Call to Order
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Good afternoon. It’s 4 o’clock. This is the Cape Cod Regional Government, Assembly of Delegates. It’s Wednesday, October 17th at 4 p.m. We are in the Harborview Conference Center at the County Complex.
We would like to start with a moment of silence to honor our troops who have died in service to our country and all those serving our country in the Armed Forces.
(Moment of silence.)
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Thank you.
Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.
(Pledge of Allegiance.)
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Thank you. Will the Clerk please call the roll?

Roll Call Attendance
Present (90.76%): Ronald Bergstrom (2.84% - Chatham – left @ 5:30 PM), Mary Chaffee (4.55% - Brewster), Christopher Kanaga (2.73% - Orleans), James Killion (9.58% - Sandwich), E. Suzanne McAuliffe (11.02% - Yarmouth), Deborah McCutcheon (0.93% Truro), Susan Moran (14.61% - Falmouth), Thomas O’Hara (6.49% - Mashpee), John Ohman (6.58% - Dennis), Brian O’Malley (1.36% - Provincetown), Patrick Princi (20.92% - Barnstable), Linda Zuern (9.15% - Bourne).
Arriving Late (1.27): Lilli-Ann Green - (1.27% - Wellfleet - @ 4:05 PM).
Absent (7.97%): Peter Hughes (5.67% - Harwich), VACANT (2.30 – Eastham).

Clerk O’CONNELL: Madam Speaker, you have a quorum with 90.76 percent of the Delegates present; 9.24 percent are absent.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Thank you.

Approval of the Calendar of Business
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Is there a motion to approve the Calendar of Business?
Delegate CHAFFEE: So moved.
Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Second.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Any discussion? All those in favor? Aye.
Any opposed? It passes unanimously.

Approval of the Journal of Proceedings of 10-3-18
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Is there a motion to approve the Journal of October 3rd, 2018?
Delegate O’MALLEY: Madam Speaker, I’ve read through the Journal as distributed and move its acceptance.
Delegate BERGSTROM: Second.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Any discussion? All those in favor? Aye.
Any opposed? It passes unanimously.

Summary and Communications from the Board of Regional Commissioners

- Commissioner Cakounes updated Assembly Delegates on the actions taken by County Commissioners at 10/10 and 1017/18 board meetings.
- Barnstable County Technical Rescue Team deployed to Florida to assist with hurricane recovery efforts.
- FY20 Budget Message voted by Commissioners on 10/17/18.
- Upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday break schedule and 2019 legal holiday observances approved by Commissioners.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: All right. This takes us to the communications and report on County issues from the Board of Regional Commissioners. I see Commissioner -- Chairman Cakounes is here. Welcome.

Commissioner CAKOUNES: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I’m going to really be quick today because we only have two meetings to report to you on. This has been a -- and both meetings were relatively short with not a lot of fanfare.

So, on October 10th we had a number of minutes in front of us that we approved. We also had a presentation on the Barnstable County Technical Rescue Team regarding the Hurricane Florence deployment, and I’m also here to tell you that now we've deployed some people down to Florida. So there’s some continuing of this participation helping out the different communities when they need it.

Back on October 10th, we did begin our first discussion on the FY20 Budget Message; however, on the 20th -- on the 10th, I mean, we did not vote it. We voted it today and I will get to that next.

We did approve the legal holidays for 2019. We also approved the holiday break schedule for 2018 and ’19. There were a number of different grants again that we issued, or I should say accepted and executed some contracts in relationship to those grants. One was with the Mass. Department of Fish and Game for $58,000 for the Shellfish Propagation Program. And then we had a Regional Collection and Analysis of Cape Cod Water Resources for $99,000. Also, another one in the same situation for $42,000 and then the final one for Woods Hole for $107,000 and all three of those are/were in conjunction with the Cape Cod Commission.

And the dissolving septic betterments which, again, is a function of the executive branch.

That brings us to today's meeting, which is October 17th. Once again, we had some minutes that were not ready last week which were actually brought forward and approved this week. So, subsequently, all our outstanding minutes now have been approved and are ready for public viewing if people so desire.

We had a very interesting discussion and presentation on the HUD Program that is run here through the County. I really won’t get into it in length, but you’re welcome to certainly watch the video. There was a situation in which some of the funds that we allocated, the recipients of those funds did not meet the timeline correctly, so they were --
although, I guess the term would be “ineligible” to receive those funds. So instead of the federal government -- the state taking back the funds from those people, they have just, subsequently, reduced what we are going to have available to offer in FY19. So it was kind of a -- just a way of them correcting the flow, if you will, or the allocation of monies.

We did talk in length today of the FY20 Budget Message and it was approved today. I will tell you though that for the record it will not be distributed until it has passed my staffs’ editing and spellcheck because as you all know, I am not very good at that and, unfortunately. Ms. Chaffee, I should have sent it over to you and have you check it out for me, but I didn’t. So I have to wait until it’s correctly formatted, but it has been approved in its body and it will be released as soon as it is gone through spellcheck.

There was no “New Business.” We did have an authorization of a carryover for some vacation time. We also had a disbursement, or I should say a discharge of a mortgage, and there were no septic betterments.

So, with that, I will conclude my report and open it up for questions through you, Madam Speaker.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Yes, I just had a quick question. Does the HUD tie into the HOME Consortium?

Commissioner CAKOUNES: Yes.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: And that, as I recall, is a huge commitment that we are kind of tied to because we have accepted money and we are required to follow and --

COMMISSIONER CAKOUNES: That is correct.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: -- edit and do paperwork.

COMMISSIONER CAKOUNES: No only -- right. Not only do we have given to us a dollar value to reissue or I should say issue under grant alone programs, but we also are obligated to monitor the past ones that we’ve done. And a lot of times you will see on our agenda that we will do the business of the HOME Consortium, but it will say on or through the Cape Cod Commission and that’s because prior to about three or four years ago, most of that action through the HOME Consortium was done at the Cape Cod Commission. And now we’ve moved it out and it’s over in -- I think it’s under RDO now.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: So do the funds we get from the federal government cover all those costs or --

Commissioner CAKOUNES: It was a question that was asked today. For the most part, it always has, but it is something that we -- I know that one County Commissioner asked specifically about that but because it was a little out of the realm of the presentation and on the agenda, it will be brought up though as we go into the budget season for FY20. We’re going to make sure that -- well, when you see the Budget Message too, you’ll see how it all ties in together. We’re going to look at the programs that we are monitoring and that we are offering and making sure that we’re covered for our labor, if you will, and our time and our input.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Administrative costs.

Commissioner CAKOUNES: Right, exactly.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate O'Malley.

Delegate O’MALLEY: Mr. Chairman, you referenced a grant of $95-98,000 from the state; is this relevant to the Water Protection Collaborative?

Commissioner CAKOUNES: No, sir, it's not.
Delegate O'MALLEY: It's separate.

Commissioner CAKOUNES: This was a separate grant application that was actually applied to by three organizations. However, they joined forces with the Cape Cod Commission, so the money actually comes -- it goes directly to them, the three different recipients, but it came through the Cape Cod Commission because the state likes to have one applicant with, I believe the word is actually “sub-grant,” is the actual word that they use. So the sub-grantors were actually the people who were listed on the documents. So the money really belongs to them; we’re just going through us.

Delegate O’MALLEY: Well, that's great, and I think it's a really perfect example of the kind of facilitating that the County could do to pull together those not-for-profit organizations that serve as the crucible for delivering the application and winning it. That's providing real assistance. So, great. Thank you.

Commissioner CAKOUNES: Thank you. I'll pass that on to the Cape Cod Commission. I actually did at our meeting make a point of that and make it so that anyone listening at home or watching it would understand that this is not anything to do with the Cape Water Collaborative Water Monitoring Program but, in fact, a whole different -- a grant application.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Ohman.

Delegate OHMAN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Leo, regarding the HOME Consortium number, I read on your agenda today that was over $225,000, right, that was --

Commissioner CAKOUNES: I believe the figure was -- I’ll give it to you exactly -- $255,942; yes, sir.

Delegate OHMAN: Now, that has not been given back to the County so, therefore, does that give us a shortfall going forward?

Commissioner CAKOUNES: No, and I’m going to try to explain this. It's a very confusing situation. We have given that $255,942 out to two projects, okay. So that total number, I guess for sake of argument, you could split it in half in your head, but it really wasn’t 50-50, but that total number was specifically for two projects. The money was given to them. The projects have been completed and they are actually living in those projects, developments right now. They are working and out.

When the audit happened from the state, it was discovered that the developers did not meet the timeline required in the original offering to actually receive those awards. But they received them and the projects, again, are completed and there’s people living in them.

So what the government decided to do is say to Cape Cod, through the County but to Barnstable County that, you know what, instead of getting, and I don't have a calculator in front of me, but instead of getting $255,000 plus $80,000, if somebody could do that math quickly, instead of getting that total to offer in FY19 the government is only going to give us $80,000. They’ve held back $255,942 for any future disbursements.

So it's not really a penalty. It's not coming out of our pocket. The County didn't lose that money, but what we have lost, the way I understand it, is the ability now to yet, again, give out another round of grants of $245,000 -- $255,000.

Delegate OHMAN: Yes, that makes sense to me. So it doesn’t hurt our financial obligations on the annual basis?

COMMISSIONER CAKOUNES: Not at all.
Delegate OHMAN: We did what we have to do to monitor.
Commissioner CAKOUNES: Not at all. It also does not hurt the financial obligations of the people who receive those funds either. That was my concern. I was wondering if the developers were now going to have to pay back that money or give it back or would we have to give it back and that’s not the case. Because, again, the two projects that I referred to that make up this $255,000 are completed and being rented. So this is just a way of the government adjusting their books.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Anyone else? Thank you, very much.
COMMISSIONER CAKOUNES: You're welcome. Thank you.

SUMMARY and Presentation from the County Cooperative Extension: Agriculture, Horticulture and Nutrition Programs

- Presentation made to Assembly and handout of materials related to Cooperative Extension Programs
- Programs provide services both to the public and the Green Industries of Cape Cod.
- County Farm Lease awarded to the current lease holder.
- Currently 12 to 15 county employees working from the county farm field station.
- Cooperative Extension Food Safety works with County Health doing some of the trainings for the health agents.
- Upwards of 250,000 pounds of food comes from the Greater Boston Food Bank every month to Cape Cod.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: The next item on our agenda is a report from the Cooperative Extension, Horticulture Educator Russ Norton, Horticulture Program and also the Nutrition Education staff. I'm sorry; I don't have a name.

Ms. KIM CONCRA: Kim. Kim Conpra.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: And this is regarding nutrition programs as well. So welcome.

Ms. KIM CONCRA: Thank you.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Thank you.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: And perhaps you just want to make sure, for the record, everybody has your names. Just give them into the microphone.

Ms. KIM CONCRA: Yes. My name is Kim Conpra and I work for Cape Cod Cooperative Extension doing Nutrition and Food Safety Education.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Okay.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: My name is Russell Norton. I’m an Extension Educator for the Agriculture and Horticulture Program for the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Excellent. And --
Deputy Director DIANE MURPHY: Last but not least. Hi. I’m Diane Murphy. I am the Deputy Director of the Cooperative Extension.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Welcome. Thank you, very much. Russ, would you like to start?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Sure. Is this close enough to the mic and everything?

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Yes, that’s perfect.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: All right. Great. So, I’m just going to give you a little overview of the Agriculture and Horticulture Program for the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension, and I was also asked to talk a little bit about the County Farm. So I’ll be talking about my program and then a little bit about the County Farm.

So my program provides services both to the public and the Green Industries of Cape Cod. So the Green Industries include farmers, landscapers, arborists, garden centers, you name it. Those folks that are in those industries or related industries, and we provide a number of different services. We do education, technical assistance, workshops, demonstrations, publications, and then general outreach.

I tend to split the program in two. I kind of consider the public outreach piece and then the industry outreach piece. For our public outreach piece, it’s primarily served by our volunteers which we train volunteers for this program. They’re called Master Gardeners. Each Master Gardener goes through about 10 to 12 weeks of training, about 60 hours of training, and then they give back to the program, kind of increasing the ability for us to reach the public. And they service our program in many ways, so one of our primary programs that we offer is the Horticultural Clinic, which is the clinic that we offer out of our office in Deeds in the Probate Building where people are able to, basically, get their horticultural questions answered. So anyone is able to call them, email them, or even come in and get their questions answered with unbiased science-based information that’s developed from our Land Grant University system.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: I’m sorry; did you say how many Master Gardeners you have?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: I’d say it’s somewhere around 180 active volunteers right now in that area.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Wow.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Each year we train 16 new or roughly 16 new individuals, so it increases a little bit and then we have a little bit in falloff.

