



The Town of Barnstable

Comprehensive Financial Advisory Committee (CFAC)
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CFAC Committee:

Chair:
Lillian Woo

Members:
Clerk, Hector Guenther
John Schoenherr
Ralph Krau
Joseph Mladinich
Melanie Powers
Tracey Brochu

Staff Liaison:
Mark Milne
Nathan Empey

Councilor Liaison:
Paula Schnepf

MEETING MINUTES

09.23.19

6:00 PM

Procurement Conference Room

Roll Call:

- CFAC Members Present: Hector Guenther, Lillian Woo, Melanie Powers, Joseph Mladinich, and John Schoenherr
- CFAC Members Absent: Ralph Krau, and Tracey Brochu
- Councilors Present: None
- Staff Present: Mark Milne, Finance Director, Rob Steen, Assistant Director of Public Works, and Nathan Empey, Budget Analyst
- Other Present: None

Call to Order:

Lillian Woo called the CFAC meeting to order at 6:00 PM in the Procurement Conference Room at Town Hall.

Act on Minutes:

The following minutes were approved by unanimous vote:

09.09.19

Comments:

Old Business:

Lillian W. noted that Bob Ciolek, Vice Chairperson on the committee has resigned, and therefore, it was proposed that the committee table Bob's Barnstable Funding Principles documents. Hector G. asked do we still have a choice to endorse this document? Lillian W. responded this document had already been submitted by Bob C. to certain leadership personnel.

The committee voted unanimously to table the document.

New Business:

Rob Steen, Assistant Director of Public Works presented the latest version of the Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan. Rob S. noted the general focus of the plan is wastewater and how it is affecting us. The plan seeks to address regulatory requirements, changes made to flood zones, failing septic systems, and opportunities for needed economic development. Rob S. noted this comprehensive plan stems from the Barnstable County 208 Plan that focuses on nitrogen management. This is a controllable source from septic systems, and that algae growth is limited without nitrogen. Excessive levels of algae growth can cause bacteria blooms that consume oxygen, which negatively affects ecosystems.

Rob S. noted nitrogen is not the only concern in Barnstable. There are other contaminants such as PFOS and PFOA (PFOS and PFOA are manmade chemicals that contaminate drinking water supplies). Rob S. noted that two decades ago UMASS Dartmouth and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) established an estuaries program to model a Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) for town watersheds. Rob S. noted the town is trying to get these watersheds below the TMDL limits. A watershed is defined as an area that separates water flowing into estuary systems such rivers, basins, and seas. Rob S. noted that in some cases the comprehensive plan requires reducing 60% of existing nitrogen in a watershed area and 100% of future nitrogen.

Rob S. noted the plan seeks to identify where traditional methods such as Title V septic systems can be used and where other traditional methods are required. The focus of the plan will address sanitary needs, aesthetics, and protecting groundwater. The plan needs to holistically look at how much wastewater do we need to treat and how do we treat it. Rob S. noted this plan is constantly changing, and that it has been changed to a 30-year plan from a 60-year plan. This plan will also continuously change as technology and our understanding advances.

Rob S. noted the Wastewater Resource Advisory Committee (WRAC) was established to identify the different needs of the town using a Geographic Information System (GIS) tool. The current plan is being done through numerous phases over 30 years using traditional and non-traditional solutions. Non-traditional solutions include such things as dredging, cranberry bog conversions, and aquaculture. The first phase will include non-traditional solutions that can be monitored and measured to present to DEP. Rob S. noted these non-traditional solutions would provide synergies and learning opportunities. Rob S. noted it is estimated that the first phase would remove 44% of the nitrogen. The cost of the plan using broad factors is estimated to costs between \$600 to \$700 million. This does not include Joint Base Cape Cod or non-traditional solutions. Rob S. noted that once the plan is approved by Town Council, it will be presented to the Cape Cod Commission as well as DEP for final approval. Melanie P. asked are we in phase 1? Rob S. responded as soon as the plan is approved, but some projects are underway.

Rob S. noted there are several non-traditional solutions being conducted in the Three Bays. Sampson's Island dredging project would open up the bay for water flow. Melanie P. asked from the finance perspective is this included in phase 1? Rob S. responded the first phase of this project was financed through a grant. Rob S. noted Mill Pond dredging project would bring the pond back to normalization. A normal pond can remove up to 50% of nitrogen. Existing nitrogen removal at Mill Pond has been 10%. Hector G. asked where does the material go? Rob S. responded that it could use it as topsoil at the Solid Waste Facility, or added into a wetland system. Rob S. noted a coalition group is looking into the viability of converting cranberry bogs into ponds or wetlands to help reduce nitrogen. Warren's Cove would be dredged out and used as a nursery for the aquaculture industry. Permeable Reactive Barrier (PRB) acts as a filter barrier between where the water is coming from and where it is going. Melanie P. asked is this technology being developed? Rob S. responded Europeans have been using this technology for decades. Rob S. noted a horse produces

