

**COTUIT FIRE DISTRICT
PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
In Person at Freedom Hall and Via Zoom
COTUIT, MA 02635
November 17, 2025**

The meeting was called to order by Mark Lynch on November 17, 2025, @ 6:15pm.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Chair Lynch led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Lynch did roll call:

Present: Chairman Mark Lynch, Prudential Committee Members John Havel and Seth Burdick (late arrival)

Also present: (In Person) Assistant Treasurer Ryan Ouellette, Clerk Charlie Eager and Treasurer Ray Pirrone (via Zoom).

Public Comment:

Lally Lloyd asked for an update on the two committees for which she recently made appointments. She noted that the Policy Advisory Committee has been convened but the Bylaws Committee has not yet scheduled its first meeting, despite Commissioner Burdick previously indicating he would set a date by the end of October. She requested that the Bylaws Committee be convened as soon as possible.

Carol Zais, 86 Putnam Ave, speaking for the Cotuit Civic Association, proposed that the Civic Association lead early community engagement—meetings and surveys—to gather input on the “return to nature” plan for the Cotuit School property, noting past designs lacked broad public involvement. She asked whether the Committee supported this and who should present the existing concepts. Chair Lynch responded that a project status update and a formal presentation—likely by ICON—should come first to give the public a clear starting point, emphasizing the need to keep the project on schedule for spring. After that presentation, the Committee could consider additional community input. Ms. Zais agreed and added that the Wampanoag Tribe should be included for their expertise in ecological restoration.

Patty Daly, urged the Committee that if they hold an informational meeting with ICON or any consultant, it should be a facilitated discussion, not just a presentation of options. She noted that the facilitated format used for the Memorial Park meeting was far more productive and encouraged the same approach for the school property discussion.

Meeting Minutes Approval:

MOTION: To approve the October 27, 2025, Prudential Committee Meeting Minutes.

Motion made by: Mark Lynch Seconded by: John Havel

Motion passed unanimously. (Mark Lynch, and John Havel)

MOTION: To approve the October 27, 2025, Prudential Committee Executive Meeting Minutes.

Motion made by: Mark Lynch Seconded by: John Havel

Motion passed unanimously. (Mark Lynch, and John Havel)

Chair Lynch did remind Assistant Treasurer Ouelette that the Executive Meeting minutes are not being published right away.

MOTION: To approve the October 20, 2025, Prudential Committee Meeting Minutes.

Motion made by: Mark Lynch Seconded by: John Havel

Motion passed unanimously. (Mark Lynch, and John Havel)

MOTION: To approve the October 20, 2025, Prudential Committee Executive Meeting Minutes.

Motion made by: Mark Lynch Seconded by: John Havel

Motion passed unanimously. (Mark Lynch, and John Havel)

MOTION: To approve the November 5, 2025, Prudential Committee Executive Meeting Minutes.

Motion made by: Mark Lynch Seconded by: John Havel

Motion passed unanimously. (Mark Lynch, and John Havel)

Treasurer's Report:

Revenues through October are strong: tax collections are slightly above target, ambulance collections are high, and year-over-year revenues are up across tax, water, and fire. Spending is at or below budget, creating a surplus, and the Treasurer plans to begin placing more funds in 30-day T-bills.

The \$12.1 million note goes on sale the next day, with the interest rate expected by Wednesday. The Committee must meet before the end of November to vote to accept the bid, with funding expected December 5. Bond-counsel documents should arrive by week's end, and meeting notices must follow the 48-hour rule. Secure Networks will review the former assistant treasurer's computer, and the Committee will receive mid-week updates on the rate, documents, and scheduling.

Cotuit School Building Demolition and Site Remediation Status:

The Committee received five proposals for the required Owner's Project Manager (OPM) role and interviewed the top three firms. They selected Leftfield for negotiations, and the draft contract—reviewed by counsel—was deemed acceptable with minor corrections. One insurance clause mistakenly named the Town instead of the Cotuit Fire District/Prudential Committee; two similar sections will be corrected. The Committee moved to proceed with the contract pending these edits.