So that Horticultural Clinic, people can bring in plants for identification. They can bring in disease plant samples, insects for identification; plant insects not just general insects, and we also do pH soil testing. So that’s one of the things that the Master Gardeners help staff in our office.

They also do a lot of educational programs for the Ag & Hort Program. We do two conferences, one in the spring, one in the fall. They also offer two 8 to 10-week courses for backyard horticulture which are open to the general public to kind of increase their knowledge about sustainable landscaping and sustainable gardening.

We operate a children's garden in Brewster off of -- I think its Lower End Road, which is a great opportunity for kids. They have 12 to 16 kids each summer that come weekly to garden with master gardeners in a one-on-one situation to encourage the development of our young ones and their interest in horticulture.

And then we do a lot of community lecture programs, both myself and the Master Gardeners. For example, I think next week I have a program that’s all about trees, landscaping for resilience. So we’re going to talk about assessing trees in your yard for
storm damage and potential for storm damage.

So we do a lot of general things like that. And then we also have an industry-focused portion of the program. And primarily with the industry-focused portion it’s technical assistance, so people can contact the Ag & Hort Program, primarily myself, and help them with, basically, troubleshooting issues in any areas. So a lot of what I do is pest management issues, diagnostic issues for professionals and municipalities. We also do a number of publications, so we write articles for two publications, Hort Notes and Garden Clippings that are from UMass Extension.

And then we also do a landscape message which goes out weekly during the growing season, biweekly on the outskirts of the growing season, and then monthly through the winter months which gives basically everyone in that Green Industries kind of pertinent information about what’s going on, disease and insect pests, horticultural problems, cultural problems that might be arising due to things like weather.

Then we also operate a municipal Shade Tree Nursery which was established by Bill Clark, the previous director of Extension quite a few years ago. That Shade Tree Nursery provides trees to towns at reasonable costs and it encourages them to plant more trees and get the community benefits of that. That's kind of a focus of mine for the next couple years. It's kind of tailed off over the last couple years but there’s, I think, a lot of growing interest in planting right now because we’ve had a lot of tree mortality on the Cape and, hopefully, we’re going to couple that with some technical assistance to the towns about site assessment, so assessing the sites so you can plant a tree that will actually survive in that site. I’m giving them planting recommendations and maybe helping them prioritize where areas are to plant.

So that's kind of the program in a nutshell.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: That's great. How do people hear about your presentations and your programs?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: So we have an email database that we keep that we send out notifications through constant contact. So if you're interested in getting on that newsletter list, you can send me an email and we’ll put you on there. I think we have just over 2,000 people on that email database right now. We also do PSA releases too, you know, the Enterprises and the Cape Cod Times.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: So papers. Sometimes do you do town halls to libraries?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Libraries, garden clubs, we have a list of all the garden club presidents.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: And, obviously, on the website as well?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: And on the website as well.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: I mean it’s such a gem.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: You want to make sure that people are aware of it.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: That’s right. So, also, Facebook through our County Extension Facebook page.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: And your messages to your green industry, are they available to the public as well or is it a certain --

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes, you have to sign up for them.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Okay.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: All three of the industry-related publications are through UMass Extension. So you can go and, basically, sign up to receive those communications. They’re all free and current.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: So as the Assembly members are out in the public now during election season, people always want to know what does the County do for you?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: And then every time we meet, and we hear more and more about what the County is doing for people, it really -- it highlights the people in the County, but it also highlights how much is going on that a lot of people, including Assembly members, may not be aware of.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes. There’s a lot of services that are offered.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate O’Hara.
Delegate O’HARA: Are these services utilized by the towns?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes.
Delegate O’HARA: They are.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: So I consider the municipalities under the industry professional area, so they would get all the same services. So, I do work with the towns on a regular basis, different departments, a lot of times with DPWs but sometimes the cemeteries or different folks that are good at planting and horticulturally-related --
Delegate O’HARA: So a number of the towns, all the towns, or just a few?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: It varies.
Delegate O’HARA: Or do you reach out to the towns and let them know the citizens are available?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes. So we do reach out. I will actually be reaching out to all the towns regarding the Municipal Shade Tree Nursery probably in the upcoming months to kind of make sure that all the departments in the towns are aware of the services that we’re going to be offering.
I encourage you as people and members of those towns to also mention it. As far as services to the towns, every year it varies. So some towns are regularly buying trees from us, other towns are not necessarily. I don't have all that information.
Delegate O’HARA: No. And my thought process is, well, if the town’s utilizing your services well that’s the benefit to the taxpayers.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes. That’s right.
Delegate O’HARA: So they’re saving them money and educating as well. So I think it’s great. And the only other question I had was I know that you do the testings for pH; do they also test the soil for contaminants and things of that nature?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: So that’s a very common question I would get. And so we do soil pH testing. If you wanted more extensive recommendations, we’d have you go to the UMass Soil Testing Laboratory for, basically, fertility recommendations.
As far as contaminants go, lead is the only one that’s popularly screened. Beyond that, it becomes extremely expensive, and if you don’t know what you’re looking for, you’d spend a lot of money just screening for any contaminants.
Delegate O’HARA: So there’s a charge for the service?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes, there is a charge for those services.
Delegate O'HARA: Great. Thank you.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Green.
Delegate GREEN: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you, Russ.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes.
Delegate GREEN: And, also, I want to thank Russ. He helped us in Wellfleet. I’m also on the Energy Committee and we had an energy fair a couple of times, and I reached out to Russ and he put me in touch with someone on his team that came out and spoke to sustainable landscaping on two different occasions, and they were really highly informative, gave great handouts, had answered a lot of questions. But there also was a high interest in the -- involving the landscapers so that they understand about sustainability and the toxins so that perhaps less toxins will go into our fresh water ponds.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes.
Delegate GREEN: But I do want to say that for any of us here and anybody listening out there, I was really very impressed with the services of our County at that point in time.
But I would like to ask you what are you doing with the landscapers to educate them?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: So a lot of it is through publications, so the publications that I mentioned before: Hort Notes, Garden Clippings, and the Landscape Message, but we also do conferences and workshops for the industries, each year a different one. This year I will have one basically for the Agriculture industry. I think it’s in February or March, and we’ll be having, basically, talks by professionals in the industry giving them updated information about planting issues. So we see a lot of planting issues, general cultural issues, but also we’ll have diseases and insects covered that are current threats to our landscapes.
Delegate GREEN: Are you also dealing with toxins going into our freshwater ponds, and how are you addressing that?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: So --
Delegate GREEN: And I know that’s an issue with homeowners as well as with the landscapers.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes. So a big way that Extension and most of our Ag & Hort Programs address the issues with contaminants is through what we call Integrated Pest Management, which is basically a scientific holistic approach to pest management that starts with making a proper identification correct. So a lot of times people are treating things and they're not really sure what they're treating and so that's why we offer those diagnostic services through the Horticulture Clinics. So that's kind of like the first step of getting the problem correct and then understanding that problem from whether it was an insect, the biology of that insect, and then looking at things like thresholds. So for agricultural crops, thresholds are based on financial decisions, and then we go through the cultural options. So we’re getting into the control tactics.
And through IPM we always start with cultural controls. So we start on what you can do as plant manager to avoid those problems and then we look at biological controls. And then lastly, if we have to intervene with chemicals, we go through the chemical processes looking at the least toxic that will get the job done first, and then a wrap up of looking back at the whole process to see if it worked.
Delegate GREEN: Thank you for dumbing it down to me.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Bergstrom.
Delegate BERGSTROM: Yes, where was this taken, this picture?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: So that was taken at the Brewster Children's Garden.
Delegate BERGSTROM: Okay. Do we have a designated area that we use to train people? Do we have an area on County property that we use?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Most of the training is done over the winter from January through March and some years I used this room, some years I used the Innovation Room across the way.
Delegate BERGSTROM: Well, you can't grow much in this room. The soil is not very good.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes.
Delegate BERGSTROM: I mean do you have any type of garden somewhere?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes. So we do have a demonstration garden over at the County Fair Grounds. So if you're familiar with the Barnstable County Fairgrounds in Falmouth, we operate about an acre of land there that Master Gardeners meet once a week for the growing season for a couple hours on Wednesday mornings.
And we maintain the area but then we open it up for educational programs. We've had an "Evening in the Garden Program" there for a number of years where we invite the public in to talk about the sustainable practices that we're using there. And so that's kind of our hands-on laboratory.
Delegate BERGSTROM: Okay. Do you plant it? I mean, do you go out in the spring and you sow seeds to grow pumpkin or whatever?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes, you got it.
Delegate BERGSTROM: Okay. All that.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: All that, yes.
Delegate BERGSTROM: Now do you do that, or do you do that in concert with the volunteers? I mean does it start --
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: A little bit of both, so it kind of covers everything under the sun. I use one of the greenhouse facilities here in the Barnstable County Complex to start a lot of things for that garden.
Delegate BERGSTROM: Yes.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Some Master Gardener volunteers also start a lot of things so it's a little bit of everything.
Delegate BERGSTROM: What do you do with the produce that you grow?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Most of the produce goes to the Falmouth Food Service Center. So I think last year we took about a ton of produce from the garden.
Delegate BERGSTROM: Was it a good year?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: It was a pretty good year, yes.
Delegate BERGSTROM: Okay.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: But it's usually around a ton or so.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Zuern.
Delegate ZUERN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. You had said to contact you if we wanted to be on that list, and I see different addresses here or email addresses.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes.

Delegate ZUERN: Which is the best one to --

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: It's probably easier to contact me. It's more direct.

Delegate ZUERN: For the public? If the public wants to --

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: So the public, it would be the gardeners’ email.

So the Gardeners@BarnstableCounty.org.

Delegate ZUERN: Okay. And is that -- is there something available on the Barnstable County site as well where they could get you if they went to the Barnstable County --

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes. If you go to the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension website, and you can find the Ag & Hort page, and then you can get to all of our services from there.

Delegate ZUERN: Okay.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: There's a lot of information. I encourage you to check it out. There's a lot of information.

Delegate ZUERN: Thank you.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Ohman.

Delegate OHMAN: Thank you, again, Madam Speaker. Thanks for your presentation. Two questions; one's on the Municipal Shade Tree, how extensive is it?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: So --

Delegate OHMAN: I know you did a great job with Orleans a few years ago.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: So Bill Clark had it up and running. I'm not sure when, and it was facilitated by the Sheriff's Department, and the Sheriff used to be at the County Farm. It has kind of changed over the years because they no longer have the inmates, or the equipment associated to harvest the trees, so it made a transition before Bill left to contain our nursery stock. And it's kind of, I would say, we've had a couple of hiccups over the last couple years so there's not a lot of tree availability right now out there. But I am looking to basically fully stock it for the spring. I'll be putting out a letter to all the departments looking for requests. And moving forward, I think it will be quite a resource for everybody.

Delegate OHMAN: Thank you. And in conjunction with that, we recently put 90-some-odd acres of the County Farm out to bid. Did you have any interest in using part of that acreage for the Shade Tree Program?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: So I was asked to talk about the County Farm as well and I will do so.

Delegate OHMAN: Okay.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: But we’ll wrap up questions on the program first.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Yes, Delegate O'Malley.

Delegate O'MALLEY: Right. My question is in follow-up to Delegate Green from Wellfleet concerning the use of toxins on practices. Now I know -- and I'm from Provincetown -- and a number of years back commitment was made there to do all municipal landscaping green without chemicals. And, in fact, the town hired somebody, a landscaper to advise and oversee this project. 
Is that something you do, and I'll kind of drive it a little further is how far do you push the case that use of glyphosate herbicides should be very, very strictly limited given what we know about their toxicity and the uncertainties about what is going to show up in the future.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes. So, that's a great question, and I'll kind of defer it a little bit. So, generally, I take my information from the Land Grant Universities and the research that's coming out of those and the standpoints that they take. We do address all pest management issues through the IPM, so we're always looking at all the other steps that we can do first before we get into those say chemical intervention situations. Sometimes they are unavoidable for cost and other reasons, but a lot of times that comes down to who is doing the hiring and then who is being hired making those decisions. And I can definitely provide technical assistance to that but I'm not sure --

Delegate O'MALLEY: And I would reflect that questions of cost in matters such as this have to be -- have to factor in the externalities, who bears the costs?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Right.