waste equivalent to roughly 20 people a day, and the local rivers can experience nitrogen levels six times higher during rain events. Rob S. noted PRB technology could be used as a surrounding filter barrier for horse farms. Rob S. noted we could also make our existing septic systems better by using tight tank and layer cake technology. John S. asked what about denitrification septic systems? Rob S. responded these systems require many bells and whistles, and that the concern would be monitoring homeowners to manage the systems properly. Rob S. noted a traditional system includes piping (Wastewater Facility Process) that brings the nitrogen to the wastewater facility.

Rob S. noted collaborative opportunities exist with these projects. The Vineyard Wind's collaborative project could save the town \$3 million by doing both projects together. In addition, the Joint Based Cape Cod (JBCC) has its own wastewater facility with an effluent disposal location. The town could leverage this opportunity for the Cotuit area projects, since it may be closer than sending wastewater back to our facility.

Rob S. noted the Mastons Mills Treatment Facility is past its useful life. The question will be what's it going to cost to upgrade this facility or convert it into a pump station.

Hector G. asked is Town Council looking at the draft plan? Rob S. responded Town Council has to endorse the plan before sending it to DEP. Hector G. asked does this include the financial plan? Mark M. responded the financial plan should be ready for October 3 Town Council hearing. Lillian W. asked does this include a proposal with JBCC? Rob S. responded the question would be what the most cost effective way is, but we have options. Mark M. noted the financial plan would need to provide flexibility. Rob S. noted the wastewater plan process has been the best process because of weekly meetings with leadership that really ties everyone in. It's been a very dynamic process that's always changing. Mark M. noted this wastewater plan would probably need to be reviewed 3 or 4 times a year. Lillian W. asked would the working group continue to meet? Rob S. responded yes, and that this process has branched off to other initiatives such as Affordable Housing.

John S. asked does the plan include storm water? Rob S. responded no, and that the MS4 program handles the town wide storm water issues.

John S. asked would this plan include continuous monitoring of nitrogen levels? Rob S. responded yes. John S. asked how quickly could we monitor the impact? Rob S. responded it would be a long time because of the time it takes water to travel.

Hector G. asked does this plan include drinking water? Rob S. noted we're dealing with drinking water issues separately, and that a \$20 million project at the Maher Wells would be treating the contaminant issues there. Lillian W. asked is this project being subsidized by the state? Mark M. noted we just got a principal subsidy loan.

Melanie P. asked whether wastewater and drinking water have the same plan? Rob S. responded wastewater plan would be sent to DEP, and that drinking water is its own plan, but same people are working on both plans.

John S. asked how much of the wastewater plan goes towards the wastewater facility? Rob S. responded about 30% of the cost is facility and 70% collection systems. John S. asked what about the maintenance of the system? Rob S. noted we have about 50 miles of piping, and that personnel needs would go up with more piping.

John S. asked do you have a time frame or schedule in place for the Vineyard Wind collaborative project? Rob S. responded to be discussed, but 2020 to start and completed by 2022. John S. asked when will abutters start being charged? Mark M. noted we're dealing with that right now, and that various options exist such as assessments, debt exclusion overrides or property tax overrides. Mark M. noted the challenge would be finding a comfort zone, but there's a lot of unknowns, including the new Cape Cod Trust Fund and how much principal subsidies we could receive in the future. Mark M. noted the Vineyard pipe project addresses 1,600 properties, but only 250 would initially tie in, so what do we do with the cost? The remaining properties assessment would not be collected for years. Those costs would be on the town's books and require a lot of tracking data to recoup those costs on a later date, but if we decide not to allocate assessments, we'll never generate any revenue.

Rob S. noted this plan would inject \$600 million into the local economy, it'll be hard to predict the benefit from economic stimulus, but there is going to be some residual.

Mark M. noted Rob S. would be giving another presentation on Thursday.

Lillian W. asked would the financial plan be ready before our next meeting? Mark M. responded he thinks so. Mark M. noted Town Council has three more meetings before the November 3rd Council reelections. The plan should be submitted by October 30th before Town Council leadership changes.

Matters not reasonably anticipated by the chair:

None

Discussion of topics for the next meeting:

The committee will vote a new Vice Chairperson as well as Mark M. would provide a review of the financial plan.

Adjournment:

Next meeting is October 15th at 6pm

List of documents handed out

1. 09.09.19 minutes
2. Board and Town Departments - Nutrient Management Plan