

Select Board Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2024, Budget Task Force (BTF) Meeting

Via Zoom Platform

Select Board Members Present: Kristen Reed-Chair, Susan Areson-Vice Chair, John Dundas-Clerk, Robert Weinstein-Member

Select Board Members Absent: Stephanie Rein-Member

Others Present: Darrin Tangeman-Town Manager, Kelly Clark-Assistant Town Manager, Alex Lessin-Finance Director, Elisabeth Verde-Town Clerk, Barbara Carboni-Town Planner/Land Use Counsel, Trudi Brazil-Town Accountant, Stephanie Costigan-Superintendent, Emily Beebe-Health and Conservation Agent, Vida Richter-School Committee Chair, Robert Panessiti-Finance Committee Chair, Michael Forgione (Truro Voter), Nancy Medoff (Truro Voter)

Chair Reed called the meeting to order at 8:30 am and introduced the Members and Town staff present.

Vice Chair Areson recognized Finance Committee Chair Panessiti who announced that there was not a quorum of Finance Committee members present.

Finance Director Lessin reviewed the agenda for today's meeting.

Clerk

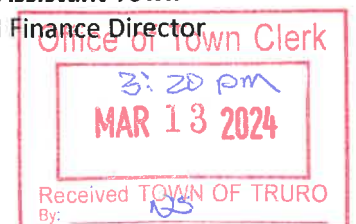
Town Clerk Verde presented the Clerk FY2025 budget narrative and the Elections FY2025 budget narrative. Town Clerk Verde then reviewed the line budget items for both budgets with input from Finance Director Lessin, Town Manager Tangeman, and Assistant Town Manager Clark. Mr. Forgione and Ms. Medoff also participated in the discussion.

The discussion with the Members included the following highlighted items: the \$11,000 software contract to track landlords who don't register with the Town regarding rental registration fees and the need to continue the contract for compliance purposes as this tool has increased number of registrants, the recommendation to subscribe to a full compliance package with the software vendor, hourly wages for board support, and the costs associated with public records requests and the specific budget line item that reflects that amount.

New Positions Discussion

Finance Director Lessin announced and led the discussion for the four requested positions (Assistant Town Clerk, Human Resources Coordinator, Housing Coordinator, Climate Action Agent/Coordinator, and Housing Coordinator) to include the justification for the role, proposed salaries, the administration's prioritization of these positions, and the funding for these positions.

Town Manager Tangeman presented the proposed request and justification for the **Assistant Town Clerk** position with input from Town Clerk Verde. Assistant Town Manager Clark and Finance Director



Lessin provided input on this topic. Mr. Forgione and Finance Committee Chair Panessiti also participated in the discussion.

The discussion with the Members included the following highlighted topics: specific constraints regarding public records requests through the Town Clerk's office and the Chief of Police's office, the effort to reduce the number of public records requests, Town staff workloads increased by responding to public records requests, the overlap of certain duties among the Town staff when processing public records requests, the salary review and the funding source for the position, the proposed position would be voted on at Town Meeting, and the suggestion to use a contractor for the position rather than a full-time employee with benefits.

Assistant Town Manager Clark presented the proposed request and justification for the **Human Resources Coordinator** position with input from Finance Director Lessin regarding the funding source for the position.

Finance Director Lessin announced that all of these proposed positions are posted in a public folder on the Town website.

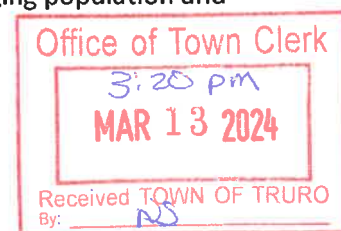
Health and Conservation Agent Beebe presented the proposed request and justification for the **Climate Action Agent/Coordinator** position with input from Finance Director Lessin regarding the funding source for the position. Mr. Forgione also participated in the discussion.

The discussion with the Members included the following highlighted topics: other municipalities on Cape Cod and Massachusetts which have a similar position on the Town staff, the status of the contract with a company that owns a solar array for net metering credits to reduce the Town's electric bills, and the salary of \$57,000 may not be adequate for the technical expertise and education necessary for the position (*Note: Finance Director Lessin stated that he had intended to update the slide with a new starting salary range of \$67,000-\$79,000 and he noted that it still might not be adequate.*).