Delegate O'MALLEY: That is to say if it's cheaper to maintain a municipal area with glyphosate but that results in X number of cases of whatever disease we wanted to find down the road, that's not factored into the cost, and I think it's been an issue that we're recognizing now. I was at the Wampanoag presentation of the Silent Spring thing just last night.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes.

Delegate O'MALLEY: And, you know, there's a real lesson to be learned there, but there was a recognition of what they were pumping out into the air into the water was really toxic. They knew it and persisted.

And I have this awful sense that we're using this stuff; we're throwing it around. Well, you walk into Home Depot and there's mountains of the stuff right by the door.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes.

Delegate O'MALLEY: More and more the research is finding, you know, we shouldn't be doing this and those are externalized costs --

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Right.

Delegate O'MALLEY: -- that really are not well factored into most of the models that we use, dollars here, dollars there. It's people who are going to be sick years later.

I don't think there's exactly an answer to that question.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: No, and definitely not from my -- I'm not a toxicologist so I don't get into the nitty-gritty of the science. It's probably far beyond my chemistry and biochemistry skills.

Delegate O'MALLEY: Yes.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: But, basically, I always defer to that IPM process, that process by which we step people through to make sustainable decisions. And so that process is really well-founded, and it really does -- it, basically, all the other options come out first.

Delegate O'MALLEY: Good.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: And human health is an important piece of that.
Delegate O’MALLEY: Yes.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Green, final question.
Delegate GREEN: Thank you. This is a follow-up to my fellow -- my question and Dr. O'Malley's follow-up question to that. People in Wellfleet are very concerned about glyphosate. And I also represent my town on the Cape Cod National Seashore Advisory Commission, and the National Park is interested in and open to doing experiments without glyphosate for phragmites control specifically around the ponds.
Would the County be interested in collaborating with the National Park and how would we go about doing that? I mean it's not a huge project, but I mean it could be very informative for the rest of the towns on Cape Cod.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes, I would assume that starting with a communication, just putting one person in contact with the other person and then see --
Delegate GREEN: Would the County be open to that?
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes, for sure.
Delegate GREEN: Thank you.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Give them a card.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: And then you were going to address a little bit about the County Farm. We had that lease coming before us in December, I believe, the second meeting in December because this is up at the end of December. So it is a hot topic right now.
Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes. So, if you're not familiar with the County Farm, it's approximately 90 acres. It's just down the street. About 30 of it are what would be considered agricultural use and the majority of the other acreage is actually wooded. It is in a deed restriction for agriculture and conservation. What else to say about it?
Tim Friary, Cape Cod Organic Farm, has been the leaseholder for the last 9 to 10 years. I've worked with Mike McGuire, Jack, Elaine, and Leo to kind of construct the current RFP that was put out a couple months ago. That RFP has been awarded at this point to Tim Friary again; I believe I can say that.
It's a little bit different. Someone was asking about whether I would have use, I believe, of the County Farm for some of the areas that I am interested in, and we did pull about 2.4 acres roughly or 2.5 acres that are behind our Extension office, which is currently out there to basically develop something like the demonstration garden, a living classroom for us to do educational programs out of, also to do applied research when needed. So we did pull that out for our use, and I'm hoping to get started on that early in the spring and turn it into something over the next 3 to 5 years. What else is there to say about it?
Deputy Director DIANE MURPHY: I'd also like to point out that Mr. Friary was the only bidder and it did get awarded to him. And he's made quite a number of costly improvements on the property, a solar array for energy, somewhere for grass clippings to be able to compost that.
And in the entire time that he's leased it, I've been there, and there's always been the opportunity to utilize the grounds that we need, certainly for the nursery area. Currently, we even have an area set aside where we're looking at some different varieties of beach grass as we're running a little test plot to see -- to be able to make recommendations of different varieties that might work -- work well in our environment. So, yeah, it's been a
good collaboration.

And Kim will talk about the efforts that go on there for growing food for to help those that need -- are in need so.

Speaker MCAULIFFE:  Great.  Yes, Delegate Bergstrom.

Delegate BERGSTROM:  Yes, just, you know, we've had this discussion before, and I understand farms on the Cape are not all that profitable, but it seems to me that the improvements that he's made are improvements that basically help him and his business or whoever takes it over.  In other words, the improvements to the facilities and the improvement as far -- are part of the farm operation, so they don't really accrue to Barnstable County. They more or less accrue to the people who are operating it. In other words, there's no benefit to us except the fact that the property's maintained, except for the $600-and-some-odd that we get for it.

I know it's probably out of your jurisdiction, but have you ever considered community gardens? I mean Chatham has community gardens, a lot of towns have community gardens, pieces of land that are set aside for people for a nominal, you know, fee. You know, if you live on a small little plot of land, you haven't got a chance, but any consideration given to that?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON:  I think the farm being the size that it is it is very desirable for it to stay in commercial agriculture, which is one of the things that is really lacking on Cape Cod.  So the loss of a parcel of land that is able to grow produce for the community and keep it in commercial agriculture is an economic development piece, I think, is really important.

It has been talked about, the community gardens in the past.  I don't know exactly where that led or --

Delegate BERGSTROM:  Yes, I'm looking for a public benefit.  I mean I understand that the leaseholder gets a benefit, and he's a good guy and I like what he's doing, but the fact is we don't get any money from leasing the farm.  And as far as the economic development goes, that mostly accrues to him and a few people that he hires.  So, I mean have you ever --

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON:  I--

Delegate BERGSTROM:  -- I'm looking for a long-term strategy for 90 acres of land.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON:  Yes, right.  And so understand that only 30 of that is actually an agricultural use, so a good portion of that is in forest.

Delegate BERGSTROM:  But it could be there?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON:  No, it cannot.

Delegate BERGSTROM:  Okay.  So over 30 is agriculturally zoned?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON:  The deed restriction is for conservation.

Ms. KIM CONCRA:  Yes.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON:  Correct.

Speaker MCAULIFFE:  Because there's a deed restriction.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON:  Yes, and not all the land is really suitable for intensive agriculture.  So there's a good 20 acres of it that would be minimally agriculturally useful soil.  So, basically, just not great soil as were all probably familiar with on the Cape.

The piece that I think goes a little bit maybe lost is the importance of open
space on Cape Cod. I think that is really a huge piece for their community to keep and maintain a piece in open space, which a little bit helps out our primary economic piece --

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Right.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: -- which is tourism. So having those open spaces are really desirable. Tim's been a great tenant, and as far as monies back, I don't know if a community garden’s going to be providing a lot of sources of income to the County either.

Delegate BERGSTROM: I'm looking for the public benefit. I mean, obviously, it benefits the people who use it. That's what we do in the Barnstable County.

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: I would say employment is a public benefit.

Delegate BERGSTROM: Okay.

Deputy Director DIANE MURPHY: Our marine offices or our field office that's on the farm now is, basically, we now have I want to say 12 to 15 people, you know, working out of that, and it's a field station where we store all our gear and plenty of opportunity to bring folks back. We hold workshops; we hold classes there and hope in the future to continue to maybe expand on that to be able to have a research facility. And certainly Russ will have the opportunity for research gardens and --

Delegate BERGSTROM: Okay.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Princ.

Delegate PRINCI: Is the irrigation for the County Farm from wells or from town water? And if it's from town water, is it from the Hyannis water department? And if it is, would the products there still be considered organic?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: So there are three wells on the property, there might even be four. I'm not sure where the water to our office comes from, but for the farming operation, there are three wells. There are Water Testing Standards for agriculture, which would have to be met, and the water would not be something that would keep it from being organic. It is organically certified under a certification process right now. That's a third-party oversight for the USDA program.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Thank you. I think we’re going to move on to the nutrition because we have a full agenda. Okay. Delegate Chaffee, very quick.

Delegate CHAFFEE: One last quick question. In the work that you do, and your Master Gardeners do on sustainable landscaping, which I'm really glad to hear about, do you address the use of fertilizers which can be so harmful when they runoff into our freshwater ponds?

Mr. RUSSELL NORTON: Yes, fertilizer’s a really important piece of water quality and is something that we worked with the Commission to develop a fertilizer certification for Cape Cod, which was only taken up by a couple of towns, but we do offer that certification.

And we also are big pushes of soil testing, and soil testing is a key portion of determining what your fertility needs are. And then also getting, you know, scientific information to give you good recommendations on what you need to fertilize it with -- fertilize with.

So that's a huge part of our program and a huge part of what Extension does is getting that science-based information, so people can make informed decisions about things like fertilizer use.

Delegate CHAFFEE: Thank you.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Thank you. All right. Now the nutrition component of this section, Buy Fresh Buy Local is the local that we’re all familiar with. Welcome.

Ms. KIM CONCRA: Thank you. So my work with the Extension is basically split between nutrition education and food safety education. So just to put the food safety piece out there, I do work with County Health with doing some of the trainings for the health agents. And, actually, Eric and I are meeting next week to talk a little bit more about food processing and the growth of that because we both get an awful lot of questions about what the rules are and there's lots of rules and depending on who they’re talking with what they state.

So that's -- and ServSafe is a food safety manager certification course that we offer. And we're actually doing day two on Monday in Eastham, but we also hold them in this room, and we've also held it in Provincetown at least once or twice a year because we know it's difficult for people to get up Cape.

So that's for the food safety piece, and I also get an awful lot of phone calls about home food preservation, which has been on the increase in the last few years I would say.

The nutrition component, my colleague Sue Burke and I, we split up pretty much our nutrition work. A lot of it is SNAP Education, which is the new word for food stamps. So the SNAP Education we do get grant funding through the University of Massachusetts. So Sue and some contractors work a lot with the elementary schools, and I work more with the preschool, the Head Start preschools, and also another preschool in Eastham.

We also, under our SNAP Ed, we work with the food pantries so that's kind of what I wanted to highlight today for you. I work with the Cape Cod Hunger Network and under our SNAP Ed Grant, we actually go and do some nutrition education and cooking demonstrations showing people how to cook healthy food for three of our pantries. So Lower-Cape Outreach pretty much services Chatham and Harwich all the way out to Provincetown; Falmouth Service Center, and also the Family Pantry of Cape Cod in Harwich.

That idea of doing that nutrition education was very popular but we didn't have the funding through our SNAP Ed to do that in every town. So we worked with the Cape Cod Hunger Network to come up with a healthy food resolution which really was a commitment on the part of the Cape Cod Hunger Network pantries to do the best that they could to bring healthy foods to the food insecure of Cape Cod.

So, through that and through some grant efforts through the Cape Cod Hunger Network and Falmouth Service Center and the other partners of the Foods to Encourage Program emerged with some initial funding through Cape Cod Healthcare. And I did hand out one piece here that Rebecca, Becca of our Buy Fresh Buy Local and Extension, it basically highlights that this one little pilot program kind of has gone off into other towns, and the pantries themselves have taken it upon themselves to expand the program.

And, basically, one of our SNAP Ed expectations is that we address not only policy but also systems and environmental change. So F2E, as we call it, is really the program that does that where we’re going to where people are at. So, the food pantries individually now are either funding or seeking funding, grant funding in some cases, to have an educator that will talk about fresh fruits and vegetables, and then there’s a bag of
vegetables that go to the clients that come.

And what they also benefit from is one of our -- it's usually one of our County nurses that will do not only a blood glucose screening, a nonfasting blood glucose screening but also blood pressure. So these people will come typically every week or every two weeks depending on the pantry schedule, and they will meet with the nurse, and they will benefit from getting an extra bag of fruits or vegetables. To me, as a nutritionist, I think that that's an amazing program. And the highlights for our Foods to Encourage were really drawn off of the Feeding America site and some of the recommendations.

So I can say that in my 12 and a half years here at Extension that originally there was hardly any fresh produce at all on the pantry shelves. So with a $10,000 grant from the Bilezikian Family Foundation we were able to put together "Cook Well, Eat Well, Live Well," which was a cookbook that pretty much used shelf-stable foods, and I'm happy to say I think it's outdated because we now have a lot more fresh produce that's coming from Greater Boston Food Bank but also secured by some of our local food pantries.

I don't know if everyone knows but there's upwards of 250,000 pounds of food that comes from the Greater Boston Food Bank every month. So that's an awful lot of food that's coming from off Cape to help some of our food insecure individuals and families here on the Cape.

So these stats just were collected. We reached out to them all because there's a program that Harvard's doing called "Food is Medicine," and they asked us what we were doing here on the Cape. So we helped compile from the different pantries some of the efforts that they've done.

