

*Sara Coy*  
*approved*  
*4/9/26*

HYANNIS FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Date of Meeting:	Thursday, March 26, 2026
Meeting Place:	95 High School Road Extension, Hyannis, MA 02601 and Zoom Meeting Dial-in Number: 1-305-224-1968

A quorum being duly present, Chairperson Cronin called the March 26, 2026 Hyannis Fire District Commissioner Regular Meeting to order at 7:02 PM

- PRESENT:** Chairperson Laura Cronin, Commissioner Peter Cross, and Alex Mercado  
**ALSO PRESENT:** Assistant Chief Gregory Dardia, Deputy Chief Jeffrey Lamothe, and Hyannis Fire District (HFD) Recording Secretary Colleen Murphy,  
**ABSENT:** Commissioner Demetrius Atsalis, Chief Peter Burke

**I. OPEN SESSION:**

**MINUTES:**

- Upon a motion duly made and seconded it was voted to approve the minutes of March 12, 2026 as amended

**VOTE: PASSES UNANIMOUSLY**

Vote recorded as follows:

- Chairperson Cronin: Aye
- Commissioner Cross: Aye
- Commissioner Mercado: Aye

- Upon a motion duly made and seconded it was voted to approve the minutes of March 16, 2026 Special Meeting as amended

**VOTE: PASSES UNANIMOUSLY**

Vote recorded as follows:

- Chairperson Cronin: Aye
- Commissioner Cross: Aye
- Commissioner Mercado: Aye

**1. CORRESPONDENCE:**

- Chairperson Cronin said correspondence was sent from the board to the various banks and financial institutions notifying them of the appointment of the temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Sara Hunter, copies of these letters were sent to the board for its record
- Chairperson Cronin read to the board the letter sent to the aforementioned banks and financial institutions to notify them of Sara Hunter's temporary District Clerk-Treasurer appointment
- Chairperson Cronin said that Chief Burke was looking for a letter form he could use to notify the HFD staff of the recent temporary District Clerk-Treasurer appointment; Chairperson Cronin suggested Chief Burke could use this letter to alert the staff of this recent temporary appointment
- Chairperson Cronin said the second correspondence received by the board was from Mr. Richard Gallagher dated March 21, 2026; Mr. Richard Gallagher's letter is concerning his request in the letter dated February 10, 2026 asking for a fee waiver for printed copies for citizens who do not reside in the Hyannis Fire District
- Chairperson Cronin stated she will send back the board's decision to Mr. Richard Gallagher stating that the board decided at the last meeting to not change its current fee schedule

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- None

**4. STREETLIGHTS:**

**a. Audit:**

- None

#### 4. STREETLIGHTS (continued):

##### b. West Main Street:

- Commissioner Mercado said he contacted Eversource Energy; they said they will go out and look at the streetlight on West Main Street ✓

##### c. Angell Road:

- Commissioner Mercado said he will reach out to Commissioner Atsalis to see if there is an update on the Angell Road streetlight ✓

##### d. Ocean Avenue:

- Commissioner Cross said he thought the streetlight on Ocean Avenue was just put back up
- Commissioner Mercado said the Ocean Avenue streetlight is back up

#### 5. OLD BUSINESS:

- None

#### 6. NEW BUSINESS:

##### a. Budget, Elections, Annual Meeting

- Chairperson Cronin said temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter will work with Chief Burke to make sure the Budget's, elections', and the Annual Meeting's deliverables are completed in time for these scheduled events to occur
- Chairperson Cronin said Assistant Chief Dardia will be at the HFD firehouse at 4 PM on March 27, 2026 in case any candidate papers are passed into the firehouse; Chairperson Cronin reminded the board that March 27, 2026 is the last day for nomination papers to be submitted
- Chairperson Cronin said someone at the firehouse will be available to collect on March 27, 2026 at 4 PM the nomination papers
- Chairperson Cronin stated March 27, 2026 is the last day to withdraw from the election and also the warrant articles must be given to temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter; temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter will work on moving these items forward
- Chairperson Cronin said Chief Burke will be working on these Budget items with his departments; Chairperson Cronin said the board has their own Budget format to work on so these items will be ready for the Budget, the elections and the Annual Meeting
- Commissioner Cross asked if Chief Burke had the Budget ready for review yet; Chairperson Cronin said Chief Burke said the Budget is in process and will be ready for the board's review soon

##### b. Appointment of the Temporary District Clerk-Treasurer

- Chairperson Cronin said temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter's start date was March 20, 2026; temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter came in on Wednesday and she spent the whole day at the HFD's firehouse; Chief Burke and Chairperson Cronin met with her this week and they created a priority list; they were also able to get the passwords with help from the Fire Department to get temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter full access to the needed websites and portals
- Chairperson Cronin said temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter knows most of the bankers the board works with; she will get a warrant for March 20, 2026 and another warrant for March 27, 2026; Chairperson Cronin said Paula Carill, HFD Administrative Assistant, has the list of invoices items that need to be paid; temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter was able to get into the HFD's Quickbooks
- Chairperson Cronin said the temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter has hit the ground running; temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter will review everything to make sure all items are in process and/or completed; she will be back on Monday, March 30, 2026; temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter said Lisa Kennedy from her staff will be coming in; temporary District Clerk-Treasurer Hunter said after their crunch time of April 15, 2026 she and her team will be able to create a more set office visit schedule for the HFD
- Chairperson Cronin said the schedule will be worked at, but right now everything is being handled and all vital items in process are moving forward

