

**Finance Committee Budget Hearing  
Board of Selectmen Meeting  
Truro Community Center  
April 11, 2019**

**Finance Committee Present:** Robert Panessiti, Chair; Susan Areson, Jay Coburn, Richard Wood

**Regrets:** Lori Meads

**Board of Selectmen Present:** Robert Weinstein, Chair; Maureen Burgess, Kristen Reed, Paul Wisotzky, Janet Worthington

**Present:** Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer; Town Accountant Trudi Brazil

Finance Committee Chair Robert Panessiti called the meeting to order and opened the public hearing for the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget at 6:04 p.m. Robert Weinstein called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order.

Mr. Panessiti explained the budget process that the Budget Task Force had conducted to plan for Fiscal Year 2020. He stated that the total FY20 Budget is \$20,089,615. The Finance Committee's Budget Message addresses the ability to offer needed services for Truro. He commented on the influences of the aging population, housing, salaries, seasonal population influx, and job creation. The main source of income for the Town is derived from property taxes, he said. Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) is a state requirement, but it is expected to drop next year. He discussed debt exclusion requests in the Warrant. These vary each year. Mr. Panessiti reviewed the Operating Budget Summary. He commented on the pie chart that depicted personnel expenses, a significant part of the Budget. He explained the 2.5% goal and the 5-year plan for budgeting.

Selectman Kristen Reed thanked the Budget Task Force for helping her understand the budget process. Chair Robert Weinstein thanked the many people responsible for budget preparation. He noted that the process is a collaborative effort. He commented on the state mandates for School and Public Safety. He underlined Chair Panessiti's observation that municipal budgets are very different from personal budgets and are planned over half a year in advance.

Chair Panessiti invited questions from the public. Christopher Clark asked about trends that Board members have noticed. Selectmen Chair Robert Weinstein said he has studied budget rises for several years and has noticed the ever-increasing bottom line. He said other towns try to keep a reasonable total and still provide services to their communities. Janet Worthington said there has been a decrease in school age population, yet the cost of Schools stays high. Finance Committee member Jay Coburn said budget increases will continue as long as towns preserve their own separate infrastructure without merging with other municipalities. Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer said that Truro will be using new software to study data for trends. Jay Coburn said a little town like Truro would be paying the same amount as a larger town for the software or

other items. Kristen Reed said Truro has been working on shared services with neighboring towns. She said the ClearGov app already has Truro information included in its database.

Christopher Clark asked what was the most difficult Budget piece that the Task Force faces. Chair Panessiti said Public Safety, Education, and staffing are all challenges. Robert Weinstein added that resiliency in the face of Climate Change is another challenge. He also discussed how the Education budget can add large increases when costly Special Needs provisions are necessary. Chair Weinstein said that the state had provided some additional money for beach safety. He discussed the importance of the Fire and Rescue. Mr. Clark said this was all about risk situations. Ms. Palmer said there is around one million dollars in the rainy day fund. She said, from her perspective, the biggest budget challenge is meeting the needs of the community while balancing it with keeping costs under control. When the Town can't cover expenses, the Town will need to make decisions on the services that can be provided.

Monica Kraft asked why the Public Works Budget line had such a big decrease. Trudi Brazil explained that all electricity has been moved to another line and that DPW has been the biggest user of electricity. Rae Ann Palmer said the Town is now receiving energy credits.


In closing, Mr. Panessiti commented on the visioning the Town will need as it moves forward. He recommended that residents volunteer on Town boards and attend meetings to stay informed. He gave thanks to staff and the Board of Selectmen for preparation of the FY20 Budget.


Chair Panessiti closed the public hearing and adjourned the Finance Committee meeting. Paul Wisotzky moved to adjourn the Board of Selectmen meeting. Maureen Burgess seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

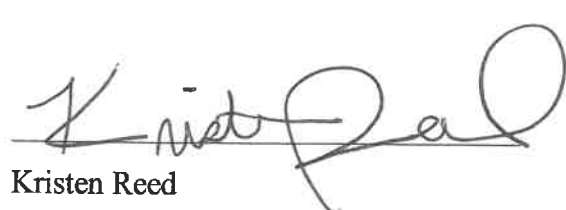
Respectfully submitted,

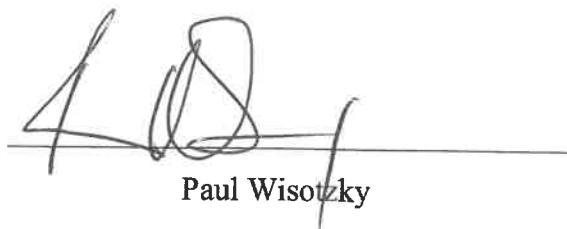


Mary Rogers, Secretary

  
Robert Weinstein, Chair

  
Maureen Burgess, Vice-chair

  
Kristen Reed

  
Paul Wisotzky

  
Janet Worthington, Clerk