So to echo on that, I did not give you this one, but Harwich Family Pantry in applying for some monies for their F2E Program, they were collecting some statistics from their nurses, basically, on how this has been working for them and they did, overall, over a six-week program looking at people.

The biggest success I would say was a positive change in their blood sugars from people that were attending just from bringing home and learning how to cook some more fruits and vegetables and also having that social support of seeing the same nurse for the most part, that educator that would talk to them about fruits and vegetables.

So this is probably the fourth or fifth year that Tim Friary at Cape Cod Organic Farm has partnered with the Cape Cod Hunger Network and collaborated to grow produce for the food pantries. So it's typically -- I think the first year it was just butternut squash, and in the last several years it's been butternut squash and sweet potatoes.

It started with a small grant through the Cape Cod Hunger Network through Cape Cod 5, although this year we did not have that grant to do that. But he has basically purchased the seed, the slips for the sweet potatoes, and donated between 2,000 and 4,500 pounds of sweet potatoes and butternut squash, so it's an awful lot. So we're just winding that down now but, you know, Farmer Tim has used his staff to basically maintain it, and then we've used constant contact through our Buy Fresh Buy Local Program to basically get volunteers.

Deputy Director DIANE MURPHY: And AmeriCorps.

Ms. KIM CONCRA: And AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps was here. They saved us last year when I had to do a last-minute emergency can you come and help us because our hundred volunteers could not dig all those sweet potatoes that we needed to get out of the
ground ASAP. So this year they were also very helpful.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Any questions? Yes, Delegate Bergstrom.
Delegate BERGSTROM: Yes, I think this is a great program, and I know that there’s a feeling that people, especially people on the lower economic scale tend not to eat very healthy, you know, they come home and haven't got any energy to peel a potato and cook, make a sandwich so they tend to eat something out of a box, but I know this from personal experience, you know, because it’s --

So the very fact that you supply healthy foods to them and to people is a real benefit, I think, because it improves people's quality of life. If they live healthier lives then they stay out of trouble, so I’d just like to say that. So I think it's a very worthwhile program.

Ms. KIM CONCRA: We’re very fortunate too; we have quarterly meetings at that -- we’ll go to the Cape Cod Hunger Network meetings and anyone's invited to go to those. We have one this Friday actually at the Barnstable Senior Center at 12:30, and we have the Greater Boston Food Bank comes, Project Bread comes, sometimes we have funders that come. They’re just interested in what's going on, and it's really about supporting other programs that help people find ways to pay for food.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Killion.
Delegate KILLION: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Across the folks that you serve, are the age groups spread out or do you have larger groups that participate than others?

Ms. KIM CONCRA: So I’m not exactly sure what you're talking about. If we're talking about -- we serve families with preschoolers with our nutrition education. The food pantries themselves which we, through Extension, collaborate with are all ages. We also extend out into what's called a Brownbag Program. The Greater Boston Food Bank contributes basically a brown bag of food to primarily seniors and some of the hosting agencies in the different towns. And so we in our SNAP Ed, we try to rotate who we can help do some nutrition education for. And so we’re finding that not all seniors will go to the food pantries. They were people that were used to volunteering or used to giving to. So sometimes it's easier to reach them at the actual senior centers themselves, but I would say that age is pretty broad.

Delegate KILLION: Thank you.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Ohman.
Delegate OHMAN: Thank you, again. Now living on Cape Cod here, there an abundance of fish at times; is there a path where local commercial fishermen can actually -- because I know in the past some of my friends that are fishermen have tried and they’re blocked because of, you know, regulation.

Ms. KIM CONCRA: Yes.
Delegate OHMAN: So is there a clear path if these fishermen have extra fish who would like to donate or go out and just do it for that purpose alone?

Ms. KIM CONCRA: To do direct donation, you might actually be able to answer that better than me, Diane; I'm not sure. But, basically, what has happened is the Cape Cod Hunger Network has worked with the Fisherman's Alliance, the Cape Cod Fishermen's Alliance who has offered fish at a very affordable price to the food pantries, which has been really a great well-received program. We did do -- through Buy Fresh Buy Local and Fisherman's Alliance and our Nutrition Education Program, we did a couple of promo videos kind of modeled after those Tasty videos to show people and say how to cook.
dogfish or bluefish or --

Deputy Director DIANE MURPHY: Skate.

Ms. KIM CONCRA: -- skate. Skate was the other one. So there is a path to do that and it has been very well received. There’re certain populations culturally that really love mackerel. So when mackerel comes to some of the food pantries, it's taken right away.

Delegate OHMAN: Okay.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: That's great. I remember in 2008 when the economy went south, and food pantries sprung up in every town and became -- they were just -- every town had a need for a food pantry, and I think the economy was kind of the trigger for noticing that hunger was a big issue.

The interesting thing particularly in the town of Yarmouth is that the economy is better, but the food pantry needs are still in existence, and there are still a number of people who require assistance. And it could be our long tried-and-true seasonal economy, low wages, whatever the demographics are on the Cape. The need came out of an economic downturn, and yet I think the issue of hunger was there before the food pantries kind of sprung up.

I remember a foundation that tried to leverage the food pantries to organize and get them to kind of become one giant food pantry and that was not something that the food pantries were interested in. You know, a few of the food banks I know like Harwich gets directly from Boston and then they will disperse.

But we were able to buy refrigerators and do some things to help with the big bulk storage. But I think it's truly a Cape Cod industry in that each town knows its needs and each town has its individual way of addressing those needs and it really does deliver I think some essential and very critical services to residents of the Cape.

And I applaud the healthful path that it's taken because I remember when started it was bags of cans and maybe some bread. Fresh was very hard to come by because you had to have refrigerated means to keep things fresh, but it's really come a long way. And I think it fulfills a present and ongoing need on the Cape. I really laud the efforts of the County in helping the local food pantries.

Ms. KIM CONCRA: Thank you. I have to say that the, you know, years ago food pantries were an emergency situation, and I think a lot of the pantries have recognized and modified their practices to know that they’re actually part of people's budgets now, which is sad, but that's the way it is. You know, that's part of their food budget is getting to the food pantry once a week or so or once every two weeks or whatever is allowed.

And that Yarmouth pantry is amazing. I had been there when it was really small, and I went last week because I couldn't get a hold of someone to pick up butternut squash, so I brought one big bin with me, and I just knocked on the door, and I got the new tour of how big it is, and I was blown away.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Yes, it went from shelves in a funny little place.

Ms. KIM CONCRA: A little closet.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: It got a new home, and then I think it took over the old fire station. Yes, it was quite the -- I think it was a shock to the town of Yarmouth that it was an ongoing need. As you said, we thought it was an emergency. We thought this is going to help people for a few years. And, no, people continued to have the need. So, thank you, so much.
Ms. KIM CONCRA: Yes, thanks.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Yes, Delegate Chafee.
Delegate CHAFFEE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Is there additional
capacity in the Foods to Encourage Program?
Ms. KIM CONCRA: The Foods to Encourage Program now is working on an
individual basis with individual pantries. So I know that Lower-Cape Outreach, I believe, is
doing an F2E program in Brewster at the Council on Aging or else they just started it. I
know I heard that. I’m not sure if it started yet or not.
Delegate CHAFFEE: Thank you.
Ms. KIM CONCRA: You’re welcome.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Thank you, so much.
Ms. KIM CONCRA: Sure.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: And, once again, we are just very impressed with the
work of the County and all the hidden gems that are in our County. Thank you for bringing
them forward to us.
Ms. KIM CONCRA: Thank you for having us.

Summary and Discussions with Open Cape

• OpenCape is a fiber-optic network that consists currently of just over 500 miles
  of fiber that runs from Boston down through Brockton, down through the South
  Shore, across the Sagamore Bridge, back-and-forth across the Cape.
• OpenCape is a nonprofit organization.
• Currently building the network and following a strategy of connecting municipal
  clients, federal clients, and business clients that are on or near OpenCape
  network.
• It could cost somewhere north of $100 million to connect every home on the
  Cape but on a town by town basis cost not as great.
• Costs about $70,000 to go a mile.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Our next item is OpenCape. We are very pleased to
have the Executive Director Steven Johnston. I know you people are crazy busy.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: It’s good though.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: And I really appreciate your taking the time to come
in. We had an IT presentation at our last meeting and everybody had some questions about
OpenCape. I said this is perfect; we’ve been wanting to approach you to have you in. So,
welcome.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Well, we’re happy to be here. To my left
is Angela Hurwitz, she’s our Director of Client Solutions. We’re happy to answer -- I’ll give
you a brief update, and we’re happy to answer any and all questions.
I will say some of the questions I may not go into the specificity that you
would like and there’s a reason for that. It’s just that I’m competing with a very large
competitor in our marketplace, and I prefer them not to know everything I’m doing a hundred
percent of the time. I hope you can just respect that.
I’m happy to talk off-line and give you all the detail you want and more, but
some questions I may just decline to answer in this forum this evening.
So, since the last time I was here, you were in the other location.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Right. And we have some new members, so if you can kind of start with a general overview because there are probably many people in this room who may not be familiar with where you came from.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Okay. I'll try to make this quick. I do a lot. OpenCape is a fiber-optic network that consists of currently today just over 500 miles of fiber that runs from Boston down through Brockton, down through the South Shore, across the Sagamore Bridge, back-and-forth across the Cape. Some fiber out to Nantucket; no fiber out to Martha's Vineyard. We have a microwave connection out to the Vineyard. Fiber back-and-forth across the Cape, across the railroad bridge, out through New Bedford, Fall River, into Providence. And then in some of the off-Cape areas, we do have some connections up through Taunton. We provide service to Taunton; Taunton Municipal Light Plant. We provide all their connectivity for them as well as to Bridgewater College, Bridgewater State University. We’re one of the primary providers of Internet for them at the college.

Prior to, and I'm trying to remember the last time I was here, we had a partner that worked with us, a company called CapeNet. Their roles and responsibilities were to sell services on the network and then maintain the network. When I started in the fall of 2015, that was a highly ineffective relationship. We struggled for 8 to 12 months to try to rectify that. And in September 2016, it was obvious that that relationship was not going to be productive, so we terminated it.

At that time, we brought everything in-house. So OpenCape owes/owned all the fiber, all the equipment, the electronics, the pole placements, the licenses, et cetera. When we brought that on board, I added some staff and pretty much since the beginning of 2017 we've been operating OpenCape. We're a nonprofit organization.

The goal of the organization initially as an open access network was to encourage other ISPs, other providers to come and connect to us and connect Sandwich and Wellfleet and Truro and towns off-Cape. There wasn't as much demand as we had hoped for ISPs to come to the Cape for service. So, in a sense, OpenCape has been acting as an ISP, Internet Service Provider. I use a lot of vernacular. I apologize.

And since that January 2017, we've added about 150 clients, and we’ve been following a strict strategy to really focus on making the network strong and sustainable. In order for that to happen -- before we talk about fiber to the home and when are you going to get faster Internet at your house and that type of stuff, we have to talk about the infrastructure itself. And it's incredibly expensive to run and maintain the fiber network. And unless you have key core clients on the network, you will have difficulty paying the bills and fixing fiber and attaching fiber. So we worked really hard over the last year and a half to attract those type of clients. And I'm happy to say that we've done a great job of it. We now connect Southcoast Hospitals, their hospitals. Right now, we’re in the process of building out to the Falmouth -- Cape Cod Hospital and Falmouth. We’re connecting Falmouth Hospital to Cape Cod Hospital in Hyannis and over to their buildings in Industrial Park.

You know, it was shocking that the largest employer, the largest user of bandwidth on the Cape wasn't connected to OpenCape. And we worked really hard over the last year to get to that point and we’re doing that right now.

Likewise, we’ll be connecting pretty much all of Woods Hole. If you live in
Woods Hole, yay, you, because you're going to get a huge benefit from that. Primarily it used to be we connected WHOI and then everyone got their Internet from WHOI. So WHOI was the Internet Service Provider. Now we have direct connections into NOAA, USGS, MBL, pretty much a Pie-In-The-Sky and other integral Woods Hole locations and probably expanding that even further in Woods Hole.

So we've been really building, following the strategy of connecting municipal clients, federal clients, and business clients that are on or near our net. So we can do it quickly, and as we extend out, we can become closer to the community. So we're kind of building our network right now on the backbone of businesses who want to connect to the network.

