



# The Town of Barnstable

## Comprehensive Financial Advisory Committee (CFAC)

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### CFAC Committee:

#### Chair:

Hector Guenther

#### Members:

Vice Chair, Chuck McKenzie  
Clerk, Chris Lauzon  
Tom Keane  
Chris King  
Jeremy Shea  
James Sproul  
Lillian Woo

#### Staff Liaison:

Mark Milne

#### Councilor Liaison:

Betty Ludtke

### MEETING MINUTES

## Comprehensive Financial Advisory Committee

03.24.2025

6:00 PM

**Join Zoom Meeting:** <https://townofbarnstable-us.zoom.us/j/85773707526>  
**PHONE:** 877-853-5257, Meeting ID: 857 7370 7526

#### Roll Call:

Chair Guenther called the CFAC Zoom meeting to order at 6:00pm

- CFAC Members Present: Hector Guenther, Lillian Woo, Jim Sproul, Tom Keane, Jeremy Shea, Chris King and Chris Lauzon
- Roll call and quorum verified by Chris Lauzon
- CFAC Members Absent: Chuck McKenzie,
- Councilors Present: Betty Ludtke, Kris Clark
- Staff Present: Mark Milne-Finance Director, Sara Ahern-Superintendent Barnstable Public Schools (BPS), Chris Dwelley- Deputy Director of Finance for BPS
- Others Present: None

Motion to approve the minutes of March 10, 2025, made by Tom, seconded by Jim

Roll call vote by Chris L.: Hector-yes, Lillian–abstain, Jim-yes, Tom-yes, Jeremy-yes, Chris K.-yes, and Chris L.-yes

Minutes approved as submitted

### Proposed FY 2026 School Department Operating Budget

Review of recommended budget provided by Sara Ahern and Chris Dwelley

- The School Committee (SC) will be voting on the adoption of the proposed budget on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, it is the same that was presented at the SC's budget hearing. Public hearing was held on March 19<sup>th</sup> after a few presentations and workshops to the SC. Once approved the proposed budget will be submitted to the Town Manager.
- Development of the budget was difficult given the many challenges facing school districts statewide. BPS is not facing a shortfall for FY26.
- Challenges in the development of the budget include the expiration of ESSER funding, escalation expenses, Ch 70 fundings cap is below the actual inflation rate, decreased enrollment, reimbursements of Circuit Breaker not fully funded, and the local revenue having not increased sufficiently to make up the difference. Student Opportunity Act legislation funding has decreased as well.
- Priorities are to present a balanced budget, maintaining the goals of the District Improvement Plan, maintenance and operating costs of facilities, diverse student needs, maintaining efficient and effective systems. The current situation is not sustainable.
- Priorities for sites and departments include staffing, technology, curriculum, English Language Learner (ELL) support, and requests from sites.
- Challenges faced show increased costs which are to be covered out of savings.
- Budget assumptions identify the changes within the three (3) revolving fund sources, increased costs from the health care split contributions which are paid out of grants causing shifts in the operating budget.
- Proposed funding sources and recommended investments reviewed.
- Maintaining reasonable class sizes to address the diverse student needs and staying competitive with school choice while still operating in a fiscally responsible way.
- A 5% increase is estimated for this budget due to supply costs and operating contract services. Savings are being used for some proposed projects. Conversations with the potential reduction in services are beginning.
- Budget neutral offsets review included reallocation of staffing changes as needed. That review included mitigation strategies, class sizes, caseloads; ESSER review and reduction in services, and deeper cuts.
- One-time expenses include three (3) specific items to be paid out of savings.
  - \* First: mold prevention and environmental health specialist
  - \* Second: teach town curriculum
  - \* Third: new mathematics curriculum for K-5
- Recommended budget – broken down by cost center
- Recommended budget – DESSE function
- The SC will vote on the proposed budget on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, it will then be submitted to the Town Manager on April 7<sup>th</sup>, be presented at the Town Council on June 6<sup>th</sup> for a first reading and lastly have the Public Hearings at Town Council on June 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Request was made to show an alternate budget if the math curriculum was funded through savings, and if the cybersecurity keyfobs were to be funded through the operating budget.

