

O'Leary to present wastewater draft to assembly

Proposal reviewed with county commissioners this week

By David Still II

dstill@barnstablepatriot.com

Legislation to provide a funding program to help with the Cape's many and expensive wastewater needs is being sharpened, with hopes for filing and approval by the end of the year.

That was the message delivered to the Barnstable County Commissioners Wednesday morning.

Cape Cod Water Protection Collaborative consultant Andrew Gottlieb and board member John O'Brien focused on where the draft legislation office was and what it contained.

Gottlieb has worked "fairly intensively" with Sen. Rob O'Leary's office on the draft. O'Leary himself will be at Wednesday's Assembly of Delegates meeting to review his work on the bill.

Hired by the collaborative in March, Gottlieb said that the legislation has been more broadly defined to include regions beyond Cape Cod, a political decision to open funding to other regions and draw more support.

Among the key parts of the draft is designating 35 percent of the annual Revolving Sewer Fund (SRF) loans to support projects brought under the legislation. That represents some \$100 million in annual loans for sewer and wastewater projects. In addition, SRF funds are loaned at 2 percent interest. For communities that meet certain planning and performance thresholds (growth-neutral), which many Cape towns are positioned to do, the legislation calls for zero-interest loans.

Gottlieb is hopeful that the legislation to be filed and approved by the end of the year.

The commissioners were pleased with the report.

Commission chairman Lance Lambros said, "[Wastewater] is on the top of our agenda right now."

David Still is the editor of the Barnstable Patriot. He welcomes your feedback.