And the huge differentiation here is we run a network that was purposely built 100 percent fiber. It's designed for delivering high-speed Internet. We don't deliver video. We don't turn on your lights and things like that. I mean you can do with your, you know, we're not running secure -- alarm systems and things like that. We deliver superfast Internet. And for this region to compete in the future, we will need that type of connectivity.

So we offer everything from a 20 megabit per second connection up a hundred gigabits per second. So we're like the primary provider at Joint Base Cape Cod. We're the only provider to have two redundant paths, two diverse and redundant paths into Joint Base Cape Cod. We provide a lot of connectivity over there. We're actually increasing that almost by 400 percent over the next few months. So those are things that we're doing currently.

We're doing a lot of work with towns, and I'm going to -- I won't give specifics just because I've had it backfire and work against me. Angela will jump in if I leave anything out.

We're working with a couple towns right now where Main Street was a problem where vendors who were connected to the incumbent provider could not process a credit card. So think about that. So think about economic development. You've got a hundred people in your store in the middle of summer and your town X has 30,000 individuals and all of the sudden it balloons to 105,000 individuals in the summer, and your store can't process credit cards and you can't get connectivity. That's an economic development problem.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Which is a small amount of data as well.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.

MS. ANGELA HURWITZ: It's not like it's a large amount.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes. And so we walked through these main streets and talked to vendors, and it's not just a one town issue; it's a multiple town issue. So, I'm happy to say we're in two particular venues right now. We are poised to finish building out where we would offer -- so, right now, I offer one kind of connectivity. I offer what's called Dedicated Symmetrical Connectivity. So if you take 100 meg service from us, your traditional Comcast service that you probably have is 150 megabits down and you probably get 10 or 20 megabits up. That's probably what you're supposed to get; you don't actually ever get that, but I'm not going to go into that. I'll refrain from that today.

What we deliver is Dedicated Symmetrical Internet. So if you buy a hundred megabits from us, you always get 100 megabits. It doesn't vacillate. It doesn't change. It doesn't go up or down depending whether we have, you know, a snow day or the busiest day
of the summer or whatnot. But that expense at that level of service is expensive because your upload and your download speeds are the same.

We've been working really hard in these downtown areas where we have a lot of density to offer a lower price service which requires we put some different technology into a location somewhere in the downtown area that allows me to offer a service that might be more easily compared to Fios where you get a shared service. You might, for a hundred dollars a month, get 3 or 400 megabits of service at your store or at your business. And for most people, that's plenty, that's more than enough, and even lower prices for those people who want less service. That's what we're going to unveil in some of these downtown locations where you can do this; we're offering much cheaper service. In one of these locations we're going to add a wireless overlay over the top of that so that in addition to, you know, if you're a -- let's say you're a really small business, you know, 64 percent of the businesses on the Cape have between one and four employees. Let's say you're a mom-and-pop shop and you only need to order supplies in your store and you need to do, you know, you're just streaming your Pandora in the store and maybe run one security camera, you can probably do that with wireless connection that we can offer.

So in one particular location we're going to pilot out both a wired connection and a wireless overlay. So depending on the price point that you want, if you want the reliability of wired connection, you pay a little bit more. If you want a wireless connection, you pay less. So we're going to roll that out one of these pilots that we're doing on one of the main streets.

We were lucky enough to work with -- I spent a lot of time talking to the Cape and Island delegation about this. In Falmouth, Representative Vieira and Representative -- Senator deMacedo were super helpful, you know, as far as some funds for -- through Falmouth with the EDIC. Likewise, Senator Cyr working with Barnstable and P-town also were able to secure some funds for -- in the latest Economic Development Bill that will allow us to do some of these activities. So we've got a lot of those things going on.

Likewise, we're continuing to build out to customers. I mean, I cruise buildings almost every day at this point, which is great. And we continue to craft our strategy in terms of how to best expand. Right now, it's very much on organic where it makes sense. If I build out really heavily into Woods Hole, it probably makes sense that we try a fiber-in-the-home pilot in Woods Hole where I've got a lot of researchers, people that use Internet heavily and would benefit from that. We're looking at some other options as well.

Likewise, everything we do, we look at the public benefit and there's a lot of projects we're working on right now. Obviously, the Outer Cape, the National Seashore, using technology on the beaches to help mitigate some of those issues. We're actually meeting with the National Seashore on Monday to work through some of those issues. I was at the Wellfleet meeting, you know, I think putting a call box on the beach is a great thing, but let's be a little more proactive. How do we not just react after the case? How do we try to stop these things before they happen, and there's some ways technology may help. We have to get the technology to the beach first.

So, I'm happy to answer questions.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: I just want to make a comment, too, for people who may not be aware of your history. And correct me if I'm wrong, my recollection is you
started with a $30 million grant to run cable that’s sort of a spine of the Cape?

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Sure. It was actually -- well, it was 38 million and there was some in-kind and some additional revenues, so it was closer to $40 million in total and built 375 miles of fiber, licensed all the poles. We built a data center over there. We refurbished the building that we utilize just down the street here.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: So after that initial infusion of catch, the massive work of connecting homes or municipalities or whatever you're doing --

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Right.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: -- you have to figure out then how to fund it. So your plan has been primarily to, as you say, get solid municipal contracts or business contracts to make sure that those are up and running.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Right.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Help you with your funding so you get some grants. Do you think in the future they'll ever be another massive $48 million infusion that you could take the next level?

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: It's a great question and it's something we wrestle with all the time. I mean I wish I had the wherewithal. You know, it would literally cost us --

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: We wish we had the money, not the wherewithal.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes. I'll tell you what, if I win the lottery -- if I go to buy a Mass. Millions ticket tonight and I win on Friday, we probably could connect the Cape.

But it probably would cost somewhere north of $100 million to connect every home on the Cape. Now if you look at that on a town by town basis, it's not as scary as it seems.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: No.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Right.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Okay, so you think about, you know, look at Provincetown. They have 4,277 resident houses, housing units in the city. So if you look at the scale, the national average to connect a home to fiber is about $2,500. When you do an entire town at once, we’re having this conversation with the town of Yarmouth right now where --

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: We’re having it with every town.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: -- we’re having it with a lot of towns and, you know, and the town manager in Yarmouth used to be the mayor of Westfield. So if you've read anything about fiber to the home, Westfield is like the Google of Western Mass., you know, they're leading that charge on connecting towns.

So the town of Yarmouth is getting great kind of intel from the process, and a lot of our prime contractors that build for us are actually doing that work. So I'm getting more feedback from the street on actually what is the real cost of connecting someone.

MS. ANGELA HURWITZ: Right.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: And if you're really efficient and you're going down the street and you’re connecting every home whether you want fiber or not; you may not want fiber at your house; you may not take the service right away --

Speaker MCAULIFFE: But it’s set up.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: But at least it’s set up so if you sell your house and someone else comes in there or you change your mind or whatever, you can do that. You can drive that number down as low as $1,000 or $800 in some cases if you’re superefficient, and that’s really the goal is to be superefficient.

And then you start looking at numbers where, yes, they’re still big numbers but Provincetown, if you do the math, if you're connecting 4,700 homes and let’s say it’s a thousand dollars a home, that’s just under $5 million. That's not an insurmountable amount of money.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Right.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Now I realize there’s wastewater issues, there’s all kinds of issues that we’re dealing with here on the Cape. So where does connectivity fall into that? You know, I'm waiting for someone from some town to step up and say, hey, we’re going to bond this and connect everyone, or we're going to do a 23L betterment and we’re going to do it.

If you wait for me to connect to you, it will take 150 years for me to generate all the revenue that I would need to connect the entire Cape.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Right. And that's why my question was I know it started as a dream of every home because of the, you know, the nature of today's world.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes, right.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: But the reality is once you get the main line set, it's that last bit --

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: The last mile.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: It's called the last mile, yes.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: -- yes, the last mile that is the -- that’s the devil's in the details for that.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: But as an open access network and it's one thing saying if we did connect -- let's say if we did connect, let’s say we connected all of Yarmouth as an open access network, if my phone rang and it was Verizon or Comcast or anyone else, and said, hey, we want to ride your fiber into Yarmouth and offer service. As an open access network, I'm compelled to sell them access versus it doesn't work the other way around.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Right.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Like if Comcast's builds out someplace and I called them and say, hey guys, I'd like to come into Falmouth and service them. They’re like yes, piss off.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Strike that.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: That's not going to happen so that's one of the benefits of what we're trying to achieve.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Good. Delegate Princi.

Delegate PRINCI: Thanks for being here today.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: No problem.

Delegate PRINCI: And thanks for all your work. And as you probably remember from the last time my concern being that the large amount of public funds you receive but yet the priority’s on mostly businesses and industries in the region, and it’s the residential customers that are kind of put back on the wayside.
You mentioned seasonal economy and because of the amount of wealth we have down here in the summertime, if residential access to fiber were available, a lot of that wealth could be sustainable throughout the year because people are recognizing that the quality of life here is good not just in the summer but year-round.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Sure.
Delegate PRINCI: And a lot of these folks that have these businesses and the wealth would be more likely to spend more time here if they had these types of capabilities. So I just urge you to hopefully continue to work hard towards reaching our residents in the region and not just the businesses.
But the question that I do have is on your website, it shows like the line -- the connections that go through the region.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.
Delegate PRINCI: It also like if you were to put in, and I urge other members to look into it; if you were to put in your address, it would show how close your proximity is to the connectability. Now let's just say I've done mine, and I'm about a half mile from the connection line. Do you have any possible statistics as to individual residences that are within a certain distance from the connection how -- is there any information relative to how the timeline would be for them to get connected?
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Sure. So, all good questions. I'm happy if you want to write me a check for $35,000 right now, I will connect your house tomorrow, that's how much it would be. It would cost me about $70,000 to go a mile in my world. And it is shockingly -- it's almost criminal; I've got to be honest with you. The bulk of that cost, 75 percent is the fees that I have to pay to attach to the poles.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Wow.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yeah so --
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Who owns the poles?
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Verizon and Eversource, okay. So when I go to build someplace, when I go to build to your house, I have to say I have to build out on these poles that are brand-new, and I have to license these poles. And they come out and they look at the poles and they say, okay, great, and then I have to get cleared. They have to do make-ready. They have to move stuff around, make room for us, and they have to -- and then they try to say well, you know, this pole’s really old. We have to replace that pole.
Ms. ANGÉLA HURWITZ: You have to replace that pole, meaning us.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Us. So that cost $18,000 or that's a $30,000 pole and we fight with them. So you may see me on the side of the road someday like pointing...
Delegate PRINCI: Is there anything that you can possibly do with the Department of Public Utilities to -- and the state legislature to possibly streamline that process and make it easier for our residents?
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: We've investigated. I mean that's a powerful -- those are powerful groups that you're going up against, and I prefer to spend what little money I have deploying service versus fighting a legal fight that I'll never win.
So here's what we’re doing. So, you know, it comes down to this, basically, for residential service is for me to generate the money that I would need to do it, it would just take forever.
So looking at the towns, and there’s a boatload of case history right now. I mean you look at all the towns that are connecting in Western Mass., tiny little towns like Alford, Massachusetts. I happen to -- I grew up in Western Mass., you know, there's 800 people that live in Alford and they all fiber their home now. Because they got together; they said this is important for us; they bonded it out, they add it to their tax bill.

I know, depending on where you live, I live in Sandwich, the last thing I want to do is add anything to my tax bill.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ:  However.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON:  Sorry, but that's one way to go about it and do it really effectively. Towns like Leverett and Westfield have done this, and Westfield is really interesting. There’s a case study, you know, they were a Comcast town, and their adoption rate when they started was immediately 50 percent. Now it's 75 percent of the town has switched over to what they call Whip City Fiber, which is Westfield's own fiber business. And it's been a dramatic savings because they can offer Internet at a much lower price. So that's -- we’re not ignoring the fiber-to-the-home market, the residential market. It’s just you also have to remember you have the advent of new technologies evolving all the time. And one very smart woman, who I have a tremendous amount of respect for, asked me my favorite question, "Is fiber the eight-track time of……."

Speaker MCAULIFFE:  Yes, because it's a Betamax.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON:  Okay? And she happens to be in this room, so I'm not going to point her out. But it's a great question. I always use that as my litmus test about what I'm doing, and it's not because with 5G -- the advent of 5G technologies which, realistically, we will not see here on the Cape for 10 years, okay, so that's realistically. I mean they're not going to go out and start, you know, connecting rural areas like the Cape with 5G technology in less than 10 years. And I hope I'm wrong, but I wouldn't count on it.

