

**COTUIT FIRE DISTRICT
PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
In Person and via ZOOM at Freedom Hall
COTUIT, MA 02635
February 19, 2026**

The meeting was called to order by Mark Lynch at 6:00 pm on February 19, 2026.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Lynch led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Lynch did roll call:

(In Person): Mark Lynch, John Havel, Clerk Charlie Eager, Treasurer Ray Pirrone and Assistant Treasurer Ryan Ouellette

(Absent): Seth Burdick

Public Comment:

Mark Robinson, Chair of the Board of Water Commissioners, raised ongoing payroll issues, noting that for the third consecutive year Water Department employees have received late or incorrect W-2s from Paychex. The issue has previously been brought to the Prudential Committee and Treasurer, and the Water Commissioners have recommended changing providers. He emphasized that reliable payroll is critical to staff morale and retention.

Mark Lynch stated the District intends to move on from Paychex, but W-2 corrections must first be completed. Ray Pirrone added that the transition is being targeted for June 30, at the end of a fiscal quarter. A portion of Mr. Robinson's comments was not captured on the recording.

Meeting Minutes Approval:

Not discussed due to technical difficulties.

Cotuit School Building Demolition Status Update

- **Review of Demolition and Landscape Construction Documents**
- **Presentation by ICON Architecture and Tighe and Bond, Landscape Architects**

The Chair introduced representatives from ICON Architecture and Tighe & Bond to present the 50% construction drawings for the site restoration following demolition of the former elementary school. The plans are preliminary and intended to solicit public input.

Paul Domenico, Senior Project Manager with ICON, reviewed the feasibility study process that led to the Village's vote to demolish the building and restore the site to a natural condition. He outlined existing site conditions before turning the presentation over to Eric Doremus, Civil Engineer, and Joe Ficicello, Landscape Architect with Halvorson at Tighe & Bond.

Mr. Ficicello presented the proposed restoration framework:

Slide 1 – Overview

Overview of the restoration concept to return the site to a naturalized landscape.

Slide 2 – Site Plan

Removal of most Old Oyster Road drives (retaining well access), reseeding to "heal" disturbed areas, restoration of the building footprint with fescue, and native shrubs feathered along the woodland edge.

Slide 3 – Planting Strategy

Canopy trees and a central “kidney-shaped” planting area for habitat and pollinators. Seeded areas would be mowed annually or biannually to support natural succession.

Slide 4 – Plantings

Native, low-maintenance shrubs including sumac, red twig dogwood, winterberry, bayberry, and sweet fern.

Slide 5 – Tree Species

Native trees such as white pine, oak varieties, and red maple planted throughout the site and along former drive corridors.

Mr. Ficicello stated the goal is to create a long-term framework for natural regeneration. Plans remain preliminary; detailed specifications will follow, the property line will be delineated with naturalized boulders, and all plantings are native.

Public Comment

Patty Daly asked about phytoremediation near the drinking water well; Mr. Doremus stated the site is not contaminated and grading will address runoff. She also supported limited recreational uses and additional design options.

Chris Rubello asked about parking access; the Chair confirmed no vehicular access from Old Oyster Road. She also supported engagement with the Native Land Conservancy and the Wampanoag Tribe, and maintaining pedestrian/bike access.

Carol Zais asked how “native” species were defined and about the purpose of the boulders; the team confirmed plants are native to Cape Cod and the boulders will delineate and discourage parking. She suggested collaboration with the Conservancy and Tribe, raised drought and seed mix considerations, and asked about further public input.

Jim Redden supported the concept but suggested limited amenities, including picnic space and connectivity.

Lisa Nagel supported partnering with the Conservancy and Tribe.

Jodi Colacchini asked about irrigation and pruning; temporary irrigation will be contractor-managed. A resident raised concerns about drought-tolerant species.

Treasurer’s Report

Due to technical difficulties, this was not discussed.

Matters not reasonably anticipated by the Chair:

None discussed.

MOTION: To adjourn.

Motion made by: Mark Lynch Seconded by: John Havel

Motion passed unanimously. (Mark Lynch and John Havel)

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:05pm

Respectfully submitted,



Gina Gonsalves