MOTION: To approve the contract with the OPM, Leftfield, in the form submitted to Mr. Havel and Mr. Burdick, subject to the caveat about additional subject insurer language.

Motion made by: Mark Lynch Seconded by: Seth Burdick

Motion passed unanimously. (Mark Lynch, Seth Burdick and John Havel)

**Additional Note*: The OPM contract with Leftfield totals \$52,000, which aligns with roughly 3.5% of the construction cost estimated in the ICON feasibility study, matching the expected range for this service.*

Cotuit School Property Conservation Easement:

The Chair again raised the idea of placing a conservation easement on the Cotuit School property once it is returned to nature, similar to the Town of Barnstable's model. Before proceeding, the Committee needs to confirm whether the town's own easement has been fully approved and filed with the state. They plan to contact conservation experts to verify that status and to discuss next steps, since the Fire District would ultimately hold any such restriction.

CFD Website Status:

The Fire District's outdated 2016–2017 WordPress site is being rebuilt on WP Engine with a modern, maintainable structure. A development version is live, with link fixes underway. The new site features clearer navigation, updated department pages, improved news and meeting sections, and a searchable archive. Meetings will now be posted through WordPress posts so agendas, links, and PDFs auto-populate. Old files are being reorganized, and upgrades include better document storage, an Outlook-based shared calendar, and streamlined bill-payment access. Core systems are in place, with remaining work focused on cleanup and final refinements.

Sick Day Carryover Status:

The Committee revisited the unresolved Water Department sick-day carryover issue, noting the handbook's payout policy may never have been formally approved and that no funding mechanism exists for a future payout. Water Commissioner David Churbuck said the Board has drafted a memo and received legal guidance indicating low risk, allowing payouts in the next fiscal year and recommending clearer policy language. The memo and opinion will be sent this week, and the Water Commissioners propose a joint meeting to finalize a solution.

Public Comment:

Patty Daly, asked whether a conservation restriction on Fire District property could be approved by the Prudential Committee alone or would require a District vote. The Committee said they are unsure and will research it. If the restriction counts as a property disposition, it would likely need approval at a District Meeting—possibly by a two-thirds vote.

Carol Zais questioned hiring an architect before gathering community input, noting the ICON plans already exist. Chair Lynch said timing is the priority and that feedback is easier once a concrete plan is presented. She asked whether the ICON recommendations tied to the \$470,000 budget would still guide the project and urged a facilitated public process, including Wampanoag input. Mr. Burdick said the District should keep its work minimal—demolish, seed, stabilize—until the Town's plans for the adjacent land are known.

Chris Rubello agreed with Ms. Zais, stressing that community feedback should be gathered early. He noted that Memorial Park became a problem specifically because architects presented plans before

hearing from residents, and he urged the Committee to avoid repeating that mistake to prevent future frustration.

Lally Lloyd reported illegal dumping at the Cotuit School property and asked that it be cleaned up. She also noted the site will require some ongoing maintenance. Commissioners agreed but said the extent of future upkeep depends on the final design and on whatever the Town plans for the adjacent land, making long-term needs uncertain for now.

Lally Lloyd reminded Commissioner Burdick that the Bylaws Committee cannot meet until he formally convenes its first meeting. She noted the committee is waiting on him to schedule that initial session; once he convenes it, the members can elect their own chair and proceed independently, but they cannot begin any work until he takes that first step.

Matters not reasonably anticipated by the Chair:

Streetlights

Streetlight issues will now be directed to Mr. Oullette, who will notify the District's contracted vendor once he receives the locations. The Committee also discussed whether a broader review of streetlight placement and maintenance is needed and noted that many roads are private. Mr. Ouellette will check the contract to confirm required inspection frequency.

MOTION: To move that the Prudential Committee go into Executive Session to discuss negotiations relating to hiring an architectural firm relating to the site remediation of the Cotuit School.

Motion made by: Mark Lynch Seconded by: Seth Burdick

Motion passed unanimously. (Mark Lynch, Seth Burdick, and John Havel)

Respectfully submitted,

Gina Gonsalves

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