So we have to find -- and even the 5G, even if you’ve got great connectivity with your cell phone and you could bring that into your house and get awesome connectivity, 5G requires massive access points. For every mile in technology, you have to have a ton of access points. So if you live in historic downtown Provincetown, the last thing you want is a million access points going down your street sending out signals or wireless signals. Some towns are really adverse to that.

So we’re trying to position ourselves to be able to grow smart, to grow organically. And we’re doing stuff, we’re connecting businesses. I'll give you a perfect example. We connect Cape Space in Hyannis, the co-working in such a large facility. It's a huge success. Robbin runs a great business. There’re other places they are looking to expand, and one of those places where we’d be building into is a kind of mixed density neighborhood. It's business-residential. So there’s a perfect example of where I can build into an area that has existing businesses, but I can also offer residential service.

In order for me to offer residential service, I have to have all the tools and equipment. I need guys with trucks and ladders and hats. I mean we hardly ever go down, so I don't really need a lot of guys with trucks. And if you see why does Comcast have so many trucks? Well, because they're always broken.

My stuff doesn't break. Even though those four storms we had in the spring, we were on the ground, but our network never went down. We had poles snapped in half,
but our network never went down.

So we’re trying to use that really organic smart approach to grow. I wish I could grow faster. I really wish I could. As a nonprofit, I am having these conversations with some of the wealthy individuals that you’re talking about, you know, I think I told the story -- Andrew Carnegie was the richest guy in the world in 1900. He gave away the bulk of his fortune by 1910. We have seven and eight figure individuals on the Cape. It could change the entire outlook of their community with one gift. So we’re having some of those conversations, but that’s not the primary way I’m going to fund this. We’re operating a business. We operate it very much like a business. We operate almost much more like a for-profit than we do a nonprofit, but we take advantage of the benefits of being a nonprofit and reinvest everything back into growing the network.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Well, I think it's also important to note that we’re building it but we’re building it in a strong way. Getting to residents is absolutely a priority, and we work really hard every day to find a way that we can reach them.

But we can't skip over a lot of the businesses and a lot of the small businesses that we haven't reached yet either. So, you know, every time we build out to another business, we get that much closer to building to a smaller business to building to a resident. So, there’s, well, trust me: I live right around the corner. I'm on the line. When I -- I don’t know -- I remember a lot of you from my work with the County IT Department. So I left the County; I came back. I live around the corner, and I thought it was going to be a condition of my employment that I would be hooked up to OpenCape Internet, you know, at my house for testing.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: It's a short walk from your house to the office.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: But, you know, it's all part of the -- we’re having these discussions, like Steve said earlier, with every town. We’re trying every single town, which has been great, is working really hard too. It’s not just us. The towns themselves are coming up with great ideas, plans, looking for funding. We've got people in some towns that are -- I can't say it's like not traditional government, they are ready to move. They are saying we’re in, what can we do to support you to get this to move as fast as you can? And that's great because we all know it usually takes quite some time and then that's what -- it slows everything down and technology changes.

So it's been, I would say, probably the last six to eight months have been absolutely fantastic.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Well, I consider you still very, very new.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Yes.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: You know, you are. Considering what you've accomplished, you are -- I mean you're talking 2017-2018 are some of your major changes.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Right.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: So you really are in your infancy in terms of where your developments going.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: We’re still startup in that sense, yes.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Yes. Delegate Moran and then I'll go to --

Delegate MORAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm interested in, you know, how you’re looking at growing. For example, you talk about the Western Mass. models.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Uh-huh.
Delegate MORAN: I know there are some municipal utility models; do you see -- two questions, but this is the first. Do you see yourself kind of, you know, contracting with a municipal utility, for example? Could that be an option where, you know, or that, you know, a town might use, for example, an Enterprise Fund?

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Sure. Just to answer that question, the last public municipal light plant on the Cape was Provincetown; 1940 I think they handed that over to NSTAR, somewhere in that range.
Delegate O’MALLEY: Later.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Later, okay.
Delegate O’MALLEY: Later, yes.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: But that doesn't mean that you have to actually generate electricity to have a municipal light plant. I know that makes no sense but, the way the laws are written and if you look at all the cases that have happened, a place like Alford, Mass., I mentioned 800 people; they formed a municipal light plant, and there's like three people that sit on the board and they work out of someone's garage. There’s no businesses in Alford whatsoever.

Full disclosure, I happen to own some land in Alford, so I know a little bit about it. But they got together, and they formed a municipal light plant. And what that basically allows the town to do is it allows them some relief in attaching the poles in their own municipal footprint.

So, when I bill for a municipality, I can charge less because I don't have to license the poles. Towns can do something called a municipal lien, and say, hey, Eversource; hey, Verizon, the pole sits in our dirt, and we have a space that is allocated typically toward your fire alarm. Now, if you're not using your fire alarm space, in the town of Falmouth, you're currently using your fire alarm space so there’s not really a space for the municipal lien usage. But I can't use that -- if I build a municipal lien, I can only service municipal clients. I can't sell services to residential or whatnot.

But if the town becomes the ISP, the Internet Service Provider per se, by having a municipal light plant -- this is what they did in Chattanooga. So Chattanooga, a huge, you know, “Gig City.” And they don’t have a municipal light plant, and they added this and they started offering Internet. And they got great connectivity on the poles because they didn't have to pay fees, and they offered the whole city connectivity, where I would sell service to the town of Falmouth or the town of Yarmouth or whomever and they would push it out or contract less to push it out to all the residents.

Delegate MORAN: So the municipality has the access and you would contract the service?
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Right.
Delegate MORAN: So take that another step. If you're pole, another example, in Falmouth we're going to be doing a substantial amount of building all the way for a pretty good part of Route 28; the roads going to be ripped up. Is there a benefit, I don't know what they call it, "Dig Right" or something?
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Dig Once.
Delegate MORAN: Okay. Dig Once. You coordinate varying utilities at opportunities and that's kind of a complete misnomer when you say “you coordinate utilities”
in the same sentence. And it's tremendously expensive and tremendously time-consuming, but is that -- does that make it easier for you or less expensive or is that something you would consider?

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Do you want to answer that?
Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Well, the town of Falmouth, actually, is kind of good example. We're on most of 28 in the town of Falmouth. And so we're already --
Delegate MORAN: Teaticket; East Falmouth, I'm talking about?
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.
Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Yes.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes, we go right up 28. That is actually the busiest leg of the network between Hyannis and Falmouth. That's the most traffic. We have a lot of business, a lot of industry. Particularly, there's a lot of data moving from WHOI and MBL and those guys up through to Hyannis but go ahead.
Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: So the towns also are a little different, and that's what kind of makes it great is each town can look at what is going to work for them. Some towns might say, you know what, we want to roll this out for our residents. We want to make maybe a profit center, at least make sure that we're contributing to it in some way so it sustainable; they can do it that way.
The Town of Barnstable, for example, Barnstable has -- built its own fiber network for its municipal building's -- not too many years ago, it's pretty good, it's pretty new, but they licensed it commercially, so they could do things a little differently.
Now, Falmouth, for example, is actually the most connected town to OpenCape. So rather than what happens when you have your own municipal network is now you're the ones rolling the trucks and, you know, and there's different responsibilities. You could still have us do it, but Falmouth did it. They didn't want to get into that business, so they were smart.
They had us come in; they had us connect all their buildings, and we are their network. And so they're a residence and they're commercial businesses, there's no restriction on any of them getting service which makes it a little different. If we use the municipal lien example that Steve mentioned, they wouldn't be able to do that. You could service your residents, or you could service -- or we could service your residents through you or you would, again, have to form a plan where you were distributing the service as Steve mentioned before.
So it's kind of nice because it depends on each town and how they want to do that.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: So to answer your question about the conduit. Conduit is great for transport. And on the Outer-Cape, I would encourage the Outer-Cape towns to think about transport just because the harsh marine environment. I mean, we use some armored Plenum fiber in some of the places out in like P-town and Truro because the wind is so fierce and the sand acts like a sandblaster. So we beefed up some of our main fiber out there because it takes real abuse. It will ultimately shorten the life of the fiber.
But being necessarily underground doesn't always help, and I'll tell you why. For example, let's say we're building out downtown Falmouth. If I was coming down Main Street and I'm in conduit, I still have to get out of the conduit to get into the buildings. So
that means I'm coming out of the conduit through the street through a manhole, digging up your sidewalk or cutting across your sidewalk, or somehow I've got to make that happen.

So if it was an evergreen situation where we were building a new Mashpee Commons, you know, I would lay conduit everywhere, absolutely. But in an existing place, in an existing build, sometimes poles are easy.

Delegate MORAN: Well, I didn’t make clear; in my example, we are getting rid of the poles. We’re burying everything.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Okay. Then yes.
Delegate MORAN: Not that it's really happening, it's an example.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: And then I guess I have no choice.
Delegate MORAN: Okay, okay.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Did you get your two questions?
Delegate MORAN: Yes. Thank you.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: I'm going to go to Delegate McCutcheon, and then I have a couple other people.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: I was wondering about your concern about the nonprofit status of your company and the questions about whether you could receive government funding for purchasing the license for the poles.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.
Acting Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Aren’t the poles already subsidized in the purchase by, for example, the electric company?

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: It would seem -- I don't know how the electric company’s interworkings work. It would seem the electric company pole replenishment system is basically to tax me every -- which I don't want to. I'll give you the perfect example.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: I don’t mean paranoid.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: No, I'm paranoid. I’ve learned to be paranoid. Coastal Study Center, incredibly good organization in Provincetown, trying to build out to it, and I have 10 poles to connect to. And this third pole on the line is a pole that they, the electric company, deemed it needed to be replaced.

And so what I thought was going to be a $10,000 bill that the Center for Coastal Studies would pay for turned into a $38,000 bill because it was a big pole.

Now, this is where having great staff comes into play. My outside plant manager is a guy who worked for Verizon for 40 years and he knows everything about telephone poles; I'm not even kidding you. He went out and saw -- this just happened a year ago. The pole we’re talking about was condemned by Eversource in 2006. They put a tag on it. There’s tags that go on poles that says, “This is the status of the pole and here’s when we’re condemning it,” 2006.

So now were at 2017 and they hadn't replaced the pole. They were just waiting for some stupid sucker like me to come along and try to attach to it to say oh, Steve, thanks so much, you’ve got to buy us a new pole here. That seems to be their replacement program. So I don’t --

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Well, after you replaced their equipment, do you have any ownership interest in it at all?
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: No, none at all. None whatsoever.
Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: No.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: No.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate O'Malley.
Delegate O'MALLEY: It seems to me that you've opened up a very interesting discussion here, and I'm interested in particularly the municipal ownership because I mean clearly on the Cape here, we are at the mercy of the utilities, whether it's Eversource, whether it's Entergy at Pilgrim, you know, or Comcast, we have to do whatever they say.

And the municipal ownership model strikes me as one that might be worth exploring. Clearly for it to happen is going to require a lot of them coming in on it. I mean I guess what I'm understanding would be each municipality would form a municipal Internet service company, bonded, do it for everyone.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Right. Well, so --
Delegate O'MALLEY: And then make the loan --
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: -- there's different models there. So, I could provide you with the data and even some great case studies of certain towns like towns like Leverett and whatever and just said we're just going to do it ourselves.

Delegate O'MALLEY: Yes.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: We're not going to play with the rest of the group. Other folks have -- two, or three towns have got together and worked collaboratively, and I know in some places on the Cape that's a challenge. I totally understand that. So, there's two ways to go about it but --

Delegate O'MALLEY: Okay. I hear what you're saying.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.
Delegate O'MALLEY: It's not dependent upon everyone being involved?
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: No. Like you can say to me today, you know, and David and I have talked about this, that the Town of Provincetown, we're going to bond this out, and we're going to form an MLP. We're going to have a committee that sits on it, decides, do we go from the West End to the East End or the East End to the West End; how do we build it out? What do we do?

And it's going to cost, you know, when you look at a place like Provincetown, it's not a huge amount of money. It's doable. And when you start looking at it town by town, now, yes, they would be some cost savings. If I'm ordering fiber and say I'm going to buy this fiber for Brewster and P-town and Sandwich and Bourne then, yes, I'm buying it at much more affordable prices and using crews that I can guarantee my crews work for six to eight months I'm going to save money. It's all about efficiency. It becomes about -- that's when it comes to studying.

Delegate O'MALLEY: Do you see any role for Barnstable County in facilitating this discussion?

