRESERVE CAPE COD AWARDED SOUTHEAST NEW ENGLAND PROGRAM (SNEP) GRANT –

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC) was successful with a Southeast New England Program (SNEP) Grant to prioritize boat ramps on Cape Cod for water quality improvements. Engineering provided a letter of interest for the grant so the Town of Dennis will be included in the analysis. The boat ramp has to be within the SNEP region. APCC is not including commitment of specific town match at this stage, but will include town time for participation in project planning in reporting and will seek more formal town commitment for priority sites we agree to move forward with for design. APCC would then work with towns as desired to seek subsequent grant funding to support permitting, final design, and construction.

11-16-21 Update

The Town Engineer provided an update on this project; the kickoff meeting with APCC occurred today to outline how the boat ramps across the Cape will be evaluated. This is a competitive grant where each town will submit their priority ramps. APCC will evaluate the ramps based on a set criteria and work with their consultant to prepare design plans on the selected locations.

Engineering is already working separately with the Cape Cod Conservation District on a similar project where we have received a grant to perform design on Follin’s Pond Landing.

7. BUDGET BUILDING AND SCHEDULE FOR FY2023

As you know, the FY2023 Budget planning process commenced in early October this year. Budget guidelines were distributed on October 8, 2021, for departments to begin building their budgets. At this time, with many unknowns and all nine Collective Bargaining Agreements up, all town departments were asked to prepare level service and level funded budgets with the exception of increases in contractual and other fixed costs.

Last week, I met with the senior managers from each department to review their budgets. I also met with the DY School Superintendent regarding FY2023 school budget areas of concern and the Dennis budget calendar. As you know, we will not receive the DY Regional School District assessment number until late January when the Governor releases the Chapter 70 State Aid budget. However, I met with the DY School Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent together with Finance Director MaryAnne Gibbs, and incoming Finance Director Josee Young on November 2, 2021 to develop our plans for this year’s budget building exercises.

In keeping with the budget schedule, the Select Board will review the Budget Message on November 30th and review departmental budgets during the month of December. In January, the Finance Committee will begin their review of the FY2023 Budget.

8. RETIREMENTS

Finance Director MaryAnne Gibbs- Sharing some bittersweet news with the Community. MaryAnne Gibbs of the Dennis Municipal Finance Department, has announced her formal intent to retire. MaryAnne will be with us until the end of November 2021.

MaryAnne has provided leadership for the Finance Department which is comprised of the Accounting, Assessing and Treasurer Collectors divisions within the Town of Dennis and has continuously gone above and beyond. Her finance career spans over 33 years, and our municipality has benefited greatly by MaryAnne's years of public service and dedication to the Town of Dennis in her various roles. MaryAnne defines a true public servant who puts service before self and always has the best interest of the Community in mind. No matter the topic if you were met by MaryAnne on the phone or in person she would assist in ensuring the resident/customer was served. As Town Accountant and Finance Director, MaryAnne has been an instrumental part of the senior leadership team serving Dennis and her presence will be missed. The Finance Department and the Community has been very well served to have MaryAnne continue serving in her capacity as Finance Director over the last month to assist with succession planning.

MaryAnne came to the Town of Dennis in 2000 for a short time and returned to the town in 2003 and has worked as an integral part of our Financial Team for the past 18 years. Prior to Dennis MaryAnne worked for the towns of Oak Bluffs, and Mashpee. Thank you to MaryAnne Gibbs for all her years of service and public servant career! You will be missed greatly.

9. THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY HOURS

All Town office buildings and facilities, including the Dennis Public Library, will be closed on Thursday, November 25, 2021 and Friday, November 26, 2021 in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.

The Dennis Transfer Station will be closed on Monday, November 21st and Tuesday, November 22nd per their winter schedule. They will be open Wednesday, November 23rd from 7am to 4pm. **The Transfer Station will be closed on Thursday, November 25, 2021 and Friday, November 26, 2021.** The Transfer station will reopen on Saturday, November 27th from 8am to 4pm.

The Dennis Highlands Golf Course is open for walking only from 8am to 12pm on Thursday, November 25, 2021. On Friday, November 26, 2021 the Dennis Highlands will resume their regular schedule of 8am to 4pm.

The Jacob Sears Memorial, Dennis Memorial, and West Dennis Libraries will be open on Friday, November 26, 2021 during their regular business hours. Please visit <https://www.town.dennis.ma.us/libraries> for more information.

On Saturday, November 27, 2021, the Dennis Public Library will resume their regular schedule of 10am to 2pm. On Monday, November 29, 2021, the Council on Aging and the Department of Public

Works Offices will resume their regular schedule, and the Dennis Town Offices will resume being open from 8:30am to 4:30pm.

Wishing you and your families a Happy Thanksgiving!!

Respectfully,

Elizabeth C. Sullivan, Town Administrator