##### c. Blizzard of 2026 Storm Update:

- Deputy Chief Lamothe said they met with all officers immediately after storm and also all the entities from the Town of Barnstable to understand what went wrong and what went right in regard to the first responders' response during the storm; Deputy Chief Lamothe said the HFD's actions during the storm went extremely well with only a few problems due to the unpredictability of a blizzard and its changing conditions; Deputy Chief Lamothe said Chief Burke started emergency response planning meetings on the Thursday and Friday before the storm when the storm track was more definite
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the storm lasted about 2 days, but the storm's impact lasted 5 days
- Deputy Chief Lamothe stated the HFD did about 306 calls; the HFD got busy very fast during this storm
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the shifts during the day on Sunday reported that there was quiet during the day then after 8 PM the crews were running the whole time for the next 48 hours

### **c. Blizzard of 2026 Storm Update:**

- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the Monday morning of the storm was tough as we had to hold people over from the night shift before as the commute in was tough; 6 or 7 people were on over time as the storm's conditions worsened
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the HFD was able to run normally until 10 AM Monday as the multitude of down wires starting to impact the HFD's access to roads; the HFD utilized its SUVs (sport utility vehicles) to aid in clearing the roads of debris and responding to emergencies
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the HFD had 2 structure fires; 5 true fire calls during that period; and there were a lot of CO (carbon monoxide) problems in addition to calls regarding down lines and blocked roadways
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the first 48 hours the shifts had about 175 calls which reflects the high call volume during the storm; the HFD crews had to balance their fatigue with the call volume; Deputy Chief Lamothe stated the department heads got a lot of valuable feedback from the different shifts so that for future storms the HFD can continue to focus on mitigating the fatigue as the call volume increases during a natural disaster
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said this storm was a good lesson for the HFD team as some HFD members had not done this type of storm response before
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the road access was the biggest issue as the trees and wires started to come down and block roadways; looking forward, Deputy Chief Lamothe said the HFD wants to increase its ability to pinpoint the blocked roadways in real time to help the crews not lose time in responding to an emergency during a storm
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said during a storm of this strength the HFD is not going to get any mutual aid unless there is an emergency that absolutely needs mutual aid
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said Ladder 2 was utilized during the storm which helped the HFD to be agile throughout the storm; the most experienced FFs were assigned to that truck; there were a lot of extended shifts; some people worked 2 to 3 days straight; the HFD will be looking to fix the rotation of crews so that crew members can eat and let crew members rest
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the dispatch was fantastic; the HFD wrote dispatch a letter of commendation for their superb work during the blizzard
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said there were a few communication issues when the internet went down; dispatch is now looking at that right now to fix that and have a backup plan
- Commissioner Cross asked if the HFD crews had any interactions with the Town of Barnstable's road crews during or after the storm
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the HFD did not have direct communication with the Town of Barnstable's road crews, but if there was help needed to clear a road then the HFD or the Town of Barnstable's road crews were given that information to help each other; the Town of Barnstable was giving updated road closure information every hour to the HFD and the HFD crews gave information to the Town of Barnstable
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said no one was hurt; no major damage to anything; there were challenges due to staffing constraints and staff fatigue; Deputy Chief Lamothe said the HFD continues to work on the logistics; there were a lot of repeat calls from dispatch and the Town of Barnstable's Department of Public Works; the HFD is looking to decrease those challenges
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the Town of Barnstable opened a shelter in the Intermediate School on Route 28 on Sunday night; it was opened for 3 or 4 days; it was run by the Barnstable Police and it had agreements with the Red Cross and the AmeriCorps volunteers; 3 shelters were open at one point; a lot of people at the shelter were people who needed oxygen; the HFD tried to get more EMTs at the shelter to relieve the need to go between the shelters and Cape Cod Hospital; at one point there was a 12 hour wait to get into the ER (emergency room); there was a non-profit organization that also gave food at the shelters
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the action items going forward are preplanning; tools on hand and ready to go; contingency plans such as if Cape Cod Hospital has to be evacuated during a storm; and the HFD needs to have multiple back up plans
- Deputy Chief Lamothe said the HFD needs to make sure everyone has a partner even the shift commanders to make sure that no HFD employee is responding to a scene alone during a storm response

### **7. ITEMS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED BY CHAIR:**

- None

### **8. CHIEF'S REPORT:**

- Assistant Chief Dardia said he has not heard back from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) or MEMA (Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency) yet, but all the required paperwork has been submitted by the HFD
- Assistant Chief Dardia said he met with the HFD's insurance company; it reviews the HFD's insurance coverage and it gives an update on coverage and claims; they said the HFD's claims are at 6% while the national average for claims is 9%

**8. CHIEF'S REPORT (continued):**

- Commissioner Cross said a lot of the low number of claims for the HFD has to do with training
- Assistant Chief Dardia said he agreed with Commissioner Cross and he added the training has been documented for the insurance company's HFD files
- Assistant Chief Dardia said he asked the insurance company if the HFD could get a snow blower to use in the parking lot and walkways around the firehouse; Assistant Chief Dardia said he asked to make sure the insurance company was okay with this purchase in regard to any increased risk not directly related to an emergency response
- Assistant Chief Dardia stated the HFD hiring committee finished up round 1 today; the feedback was that there are a lot of great candidates; there are 16 people in total vying for open positions; the HFD is looking to hire 6 FFs
- Assistant Chief Dardia said the 2nd round of the hiring process is scheduled for the first full week of April 2026; this candidate pool is a mix of people from Barnstable, other Massachusetts' towns, and other states
- Assistant Chief Dardia said there were 1821 runs; the run volume was affected by the storm

**9. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- None

Vote on Adjournment of public session:

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to Adjourn the public session

**VOTE: PASSES UNANIMOUSLY**

Vote recorded as follows:

Chairperson Cronin: Aye

Commissioner Cross: Aye

Commissioner Mercado: Aye

Adjourned at 7:35PM

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Murphy, HFD Recording Secretary