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Again, a great question, something that Jack and I have talked about. Is Jack still here? Yes, he is.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Until the bitter end.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Until the bitter end. He's a glutton for punishment. Jack and I have had multiple conversations about this, about the role that the County could play. Could the County act as the ISP and bond that, and we sell service to the
County and then the County sells it to the towns? It really becomes a dynamic between the towns and the County at that point.

I would sell service to anyone, and I will work with anyone to get this done. We are much more like -- the less talking and the more doing we can do, the better. It suits me very fine.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Right. And I will say too like with all the towns that we’ve talked to, it's almost like every single one has a different agenda, has a different plan, and they all have good plans. Like no one has the bad plan. It's like, oh this, that's going to work really well for this area. This one, they're doing this. So it's really neat how they’re able to do that.

But I will say I think in our experience so far the number one thing that makes it move forward is the leadership at the town level being ready to move forward or the leader -- I guess it doesn't even always have to be at the town level because one of the towns we’re working with, not the town as much as some groups affiliated with the town, it has to be really people ready to do it, ready to move forward with it, ready to go I'm informed. This is a yes, let's keep going. Otherwise, it just becomes something that we talk about for a long time that doesn't go anywhere.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Correct.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: It's a lot of work and a big project.
MS. ANGELA HURWITZ: Right.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: And we’ve learned from wastewater it's taken us a decade in the Cape Cod Commission to get people to talk to each other to work on it.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Right.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: And this is, you know, and this isn't even as costly.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Right. Oh, exactly. And in fairness to wastewater because, you know, we at least have Comcast. Yay. And I have Comcast at my house.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: We also have septic tanks.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes, exactly. I've got that. Point taken. I have not reinvented the wheel here. My Internet is not so amazingly better that, you know, yes, it is insignificantly better. I'm not saying that, but it’s still Internet access. And, yes, it's a very different delivery model, and it's a solution for the future versus the past, retrofitting the past. But I understand that the towns have a lot of priorities to organize. But when it comes to keeping businesses here that are already here, that's important.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Right.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Creating jobs and trying to drive economic development. I mean I really see OpenCape as an economic development engine, that's what it is.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Right.
Delegate OHMAN: I agree.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Green.
Delegate GREEN: Thank you. So I'm very grateful that you're here, and I hope this is the first of many conversations we have with you.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Sure.
Delegate GREEN: How do we get in touch with you? Do you have business
cards for us?

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Sure, yes. We’re super like we even have our cell phone on a business; you can call me 24 hours a day if you want.
Delegate GREEN: So do you want to give us phone numbers or --
Delegate MORAN: It’s true.
Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: I'm happy to forward all of that information to Janice.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Delegate Moran has called me more than once.
Delegate MORAN: Yes, truly.
Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: She can send that out to you.
Delegate GREEN: Truly, this is such an important part of our community, and I'm really glad that you're talking to Jack. And I know that the towns each have their own needs as they do with every issue out there.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.
Delegate GREEN: However, I think as we're siloed into our little towns and we’re not communicating across towns, there is a benefit for the County to really look into this.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Sure.
Delegate GREEN: And to collaborate and talk with you if there isn't possible solutions.
I did want to ask you, because I am from Wellfleet, I did see you at the shark forum.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.
Delegate GREEN: And I appreciate you being there. That was very -- a very powerful evening, and I’m pleased to hear that you’re talking about funding with our Cape delegation --
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.
Delegate GREEN: -- as far as this issue with the sharks as sort of a springing off point to dovetail onto what you're doing. So am I hearing what you're saying is that there will be some funding to get from -- what I presume you go down the whole length of the Cape --
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes, we run -- we run --
Delegate GREEN: -- to all the beaches and then all of --
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: We currently don't run into any of the beaches.
Delegate O’MALLEY: No.
Delegate GREEN: No, no, but you run right down Route 6, let's say in Wellfleet?

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: In some cases, yes, where some cases are on the high transmission lines, and I wasn't here when that decision was made. I think in an effort to save the money they put the fiber up on -- which creates a little bit of a problem for me; I'll be honest with you, and it impacts Wellfleet somewhat.
I go through Wellfleet. The majority of the places I'm not on Route 6; I'm up on the high transmission lines.
Delegate GREEN: Wow.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: So, I have to get off that which is a little costly because those are -- that's big span coverage, like I've got some 7 to 800-foot spans there which is big cable for me. I can get off and that's fine. But once I get off, I have to have a plan to build out to, you know, to fix that. So it can be done. We connect part of Wellfleet, Preservation Hall, and things like that, the library, the fire department, so forth and so on. But it is -- I viewed the shark -- I viewed the beach issue/shark issue as almost as a separate issue from -- I'm not going to -- if I build out to all the beaches, I mean this is what our plan is; we would donate the connectivity to the beaches. If they were to use technology for shark monitoring, I don't see that as a revenue stream for us. Maybe down the road as we build in and I cancel service to AT&T and, you know, Verizon and whatnot to bring their cell -- rather than they can bring their cell traffic in that way. We already connect to 70 AT&T cell towers, and we're not going to put cell towers out on the beaches. That can happen.

One of the things we want to meet with Brian and Kathy about is to talk about what needs to, you know, I met a lot with George to talk about this at the seashore. But Brian is going to have his own ideas, and I want to get his sense of what he's looking for, so we can craft a solution that works for every town that has a National Seashore beach.

Delegate GREEN: Well, that would be really helpful. I mean, truly, that would make a huge difference. But also I wanted to ask you as you're building out to the beaches, will all the small businesses and businesses that are on those routes as well as the residents have access because I mean, truly, there are people in my town who have absolutely no access.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Right.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: They call us. We know.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes, and we've talking to them.

Delegate GREEN: There have been really truly horrific health issues that have happened and that is a problem in my town.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: It's a huge problem. I mean, I've talked to policeman, I've literally talked to policemen who had to pull over their car, knock on someone's door so they could make a phone call because they couldn't get radio connectivity, or the ambulance came here from Provincetown to Hyannis staying in contact with the hospital. We get this. We get it an issue.

When I'm building out to the beaches, if we indeed do that, I have to use a slightly different technology to offer residential service, and that means I need to rather than just say hook up your house and then your house and these one offs, I have to have enough residential clients in one area to really make it work financially. Otherwise, it becomes -- remember I talked about that spectrum, that $800-$2,500 spectrum?

Delegate GREEN: Right.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Part of Wellfleet is on that $2,500 spectrum --

Delegate GREEN: I'm sure.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: -- because the houses are far apart. The houses that are in the National Seashore, there's no pole lines to some of them. I mean that's the scary part. I go out there and there's like no telephone poles anywhere. And when you start setting telephone poles, it gets more expensive.
Delegate GREEN: And it only makes sense that you use conduit because of the salt spray and everything else.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Exactly.

Delegate GREEN: I mean this is a big issue and if -- when you do go to the beaches, I do hope that you will consider that because it’s really a health risk for a lot of the people.

The other thing I was curious about is how do you upgrade over time, you know, as the 5G technology becomes available, how does that work?

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Sure. So, normally I have like a piece of fiber with me that I use as a prop. The shelf life of the fiber that we use is -- it's about 30 years. So we've got a nice shelf life there.

The electronics on the other end of it we change all the time as we continue to grow, we’re changing out electronics, the cards that we put in the electronics, so really I don't have to restring fiber except when it's damaged or cut or anything like that or the sheathing or squirrels eat it. Squirrels love to eat our fiber for some reason, so they eat that up. So that's the maintenance we have to do.

But in terms of upgrading like for 5G, so I have like -- when I look at my business model from a macro perspective, I have -- the Internet service that I provide and then the service that I provide to cellular carriers what's called "backhaul," and that's where I'm connecting their towers or their places where they're moving data. You know how a cell phone works, you know, I pick up this phone to call you, and it pings off that big giant tower down here at the end of my building, okay, and then it travels. It knows where you are, and it travels through the Internet to a tower closest to you and then broadcasts that signal out. That's the backhaul part of the connectivity through the cell service. So like for AT&T, we connected 70 -- almost 70 towers here on the Cape; I can move a ton of data now compared to what used to be copper. So that's why you’re probably seeing less phone calls dropped. It doesn't mean you have more bars on your phone; it just means you have better connectivity and more of it.

Delegate GREEN: But I have no service in the summertime in my property.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Right.

Delegate GREEN: And as the population diminishes, I get better service.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Yes.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Right. That's a signal strength issue versus a connectivity issue. But I hear you; you're preaching to the choir here; I get it, and we want to do something about it. I just need to figure out -- our goal is to -- maybe the National Seashore, draw some conclusions for that, and then come back and talk to all the town managers on the Outer-Cape about -- and this isn't just going to be an Outer-Cape issue. Eventually, it's going to be a Falmouth issue; it's going to be a Sandwich issue; it's going to be a Bourne issue. I mean, it's going to affect all of us at some point but, really, get an idea of what we're going to do on the National Seashore and then go from there.

Delegate GREEN: Thank you.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Killion.

Delegate GREEN: Thank you and I really appreciate you being here. Thank you.
Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Just to add, I think like you’re bringing up the sharks and whatnot, and with Janice giving out our contact information, that is one issue that came to us. Issues come to us all the time. So remember that when you think about reaching out. Like, some of the best ideas have come from someone going, hey, what about keeping seniors aging in their home; how could we use the -- and we all know, how could we use the Internet to do that? And that becomes a conversation that we start having, dialogue about how can we do that? How can connectivity happen?

I would say, also, it is amazing how many people are really thinking forward, and they realize that it doesn't have to -- you don't have to plug in whatever the problem is to have the Internet and technology be part of the solution. There's so many people that come to us whether its schools wanting to connect, Public Safety wanted to do things differently, healthcare looking to solve problems, and that's where the Cape is in a really good position is because we have so many of those great thinkers here, and we have so many of those doers’ here.

So, you know, I always laugh that it’s like we get a chance to participate in so many great projects and we sell Internet to do that. So --

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Delegate Killion.

Delegate KILLION: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Good afternoon. Thank you for attending. I think it's important for folks to realize we’ve talked about distributing networks, utilities Verizon and Eversource. It's important to understand they're very heavily regulated industries, and the regulations force them to spend a certain amount of money every year on their infrastructure to maintain and repair it. And even if they wanted to let OpenCape hang cables, they couldn't do it because any costs that would be associated with that would then be, in theory, passed along to electric customers and it's illegal to do that.

So those costs need to be separated out in order for the systems to be installed. Just like when Comcast came down, they had to pay to hang the cables and that’s the way the system works.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes, Comcast was immediately -- if Eversource let me on poles for free, Comcast would immediately file a lawsuit because it would be, you know, unfair treatment.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Right.

Delegate KILLION: Correct. And they couldn't do it anyway, the utilities couldn't do that anyway.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Well, Eversource did say, just so you know, Eversource did allow us to put our fiber -- we use this all dielectric self-supporting fiber in the -- we’re up in the neutral, the power gain, if you will. So there's 42 inches between the electric feed and the lowest commercial feed like Verizon or Comcast; they let us go right at the bottom of that neutral area so that we could build more fiber faster, which was actually -- they didn't have to do that so, yay, Eversource. They did a good thing. It allowed us to save a bunch of money while we were building fiber. National Grid did not allow us to do that off Cape.

Delegate KILLION: So you -- I believe you said you've only been here since 2015; is that correct?

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.

Delegate KILLION: So, a lot of the stuff I know the Delegate from
Barnstable, he’s, you know, we've been around for a while since this started.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.

Delegate KILLION: So approximately what percentage of the capacity are we currently using on this network and the number of actual customers as a percentage are we servicing or are you servicing?

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: We’re using about 5 percent of our overall aggregate network.

Delegate KILLION: Yes.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: That's just because -- and there's a specific reason for that. Every chance I get to overbuild, I do. When I say that, let's say I’m connecting your business and let’s say you only need 24 strands. Let's say to service you, maybe I only need five strands of fiber. Fiber is not the cost barrier here. It cost me a 24 strand of fiber --

Delegate KILLION: Yes, it's the labor.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: -- per linear foot, its 50 cents.

Delegate KILLION: Yes.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Of 78 strands, 75 cents. So every time I bill fiber I’m overbuilding because I know we’re going to need more down the road. And so in that sense, that's why we included -- our distance may not have increased that much but our amount of fiber we have, the fiber miles we have has increased pretty significantly. So that's why it seems like the percentage is low. Different legs have much more usage than other legs of the network.