## Discussion:

- There are no potential impacts to BPS expected from changes in the DOE at the federal level.
- There could be some risk around Title I, II and III funding, but that is still unknown at this time.
- Members and Councilors agree that the proposed budget addresses all factors as fiscally responsibly as possible while maintain the highest standards for our students, staff and facilities.
- Background provided on the Community Mentor Program and how members of the community work with young people to solve problems before things happen resulting in increased attendance and retention rates. Members of this program presented to the SC highlighting the involvement and successes experienced, especially where students involved are not becoming mentors to younger students. Mentor programs are critical and important at the high school level.
- While the FY26 budget is relying on savings, it is not the goal to rely on savings for the FY27 budget which will see and need to work to address a potential \$1.2m gap, and the FY28 budget will be addressing a larger gap, and the renewing of the bus transportation contract as it will be expiring.
- Appreciation given to the challenges faced with the budget, the proposed budget makes sense and is created and supported by data.
- Town / School funding splits in other communities were touched on, but the difficulty in comparing ELL and ED students to other Cape towns may show the burden that Barnstable carries to address these needs.
- The amount of staffing changes; increased funding for staffing during COVID, and the work put in place to address the need for reallocation of staffing with the loss of those funds.
- Fee changes are being reviewed by the SC (bus / second lunches / athletic / sports / etc.)
- Short- and long-term expectations around the new mathematics curriculum.
- ELL Parent Advisory Committee (ELL PAC) has been running for about three (3) years now; it is run by parents and is a great community organization to assist parents becoming more knowledgeable about curriculum and learning in general for parental engagement. Literacy curriculum provides great support materials for parent engagement. Family liaisons are also available creating a welcoming atmosphere.
- Sara's presentation will be provided to Mark who will then share it with members.

## Approval of Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Subcommittee Report

Review provided by Jim Sproul

- The CIP subcommittee meetings held benefited from the shared drive access for review and comments during the development process and creation of the report.
- The main purpose was to review the overall CIP recommendations presented by the Town Manager with a focus on the General Fund, Schools and the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP), and those funding sources.
- Departmental collaboration is crucial
- Preservation and maintenance of all Town assets benefit residents, businesses and visitors. These assets include but are not limited to bridges, docks, marinas, and aging water and buildings infrastructure.
- The subcommittee highlighted the key takeaways within the report.
  - \* TOB has continued to strive for exceptional fiscal management and strategic planning
  - \* Extensive time spent on the 10-year history and tracking of expenditures; looking at submissions over a 10-year history and what was appropriated to potentially measure unfunded liabilities.
  - \* Importance of the CWMP

- \* Protecting the town's infrastructure through General Fund projects
- \* School CIP planning efforts; new construction vs. building repairs and improvements. A potential conversation with the Town Council regarding how to better support the schools, centralized building supervisors and who would oversee the many necessary projects, and management in a more cost-effective manner. Enrollment and maintaining competitiveness. Community readiness, fiscal strain and the need for structural reform.
- Addressing the challenges of funding future school facility needs and the CWMP.
- Data has been verified by Mark and finance staff, and the CIP subcommittee recommends approval of the FY26-FY30 CIP report so that it can be brought forward to the Town manager, followed by presentation to the Town Council
- Mark will present the Capital Plan for first reading at the 4/3 Town Council meeting in advance of the public hearings which will begin on April 17<sup>th</sup>. The goal is to have CFAC present the report to the TC right after Mark's presentation. Mark will try to set up a meeting with the TM to review the report prior to the TC meeting on April 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Members share their appreciation to Mark, all Finance staff and Department Heads, for their extensive efforts and assistance.

Motion to approve the CIP Subcommittee report by Tom, seconded by Lillian

Roll call vote by Chris L.: Hector-yes, Lillian-yes, Jim-yes, Tom-yes, Jeremy-yes, Chirs K.-yes, and Chris L.-yes  
Report approved

Correspondence from Committee Members: None

Communications from Staff: None

Matters not reasonably anticipated by the Chair: None

Closing public comment: None

The next CFAC meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2025

Motion duly made by Lillian, seconded by Tom to adjourn

Roll Call vote by Chris L: Hector-yes, Lillian-yes, Jim-yes, Tom-yes, Jeremy-yes Chris K.-yes, and Chris L.-yes  
Meeting adjourned at 7:39pm

Respectfully submitted  
Theresa M. Santos



2025.03.10 Minutes  
CFAC Draft.pdf



Budget Hearing  
Presentation for CFA



FY26-30\_CFAC\_CIP\_  
Presentation\_032425

Attachments: