



The Town of Barnstable

Comprehensive Financial Advisory Committee (CFAC)

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CFAC Committee:

Chair:

Lillian Woo

Members:

Vice Chair, Hector Guenther
Clerk, Chuck McKenzie
Jacky Johnson
Neil Kleinfeld
Chris Lauzon
Wendy Solomon

Staff Liaison:

Mark Milne

Councilor Liaison:

Paula Schnepf

MEETING MINUTES

10.10.2023

6:00 PM

Zoom Meeting: <https://townofbarnstable-us.zoom.us/j/83205825483>

Meeting ID: 832 0582 5483

Roll Call:

Chair Lillian Woo called the CFAC Zoom meeting to order at 6:03PM

- CFAC Members Present: Lillian Woo, Hector Guenther, Chris Lauzon, Neil Kleinfeld, and Chuck McKenzie
- Roll call and quorum verified by Clerk Chuck M.
- CFAC Members Absent: Jacky Johnson, Wendy Solomon
- Councilors Present: Betty Ludtke
- Staff Present: Director of Finance, Mark Milne
Communications Director, Lynne Poyant
DPW Communications Manager, Kelly Collopy
- Others Present: None

Act on minutes:

No minutes to approve at this time

Public Comment

None

Correspondence

None

Kelly Collopy, Communications Manager DPW

Kelly.collopy@town.barnstable.ma.us (O)508-790-6330 or (C)774-487-5782

Special thanks to Lynne Poyant and her team for the numerous communications tools already created and implemented prior to her arrival. Since that time a deep dive in the improvement of what DPW is putting out in terms of communications. Using all these tools and the Barnstable Water Resources website and taking all the feedback received and using the tools and knowledge in a true customer service fashion on a daily basis either in person, via email or on the phone.

Improvements to the website have been made solely based on the feedback from residents. Taking that information and focusing on the homepage on the most frequently searched topics and a story-telling approach that has been taken towards the redesign.

Resident and taxpayer conversations involve both reactionary and proactive information. This is built from gaining information and knowledge as to where holes are in providing the best communication on the CWMP. Taking conversations that Griffin Beaudoin and the team have had and evolving those relationships by continuing to build on a proactive approach by reaching out to homeowner associations, various other residential associations, and others.

Proactive in sharing the zone areas of impact and speaking with residents and business owners, hoping it becomes more proactive. Using the tools, the communications department has implemented. Documenting all resident communications and providing stats to Town Councilors when requested. Extensive record keeping allows me to document both the types of inquiries and amount of those inquiries. Sewer connection questions are geared to 'where is my property slated in the CWMP project' and 'what my property looks like in terms of costs'. About 80% of the inquiries are related to sewer connection, others encompass detours, road construction issues, etc.

Kelly's training includes public relations, media, advertising and both digital and social marketing.

Website review: barnstablewaterresources.com

The communications budget will allow for a more proactive approach to include advertising and implementing further improvements to the website. Even though the website is promoted across town channels, a strategic promotions and advertising campaign is in process and will include printed mailings, media buying in the local community and other avenues to increase public awareness. The navigation bar on the home page is the focus of the website, it tells the story of the CWMP and includes interactive measures to give an in-depth view of the entire project. Feedback received from residents guided the specific icons to address those questions and concerns. When residents reach out and their focus is identified, we can walk them to and through the site to identify most answers they are looking for and even bring them additional information. FAQ page has recently been redesigned and geared to the questions asked most often.

With the assistance from Lynne's team and our IT department, volume is now being tracked through Google Analytics. Until the full 'kick-off' of the full multi-media advertising campaign takes place, benchmark statistics are still being collected and can then be compared to the new data after that campaign begins and traffic is utilizing the site. The level of resident interest is huge. QR codes and other measures will be implemented for a more interactive experience of gaining information.

A separate Community Currents water resources newsletter had been distributed monthly; it now goes out on an as-needed basis, and one is scheduled to go out later this week to speak about things happening in the

community. Some of those happenings include the posting of the Annual Report, Governor Healy's Tax Relief Bill regarding Title V septic systems. The newsletter was also used as a mechanism for testing feedback on the website redesign. Currently there are over 1,800 subscribers.

Maps identify watersheds and the desired achievements of the CWMP. Watersheds are how water runs through to coastal embayment's. Each page has links to further explore and inform the reader. Additional modules are being built out of the website to expand water supply, water quality, and PFOS. The site is evolving all the time.

Recommendations on innovative alternative systems will be available soon. Additional information brought forward from the Annual Report and the Clean Water report regarding dredging, floating wetlands treatments, pond and lake management reports and plans; all are in the CWMP but not easily accessible. These too will be addressed. As these internal pages continue to build out, the hope is to engage the reader and encourage residents to better understand the project.