We created a whole ring topology because we connect every business -- every location we connect, we connect back actually to two locations. So think about it, you know, if I connect your business or hospital or whatnot, if one of those connections is severed, accident, storm, swirls, whatever, the guy with a backhoe, the system automatically reroutes and comes around the other way. That's a dramatic difference from what Comcast does where they single thread all their connections. So if that one thread connection through Comcast goes down, you're down.

For me, I can lose one leg of the stool and you'd still be up and running while I fix the other leg. So, that kind of answers your question. As far as the amount of people I serve, I mean I serve about 250 organizations right now.

Delegate KILLION: Which is a percentage of customers on the Cape is small, less then --

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Relatively, I mean there's -- if you look at --

Delegate KILLION: About 2 percent.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes, if you look at -- yes, if you segment it that way. If you look at the way I've segmented the market to say, okay, there's 200 of the largest businesses on the Cape.

Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: Right.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: If I can connect those businesses, that makes sure that I can keep the lights on, pay maintenance, do all the things that I need to expand the network and that's really -- has been our focus. So, ultimately, I can service the residential clients.
Delegate KILLION: And I understand that, but I think the frustration that I felt and folks that I’ve spoken to in my town is the fact that this was sold on how great it was going to be for the Cape.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Correct.
Delegate KILLION: It’s $40 million seven or eight years ago.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: True.
Delegate KILLION: And the benefits were going to be fantastic, and they really haven’t panned out. I think you’ve been connecting customers for probably six years at least. It hasn’t --

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: We went live in --
Ms. ANGELA HURWITZ: 2013.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes, the spring of 2013.
Delegate KILLION: Yes.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: And I happen to live in your town, so I share some of your frustration. I share some of the frustration with the town, and I'll be bluntly honest here, of all the towns on the Cape, Sandwich has the absolute worst agenda on this issue, and I'll tell you why.

We provide through the Barnstable County, through Jack's office. We connect 30 different locations with the RWAN. And the idea of the RWAN, the Regional Wide Area Network, was to give at least some of the smaller towns a foot up on connectivity to share the cost, towns like Truro and Wellfleet and P-town and Eastham and in some cases maybe Bourne even though it's not a small town but was going through some issues.

Sandwich is taking the RWAN and for whatever reason, and I know Mike Toohey really well; I've talked to Bud about this, and it's like I'm giving you a fire hose of connectivity and you've got it shrunk right down. They're throttling it down to a pinprick. It's like trickling through the town, and I can't get the town to connect any of its buildings. The new fire safety complex, we weren't even a thought. We weren't even a vision to connect there, and every other town at this table is connecting their fire, their police; they have multiple redundant. Now if that had happened, if someone had the foresight even though I went in there and met with Bud and met with Mike and talked to them about it, if someone had the foresight to connect them, I could have connected the Golden Triangle. I could have connected Canterbury; I could have connected all those places.

So Sandwich and I told the EDIC in a meeting I had with them two months ago; they need to get their act together in terms of having a plan for broadband because currently it doesn't exist. And that's the God's honest truth, and I can say that as a resident.

Delegate KILLION: But I think in terms of the overlay, the wireless overlay, you seem to think it's going to take 10 years. I don't think it will take that. It's really going to come down to economics for a private entity to do that.

Have you entertained, or have you even spoken with a company like Verizon who haven't come over the bridge with Fios because of cost but clearly they could if they could find a way to connect --

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: They're not -- they're never going to come over the bridge. I'm just going to dispel that myth right now. I've heard the executives at Verizon tell me this directly. They will not come over the bridge.

We have 215,000 households on the Cape. It is not financially justifiable for
them to go over the bridge. They’re not going to and they never will. They’ll continue to
serve their legacy clients but they -- I don’t even compete with them anymore. I don’t even --
they never compete for any of the business that we’re doing on the Cape. Our sole
competition in this area is Comcast. And if they probably could pull out, they probably
would. And that’s just the honest truth. So I wouldn't wait for Verizon to come over. We’ve
talked to Verizon. They know we’re an open access network. The only way that we’re going
to get 5G deployed here is either they’re using -- riding our fiber to do the most cost
effectively or we’re getting unlicensed ISPs -- we’re not unlicensed -- ISPs using the
unlicensed 5G spectrum, which we have a partner who’s looking into doing that. We’re
going to test it in one of the major downtown areas, but this isn’t Verizon or Comcast. This
is a group that everyone -- no one’s ever heard of but that doesn’t necessarily mean its bad.

But we’re very close to doing a deal with those guys because Verizon doesn’t
want to come here. They’re shedding their copper units. They don’t want to invest in the
fiber.

Delegate KILLION: I can understand that but, obviously, when it comes to
emerging and evolving technology, I’ve learned to never say never because you don’t know
what the next technology down the road will be, how less expensive it will be in terms of
maintenance alone.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.
Delegate KILLION: So that being said, it wasn’t mentioned -- I mentioned
them by name, but there are, obviously, other companies out there because I think the reality
is you are going to try and connect every or more homes or as many homes on Cape that
want it, you’re talking about a five -- a minimum of five to ten-year buildout. It’s probably
like 20 years at this point.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: You’re talking about that, you know, let's
say someone presented me with a check for the hundred and twenty-five million dollars.
Delegate KILLION: Okay, but no one’s going to do that. I’m just saying
practically speaking --

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Yes.
Delegate KILLION: That’s the only way you’re going to --
Speaker MCAULIFFE: We need to kind of pull this in.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Organically yes, we could --
Speaker MCAULIFFE: I’m losing the room.
Delegate MORAN: I know, we have elections --
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Well, I know but I know people have meetings they
have to get to, and I told them that I would -- and I apologize to you that it comes on you. I
should have --

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: And I'm happy to talk off-line with you
about this.
Delegate KILLION: Okay.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Yes, why don’t you -- yes, talk, you can talk.
I want to thank you, so much and, obviously, this is a concern for the Cape and something
that I think that the Assembly may even ruminate on and see if there’s some way that the
County can also help.

Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: And I will say, you know, Jack was very
vocal and did some good work. I think actually we had met with Jack as well as Randy Hunt to talk about the concept of having a regional ISP scenario and, you know, to Jack’s credit, I think this was a time -- he's not here.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: He left at the bitter end. Sorry.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Okay. Whether he, you know, the County was going through a bunch of stuff.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Right.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: And I don’t know --
Speaker MCAULIFFE: It may be time to revisit that.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: And I don’t know that there was a lot of faith in the County-led initiative, and I’ll just say it ......

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Right. Well, no, I mean I think you’ve given us plenty of food for thought, and I think that it may be something that the Delegates will continue to pursue in terms of revisiting because I think as it’s a priority for you, we know it’s essential to the Cape.

Thank you, so much.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: No problem.
MS. ANGELA HURWITZ: You’re welcome.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: I appreciate your coming in.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: If anyone has more questions --
MS. ANGELA HURWITZ: We’ll give Janice our contact information.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Yes. Okay.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Just pick up the phone and -- here’s some cards with me but I’m happy to give them out.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: Great.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: So I’m happy to talk about this all day long.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Thank you.
Exec. Dir. STEVEN JOHNSTON: Not all night long, all day long.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: We don’t have public officials here I don’t believe.
Any communication from members of the public?
Speaker MCAULIFFE: We convene the Assembly.

Assembly Convenes

Speaker MCAULIFFE: I don’t believe we have committee reports; do we?
CLERK O’CONNELL: No.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: No.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: A report from the Clerk.

Summary and Report from the Clerk
- Clerk visited the State House and House Clerk Steven James, and offices of Senator Cyr and Representative Peake.
- Update regarding upcoming Assembly schedule through December 2018.
• Next Assembly meeting November 7th, 2018.
• County Offices closed at Noon on November 21st, 2018 so there will be no Assembly meeting on that day unless held elsewhere.
• Notification of MMA Conference in January 2019.
• Assembly Holiday Gathering will be scheduled for December 19th, 2018 after the meeting unless there is a lack of interest.

Clerk O’CONNELL: I’m going to go really quickly. A, what a fantastic tour to the State House; I just can’t say enough about how I was treated there. Thank you to the Wellfleet Delegate for also making contact and mentioning you know it would be okay to stop by Senator Cyr’s office and Representative Peake’s office, which I did. I was able to actually obtain some native organic cranberries from a certain individual that I backpacked up to Boston and delivered those to some people there as well.

And just a reminder that this month has five Wednesdays, so that means in terms of sports, I call it the bye week. You sort of have a bye week this month. Next time we’ll be meeting on November 7.

November 7 is possibly the only time you will meet in November. The 21st is Thanksgiving Eve, the County closes at noon, so unless you chose to meet somewhere else that would open their facility, the Assembly does not meet when the County is closed, and the facility is closed.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Could we have people contact you with a preference, and if we have a preference to meet that day. I know a lot of people have plans for the holiday and they wouldn’t be attending anyway. But we could see if we could find a place to meet if people wanted to meet on the 21st. If we don’t have a quorum, there’s no point.

CLERK O’CONNELL: And I really need to know sooner versus later so I’m going to say let me know by Friday because you’ve got to schedule these places and make those types of arrangements.

Also, just a reminder that the MMA conference is scheduled. The information is up and available on the website for MMA. It’s the 18th and 19th. And from my perspective, because I’ve been going now for seven or eight years, this is probably the best agenda speakers, et cetera, that I’ve seen in all the years I’ve been going. They’ve really stepped it up. They really stepped up their game, and they’re offering some very, very worthwhile things to take advantage of.

What I will do this year is register people who want to go to the conference. I will continue doing that but based on the debacle that I had last year, I’m going to say that you will be responsible for booking your own hotel reservation. Once you have paid for that, produce a receipt, turn it into me, and I will get your reimbursed. I think that’s the safest way to go with that end of it.

And other than that, there are apples on the back table. Please feel free to take them. And if you’re interested in a holiday gathering this year, that’s another thing that I need to think about, scheduling with a local restaurant and that would be December 19th. Well, last year you wanted to do it. I don’t know if you will this year. I’ll need a consensus on that.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: By Friday.
CLERK O’CONNELL: Yes.
Speaker MCAULIFFE: People weigh in on Wednesday before Thanksgiving and holiday.

Clerk O’CONNELL: If I hear nothing about that, I’m going to presume that if you’re not objecting then I’m going to go ahead and schedule it. But there are a lot of things that will be coming up including review for RPP. That’s going to be coming up in December. So there are a lot of things that need to happen for what could potentially be three remaining Assembly meetings for calendar year ’18.

Delegate OHMAN: Wow.

Clerk O’CONNELL: It’s going fast and that's it.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Thank you.

Summary and Other Business

- Office of Campaign Finance Reports due by 10/26/18.
- Proposed resolution 18-02 submitted by delegate Princi – regarding FY20 department budget reviews by Assembly of Delegates.
- Delegate Killion reported that the Barnstable County Coastal Management Committee (BCCMC) will be holding its first meeting next week.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Any other business? Yes, Delegate Princi.

Delegate PRINCI: Just to remind Delegates that I believe on -- I think its October 26, the Office of Campaign Finances is requesting reports be submitted.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Yes.

Delegate PRINCI: And, also, more Assembly business. After listening to past discussions regarding the budget, the committees, and listening to feedback from various town stakeholders, I’m submitting a resolution that looks to follow through with what I’ve heard at the last meetings after presenting to have the full Assembly hear all of the budget presentations.

It’s also co-sponsored by the Falmouth Delegate, Wellfleet Delegate, and the Harwich Delegate.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: So this will go on our next agenda then for an official vote.

Yes, Delegate Killion.

Delegate KILLION: Just to let the Assembly know the Barnstable County Coastal Management Committee, which we voted on several months ago, we’ll be holding our first meeting next week.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: Excellent. Anything else? Good luck in the election. I'll take a motion.

Deputy Speaker MCCUTCHEON: Motion to adjourn.

Delegate MORAN: Second.

Speaker MCAULIFFE: We are adjourned.

Whereupon, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the Assembly of Delegates at 6:05 p.m.
Submitted by:

Janice O’Connell, Clerk
Assembly of Delegates

List of materials used at the meeting:
• Business Calendar of 10/17/18
• Unapproved Journal of Proceedings of 10/3/18
• Cooperative Extension Horticulture Program - Master Gardener Association brochure - handout
• Cooperative Extension Nutrition Program - Buy Fresh Buy Local flyer – handout
• Cooperative Extension Nutrition Program – Foods to Encourage Locations – handout
• Proposed Resolution 18-02 submitted by Delegate Prince (Barnstable)