

The Facilities Subcommittee met on Monday, June 15, 2026, in a Virtual Zoom Meeting. Present were Jennifer Cullum, Andre King, Sara Ahern, Doug Boulanger, Chris Dwelley, and Jen Kruczek.

Ms. Cullum called the meeting to order at 4:32PM.

Approve Meeting Minutes

- Motion by Mr. King, seconded by Dr. Ahern, and the Committee voted, unanimously, to approve the Meeting Minutes of May 18, 2026.

Financial Update of the Barnstable School District

- Mr. Dwelley gave an overview of the current financial position of the district to see what the best path forward was. He showed the operating budget with a four year projection. In FY'28, there will be a deficit of just under \$3 million and by FY'31 there will be a \$5.5 million deficit. The district is in a difficult position and needs a revenue source or will need to make cuts. He used a 3% increase each year for each budget and a 3% union salary increase as placeholders. There will be a new transportation contract next year and districts have been looking at an increase of 10% in the first year and then 3% increases for the following years. Starting July 1, the savings account will be just under \$10 million. If we were to use savings to close the budget gap each year, we can make it to FY'31. He spoke about the capital outlook for FY'28, FY'29, and FY'30. The Town's limit is \$15 million for the entire town of Barnstable. Schools have capital needs that are beyond the funding of the Town.
- Mr. Dwelley stated if the district is accepted into the MSBA's Accelerated Repair Projects for the roofs, his guess for the cost is \$8-12 million. The Town will have to go out for a debt exclusion.
- Mr. Dwelley stated the Town Council wants the School Committee to communicate their needs to them. CFAC made a list of financial options including re-evaluating the 60/40 split. The Town needs revenue for capital, schools, and the sewer project. He questioned whether there will need to be a debt exclusion for each.
- Ms. Cullum stated the Town Council is right; the Schools need to ask for what the Schools need. She asked if CFAC highlighted changing the 60/40 split. Mr. Dwelley said yes.
- Ms. Cullum stated the Schools should lead the conversation to increase the 60/40 split in the Schools favor. This is a scary financial forecast.
- Mr. Dwelley stated the split automatically happening is a great structure. Other Towns fight over the School's operating budget.
- Ms. Cullum stated she liked the idea of hammering out what the Schools need and then looking at the 60/40 split. The School budget is much more detailed than the Town's budget.
- Dr. Ahern asked Ms. Bent and she is supportive of a Workshop this summer to dive into the financial situation. She said given the districts per pupil spending, they do not have any room to cut.
- Ms. Cullum stated at this proposed Workshop, she does not want to talk about it in a vacuum. There needs to be representation from the Town at the Workshop.
- Dr. Ahern wanted to talk with Mark Ells and have Mr. Dwelley speak to Mark Milne to see what the best way to go about it would be.
- Mr. Dwelley proposed the following due to the debt exclusion for sewer. 1. Temporary adjustment to 60-40 split. 2. Move forward with debt exclusion on sewer and there will be relief with the operating budget in the future. 3. Debt exclusion for any MSBA projects.
- Ms. Cullum stated the research that Dr. Ahern, Mr. Dwelley, and Mr. Boulanger have done for the school's maintenance and potential renovations can be used at the Workshop.
- Mr. King asked about what mitigation strategies the School has been using to increase revenue. Dr. Ahern stated Mr. Dwelley investigated costs that were being charged to the operating budget and had them charged to revolving budgets. The district is maximizing reimbursements when possible. For example, the Medicaid reimbursement from the government was at \$300,000 and went up to \$700,000. At the last School Committee meeting, the Committee voted for the McKinney Vento reimbursement.
- Mr. King was encouraged by CFAC and the 60-40 split potentially changing. The School Committee should meet about the financial situation. A new building is getting shot down at the School Committee level. The Town does not have the full picture and he thinks they need to have more information.

Financing Cost Models for a New Building, Renovations, and Ongoing Maintenance

- Mr. Dwelley spoke about the potential consolidation of HyWest and BCIS. A new building just under 100,000 square feet at \$935 per square foot would cost \$87 million. With the MSBA reimbursement, this would cost the district \$43.6 million. Looking at Centerville, it would cost \$12 million to repair the building and a new building would cost \$31 million after the MSBA reimbursement.
- Ms. Cullum stated staff savings were not included. She stated there is also the matter of what to do with the parcels of land the schools are currently on. She asked why other school districts are building new schools and how they are affording it.
- Mr. Dwelley stated the Towns are going for overrides in the community.
- Ms. Cullum stated Barnstable needs to follow that model. There is value in school pride and in new systems.
- Mr. King stated this information is not visible in the community. BCIS looks modern like the facilities around it, but it is not.
- Ms. Cullum would like to focus more on what a new school would save the district with new systems and warranties. The current spaces are not meeting the moment for the students in these schools. The value is more than just the numbers.
- Dr. Ahern stated the district has the portables to address some of the space needs at HyWest and BCIS. There are still some space issues. Ceiling tiles are falling, hot water heaters are breaking, etc. Daily operations are being impacted.
- Ms. Cullum asked since student enrollment has dropped, should Barnstable consider closing a school.
- Dr. Ahern stated the district is not there. There is space in grades 6-12. The MSBA would be interested in exploring consolidating schools.
- Ms. Cullum stated for the Workshop, there is a bigger reality. There are things beyond just the hard numbers. She asked if Dr. Ahern could speak to the Superintendents in the towns building new schools to see what they are doing.
- Mr. King stated the Town meeting format might have something to do with it. The whole Town is at the meeting unlike Barnstable's Town Council meetings.

Discussion/Next Steps

- Dr. Ahern stated the next step is to have this conversation with the entire School Committee. Chair Kathy Bent is on board with the Workshop. The School Committee needs to express the needs of the School to the Town.
- Ms. Cullum stated she wanted to ask someone from Yarmouth how it benefitted them to have a new school in intangibles and not just the numbers.
- Mr. Dwelley suggested someone like Mark Forest. He asked Ms. Cullum if she knew him. Ms. Cullum stated she does.
- Dr. Ahern stated she would reach out to former D-Y Superintendent Carol Woodbury.
- Ms. Cullum suggested for the Workshop to put a note on the presentation of what is included and what is not included. All the techniques that the district has done to save money should be listed. For the 60/40 split conversation, she asked what the School Committee should say.
- Dr. Ahern stated a town to connect with would be Martha's Vineyard for elementary projects.
- The next Facilities Subcommittee meeting will be on July 27 at 9:00AM.

Motion by Mr. King, seconded by Dr. Ahern, and the Subcommittee voted to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:47pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jen Kruczek
Executive Assistant