

*Copy to Delegates  
submitted 3/16/16  
by BCC*

The CCEDC's role is to serve as advisors to County Commissioners on matters of economic development on Cape Cod.

The CCEDC's request to withdraw funding from the cleaning of the heads on the Route 6 rest area is not new, but recently has been blown out of proportion. I believe that the issue of objection is our lack of communication about this request and not the actual withdrawal of funds for the cleaning of the rest rooms. We have communicated our intentions to you, the County Commissioners, and also to the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce. However we were negligent in not informing the Yarmouth Area Chamber, and for this we apologize.

For the past 15 years or so, the costs to maintain the comfort station have increased steadily, going from about \$10,000/season to \$42,000 for last season. We have been very polite in our recommendations to not use LP funds for any amount over and above the original amount of \$10,000 in the past, and needless to say, \$42,000 is an astounding figure to maintain a facility best described as "gross" and "disgusting".

The Cape & Island license plate resources have been diminishing over the past five years as competition heats up. The CCEDC has been prudent in our recommendations to you as to how economic development is best served with the investment of license plate funds.

As a brief review, License Plate grants have funded:

- Technical assistance to towns, including Dennisport Main Street revitalization, Buzzards Bay streetscape design, Hy-Arts District in Barnstable, Campus Provincetown, Downtown Orleans planning, and others.
- You funded a career ladder program in nursing so that an individual may earn a CNA, LPN and RN degree without having to leave the Cape
- You funded numerous Wastewater initiatives and white papers, as well as smart planning and land use initiatives.
- You funded solar and PV re-training for tradespeople on Cape Cod
- You made numerous grants to the Arts including Making Art/Making a Living, Castle Hill & Payomet
- You funded renewable energy initiatives in both Technical high schools
- You funded the astrology lab in D-Y and the beginning of the Astro Park at BHS.
- You funded numerous school to careers programs @ 4C's, as well as their dental hygiene program, gave matching funds to an NSF grant for their science building and funded their culinary arts program.
- You funded the establishment of Buy Fresh Buy Local program, commercial kitchens and the early stages of the Cape Cod Sustainable Fisheries Trust
- You funded OpenCape
- You funded numerous aquaculture programs from Falmouth & Mashpee to Harwich and Chatham, and towns in between.

- You funded Stats Cape Cod, and more importantly, the CEDS: comprehensive economic development strategy for the region.

This is a small sampling of your investment in economic development. Please visit the grant archives section on our web site to read more.

When you measure the impact of the above investments and the total costs of maintaining a sub-par bathroom facility on Route 6, the consensus of the EDC was to find out what the terms of the contract with the State was, and to recommend that the County inform the State that we are no longer interested in maintaining the rest rooms here. What we discovered is that the County is NOT, in fact, bound by the State to perform this function. There is no written agreement or commitment, and therefore may end this function with no outstanding obligations.

As I stated earlier, we did not make this recommendation in a vacuum. We discussed various options, purpose of use, and sources of funds. We also discussed this with the Cape Cod Chamber, and they stated that they thought this facility was an embarrassment to the Cape, and that the State was closing all rest areas that were not full service areas. Closing this particular building would in fact, bring it into compliance.

This is not the first time the County has addressed this. Way back, there was a lot of push back stating that this was the only place on the highway where tourists could get information about where to go, and what to see as they made their way toward the lower Cape. So, the County kept it open and the costs have sky rocketed.

But that is a whole different subject matter. We are not discussing the information center here. We are discussing the maintenance of the bathrooms.

The CCEDC believes that the County should exit the bathroom maintenance business. We recommend that these funds be re-allocated to the grant program. This money could have funded 1-3 grant applications, which we had to turn down, as we did not have the funds.

Just a gentle reminder that these grant funds represent the County's only investment in economic development on Cape Cod. Our current grant round was \$75,000. To use what amounts to 56% of this dollar amount for cleaning a bathroom just doesn't make economic sense to us.

We recommend that the County Commissioners confirm with the state that Barnstable County will no longer maintain the rest rooms @ the Route 6 rest area, as of this season, beginning May, 2016.