Concerns about Avingrid's advertising and how it implies that they are partnering with the Town, and that they are covering extensive costs for the CWMP, it is very misleading and should be addressed. Ensuring that our website does not link directly to Avingrid is also essential. It should be clear that the tax dollars along with state and federal aid are covering the costs of the CWMP.

The goal remains to keep the public updated and informed through each phase. A draft is almost ready to be provided to residents either electronically or via mail. An Executive Summary version giving residents some context regarding where they are in the process will be mailed out to residents. Workshops will be scheduled for in-person connection / communication to residents as well. The volume entails about 100 at a time depending on the project phase. Most feedback is positive especially when context is provided and they begin to understand the increased value to their property, and potentially available funding assistance. Showing them where the information can be found is empowering and manageable for them. If a referendum is ever needed, this information creates a positive understanding.

The Homeowners Sewer Connection Guide (HSCG) is a great resource and provides everything you could possibly want to know on connecting to a sewer. Kelly will check with Attorney Nober and Director Santos to ensure we are providing the information correctly.

There is reference to sewer installers, and concerns about the Town taking the position of recommending installers. The Town can provide access to a list of licensed installers but cannot make a recommendation.

Each page of the website draws the reader into further information that is user-friendly and understandable. Financial support opportunities are linked within the site as well.

The water quality monitoring page offers status updates and links to other sources for further educating and informing the readers. This information covers ponds, lakes, embayment's, and signage at water sites. Our consistency with the 208 plan and our requirements associated with it is clearly stated.

For those that do not know, CFAC has supported the original sewer trust fund from the beginning.

The website speaks, educates, and informs the reader on water, not just sewer. It is meant to be a place to find your answers. The app is an additional valuable resource.

Discussion - Promoting CFAC Financial Overview Report – Lynne Poyant, Communications Director

Special thanks to Neil for the preparation of an outline of information on CFAC's FY24 report. The report can now be found on the Town's homepage and will also be available through E-News this week and all social channels. E-news will be mentioned in the intro and have a link within the newsletter directly to the report. We are currently figuring out how to word it in the App which may be ready by next week. We do need a contact to include in the Press Release. Included in the annual census mailing will be a flyer advising residents about the app and the report. Placements for the report around town are public libraries, post offices, and could even be the public information booth at Town hall; libraries have an inter-library distribution system which could assist in getting the report out to all libraries.

All assistance that the Communications department can do to assist in getting the report out to as many as possible through the free channels available, newsletters, Thrive, etc. will be done.

To date, the questionnaire link has not been utilized, CFAC is hoping to obtain the tracking of both distribution and PDF downloads would be of value to residents and the public. Google analytics has just been updated, but there is no information available right now.

The report will run in ENews, which has a subscriber count of 6,000, for a few weeks, and questions can be included in both the Newsletter and Facebook.

Citizens have a right, and should know where the money is coming from, where it goes and why. It is a positive way to engage people by making it real and relevant. The information can be intense, and how Mark makes his presentations very easy to understand.

While viewership cannot be tracked from those who access the information by the Government Access Channel, but those who stream through video-on-demand or YouTube can be tracked. Obtaining the demographic information in tracking does not appear to be possible currently. Data comes in from IP address and what we do know is that banks, other towns, realtors, year-round and seasonal residents, and state government addresses are identified, and that information is available because of out-of-office notifications when the newsletter is sent out. Lynne will check with our Webmaster and inquire if extracting information from the IP address is possible.

Audiences are different, and the ability to alter a presentation for those audiences is challenging and may take away from the purpose of the report.

Correspondence

Hector: Received an anonymous correspondence from a Centerville resident regarding water quality; the content is detailed and references Griffin Beaudoin's presentation. Unable to respond to an anonymous complaint, Mark does advise sharing this with Griffin; and once communication with this person takes place he will forward.

Lillian: Future agenda items on CFAC should include presentations on water quality.

Neil: Water quality data / nitrogen loading from the Cape Cod Commission is quantitative and should be tracked over time and would help sort things out; the way sewer installations are laid out.

Mark:

The next Town Council meeting will be joint with the School Committee to review the financial condition of the Town to create a coordinated budget. There will be a comprehensive financial overview.

The next school enrollment count is due to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education by October 1st; those numbers are needed for Ch 70 funding will likely be announced in January as part of the Governor's proposal.

CFAC focus for the next budget cycle could be a review of the Capital Trust Fund (CTF) and what our projected funding capacity is for our capital program. Both the CTF and CWMP will be part of the joint Town Council meeting. Those will also be reviewed with CFAC on 10/23.

Next CFAC meeting will be held on 10/23/2023.

Lillian and Hector will be unavailable, Chuck will chair the meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Hector second by Chris

Roll to adjourn Lillian, Hector, Chris, and Chuck

Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm

Respectfully submitted.

Theresa M. Santos

Attachments:

APPROVED