Town Planner/Land Use Counsel Carboni presented the proposed request and justification for the **Housing Coordinator** position with input from Finance Director Lessin regarding the funding source for the position. Town Planner/Land Use Counsel Carboni also provided background information relating to this position was approved at last year's Town Meeting but was not approved at the ballot box. The need for the position still exists as the Housing Production Plan (HPP) has been completed and the current Town staff does not have the capacity to execute the HPP.

Assistant Town Manager Clark, Town Manager Tangeman, and Finance Director Lessin provided input on this topic. Finance Committee Chair Panessiti and Mr. Forgione also participated in the discussion.

The discussion with the Members included the following highlighted topics: clarity of the use of CPC funds for this full-time position so it will require a legal opinion from Town Counsel, the suggestion of the use of appropriated funds which have been budgeted for a position(s) that is/are vacant and moving those funds to fund this role (not permissible by statute), the possibility of funding this position through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, the inadequate effort by the Select Board to explain in an comprehensive way to the public in order to diminish the anti-housing sentiment in Town, and the reduction (by approximately 40%) of the year-round population and an increased aging population and the need to provide economic stability and housing opportunities.



Chair Reed suggested that this topic of proposed positions presented during Budget Task Force be added to a future Select Board meeting agenda after the Members have had enough time to consider these requests followed by a policy discussion on which positions are prioritized. There were no objections.

Outstanding and Unresolved Items

Finance Director Lessin reviewed the additional following budgets and specific budget line items: the Annual Town Report and Annual Town Meeting Warrant budget, the Allocated Energy Fund budget, the Communications budget, the Municipal Postage budget, the Emergency Management budget, the Soldiers and Sailors Lots budget, and the Human Services budget.

Assistant Town Manager Clark and Town Accountant Brazil provided input on this topic. Mr. Forgione also participated in the discussion.

The Members discussed the details regarding the \$45,000 for tentage, drivers, and shuttle buses to accommodate 1,000 attendees at the Annual Town Meeting.

Finance Director Lessin then reviewed the Town's draft FY2025 budget with the Members and this document will be posted on the Town's website to satisfy the Town's Charter requirements. The draft FY2025 budget is \$26,417,793. Finance Director Lessin noted that this was a working document and that the Finance Department will have a completed budget with final numbers within the next two weeks. Finance Director Lessin said that he will be able to present the final budget at an upcoming Select Board meeting. Finance Director Lessin then reviewed the upcoming deadlines for the budget and the printing of the Warrant.

Assistant Town Manager Clark provided input on this topic. Finance Committee Chair Panessiti and Mr. Forgione participated in this discussion.

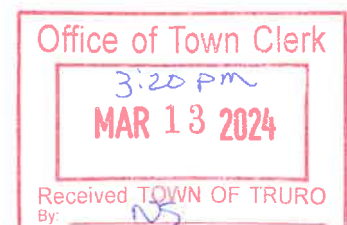
Chair Reed recommended that the Finance Department create charts and graphs to present at future meetings so members of the public obtain a better understanding of the Town budget and the process. Finance Director Lessin and Assistant Town Manager Clark concurred. Chair Reed also commented that it may be useful for the Town to place an organizational chart on the Town website as well as a photograph of each Town staff member next to each staff member's name.

Finance Director Lessin noted that citizens have a way to participate in this process throughout the year by attending Finance Committee meetings as well as Select Board meetings and Budget Task Force meetings.

Finance Committee Chair Panessiti thanked everyone for this participation and hard work.

Chair Reed thanked the Town staff for their hard work as well as the members of the public for participating in this budget process.

Chair Reed adjourned the Budget Task Force meeting at 10:58 am.





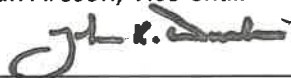
Alexander O. Powers
Board/Committee/Commission Support Staff



Kristen Reed, Chair



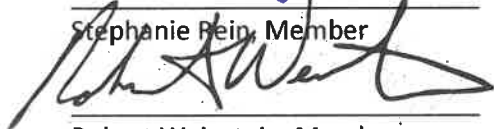
Susan Areson, Vice Chair



John Dundas, Clerk



Stephanie Rein, Member



Robert Weinstein, Member

Public Records Material Attachment

Legal Notice

