

**COTUIT FIRE DISTRICT
PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
ZOOM and IN PERSON
Freedom Hall
COTUIT, MA 02635
October 14, 2026**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Mark Lynch at 6:00 p.m. on October 14, 2026.

Pledge of Allegiance & Roll Call

Chair Lynch led the Pledge of Allegiance and conducted roll call:

Members present: Mark Lynch (via Zoom), Seth Burdick and John Havel.

Also present: Treasurer Ray Pirrone and Assistant Treasurer & Clerk Ryan Ouellette. District Counsel, Attorney Mark Boudreau, joined the meeting for the Open Meeting Law complaint discussion.

Public Comment:

A resident asked when the fence surrounding the former school property would be removed. Chair Lynch explained that the boulders currently on the property needed to be placed along the property line before most of the fencing could be removed. He had been monitoring the work but did not have a removal date. He stated that he would place the matter on the next Prudential Committee agenda.

Meeting Minutes Approval:

MOTION: To approve the meeting minutes of September 21, 2026.

Motion made by: Seth Burdick

Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Lynch adjusted the order of business to hear the firehouse financing presentation while awaiting District Counsel's arrival.

Firehouse Renovation BAN/Bond

Treasurer Ray Pirrone reviewed two financing alternatives ahead of the December 4, 2026 maturity of the District's \$12 million bond anticipation note (BAN). The first would place expenditures incurred and projected spending through May 2027 into a December long-term bond, with a short-term BAN covering the balance. The second would bond known spending in December and finance the remainder through a BAN until September 2027. Mr. Pirrone favored the second alternative for its flexibility as construction costs became clearer, while acknowledging the risk of changing interest rates.

Projected spending through December totaled \$12,925,000. Approximately \$250,000 in ambulance financing and \$675,000 in water-main financing would also be included in the December bond under either alternative. The Committee discussed construction uncertainties, including approximately \$40,000 in additional costs identified after opening a wall in the existing firehouse.

Project Cost Reconciliation and Debt-Service Budget

Mr. Pirrone reported that CHA and the fire department project team had reconciled earlier spending figures, resolving the discrepancy that had produced a projected total exceeding \$18.4 million. He also explained that Hilltop's clarification of the debt-payment schedule resolved the previously anticipated fiscal year 2027 shortfall. Adequate funding was available for either financing alternative without a

Special District Meeting. Costs exceeding the project's authorized funding would require a supplemental appropriation.

Design and Permitting Appropriation

Approximately \$267,000 remained in the \$1.3 million design and permitting appropriation. Although the project team anticipated sufficient remaining design expenses, Mr. Pirrone recommended an Annual District Meeting warrant article expanding the appropriation's permitted uses to include construction. This would clarify allowable expenditures without requesting additional funding.

Interest Rates and Follow-Up Analysis

The Committee discussed interest-rate risks, potential refinancing after ten years, and current BAN rates approximately one percentage point below long-term rates. At Mr. Havel's request, Mr. Pirrone agreed to provide an analysis of the potential cost of an interest-rate increase under the second alternative for the October 26 meeting. Selection of a financing alternative was deferred until that meeting. No vote was taken.

Discussion of Open Meeting Law Complaint

Chair Lynch reported that the District had received an Open Meeting Law complaint filed by Fran Parks concerning the June 9, 2026, Board of Fire Commissioners meeting. The complaint alleged that Commissioners Zais and Ross had conferred before the public meeting regarding the selection of the Board's chair for the ensuing year.

Chair Lynch explained that the complaint had been placed before the Prudential Committee on the advice of District Counsel. Mr. Burdick asked why the Prudential Committee was responsible for responding to a complaint involving another District board. Attorney Boudreau advised that the response should proceed through the Prudential Committee as the District's governing body. He explained that, in a timely matter, the Committee could refer the complaint to the affected board for preparation of a response with counsel.

Counsel advised that this complaint had been filed more than 30 days after the event and was untimely. He stated that the Committee therefore did not need to investigate or address the merits of the allegations. He explained that the public discussion acknowledged receipt of the complaint and provided an opportunity to remind District officials of their Open Meeting Law responsibilities, including restrictions on discussions of board business by a quorum outside a properly noticed public meeting.

Chair Lynch requested that Counsel prepare a letter to the Attorney General's Office explaining that the complaint was untimely. Counsel agreed and confirmed that he did not recommend referring the complaint to the Board of Fire Commissioners for a substantive response.

Mr. Havel expressed concern that the District reinforce Open Meeting Law compliance despite the complaint's timing, including consideration of training and whether the chair selection had occurred publicly. Counsel stated that his participation was intended to reinforce those responsibilities and offered to answer questions from any of the District's three boards.

Chair Lynch noted that the June 9, 2026, Board of Fire Commissioners meeting had been recorded and that the recording had been available on the District website. He confirmed with Counsel that the response would be limited to the timeliness of the complaint. No formal motion or vote was taken.

Public Comment

Mary Alice Callahan, a Cotuit resident, requested an adjustment to a water bill following a pipe break. The resident was advised that the request belonged before the Water Commissioners, whose meeting was scheduled for the following evening.

There was no further public comment.

Matters Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair

No additional matters were raised.

Adjournment

MOTION: **To adjourn.**

Motion made by: **Seth Burdick**

Seconded by: **Mark Lynch**

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gina Gonzales