

**Budget Task Force FY2018 Budget Meeting  
Monday, January 23, 2017 at 8:00am  
Selectmen's Meeting Room-Truro Town Hall  
24 Town Hall Road**

**Present: Paul Wisotzky- Chair, Board of Selectmen, Robert Weinstein-Board of Selectmen, Maureen Burgess- Clerk, Board of Selectmen, Kelly Clark-Assistant Town Manager, Trudi Brazil-Town Accountant, Lori Meads-Chair, Finance Committee, Richard Wood-Finance Committee Member, Robert Panessiti-Finance Committee Member, Michael Gradone-Superintendent, Truro Central School, Theresa Humes-Chair, Truro School Committee, Tricia Ford-Library Director, Sally Brotman-Chair, Library Trustees**

Chair Wisotzky noted that he did not need to convene the meeting at 8:00am because there was no quorum of the Board of Selectmen at that time. Chair Meads convened the meeting at 8:00am for the Finance Committee of which there was a quorum.

Chair Wisotzky asked Superintendent Gradone to bring the group up to speed on the school's budget. Superintendent Gradone stated that when he left for winter vacation, they had a level-funded budget. When he came back to work on January third, he discovered that one of their special education students had been turned down for enrollment in a State school with a minimal tuition. The three alternative placements started at \$200,000 and went up from there. Right now they are looking at a tuition that could be as high as \$270,000, plus transportation once a week. When he gave the School Committee the update they asked him to consider ways, within the level funded budget, to mitigate the additional cost. He has been working with the Special Education Administrator on that. He will be bringing the committee some much lesser adjustments to try to bring the net impact closer to \$200,000. The committee is scheduled to meet February 14<sup>th</sup>. Truro School Committee Chair, Theresa Humes added that they will pursue having the town which the father lives in share the cost; however that will take upward of a year.

*At approximately 8:07am, Chair Wisotzky convened the meeting of the Board of Selectmen due to the arrival of Clerk, Maureen Burgess.*

Superintendent Gradone continued by stating that the budget, obviously, would not be level funded. There would be an increase of approximately \$200,000 and he will know more as the placement is finalized.

Chair Wisotzky confirmed that this extra amount would most likely be in the budget for the next ten years.

Town Accountant Brazil asked how the funding for the placement that the student is in right now is handled; specifically is the entire years' fees been paid already? Superintendent Gradone explained that they are billed semi-annually for tuition, and they will get an adjustment when the student leaves the DY program.

Finance Committee member Panessiti asked if Superintendent Gradone knew where he was in his current budget and was he expecting to turn back funds. Superintendent Gradone stated that they would be turning back funds, but not as much as in prior years. He estimates the amount to be turned back to be in the vicinity of \$175,000-\$200,000. Finance Committee

member Panessiti also asked if the CIP was part of the overall budget. Accountant Brazil stated that it was included in the town's CIP; the school does not include it in their budget. Chair Wisotzky asked what was in the CIP budget this year. Town Accountant Brazil said that a technology upgrade to one half of the building was in there, along with replacing carpet (which is being phased in the next three years), and some peripheral costs associated with replacing the boiler.

Finance Committee member Panessiti wished to make a comment regarding the Finance Committee's position over the past couple of years regarding "found money". The town has been fortunate that every year that there have been instances where there is an amount of money "found". He believes that townspeople think there is always extra money to spend on superfluous things, but they have an obligation, as leaders, to let people know that the Town has important needs.

A short discussion was then held on how much money has been spent on the Ballston overwash to date, per a question posed by Finance Committee member Wood. Town Accountant Brazil let the group know that approximately \$35,000-\$36,000, covered by Chapter 90, has been spent. What the Town is projected to spend is unknown, because the studies aren't completed. Finance Committee member Wood used Ballston as an example of a "surprise" to the Town, where an event happens that is not planned for. Town Accountant Brazil is hearing from towns-people to not use the pledge money from the Dennis property to balance the budget, but to put it toward a necessary expense.

Library Director Ford and Library Trustee Chair Sally Brotman approached the table to discuss the library budget.

Director Ford started with the salaries. There has been no turn-over and there are three employees who are at the top of their step. There is one new staff person transitioning to longevity.

Purchase of services is up a little bit, mostly for databases. She believes there will be relief from that in future years because the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners is looking at putting databases under "materials". She has increased services by \$300 per month for a new printer which is not owned, but leased. A discussion was held regarding charges for the public using the copy machine. Both Director Ford and Accountant Brazil have researched what other libraries charge and Truro is in the same ballpark.

Charges in the "Other" category have gone up due to an increase in CLAMS fees. It is estimated that the increase will be about \$1000.00, assuming level funding by the State. Finance Committee Chair Meads asked how fees were assessed. Director Ford explained that it was assessed based on the size of the population and the size of the library users. Accountant Brazil asked if the CLAMS fee play at all into the percentage requirement for State certification. Director Ford replied that just the part that they purchase eBooks with plays into that percentage.

Chair Wisotzky asked whether the \$10,000 in the budget was for propane, or the generator. Director Ford said it was the cost for oil. Finance Committee member Wood asked about the \$3,000.00 in Purchase and Services for landscaping. Director Ford explained that that cost was for landscaping not provided by the Department of Public Works. Finance Committee member Wood then asked if Town Hall, DPW, Community Center, and Police and Fire budgets had

similar line items. Accountant Brazil stated that there were no buildings that had growth that close to it.

Accountant Brazil stated that the total increase to the library budget is \$4,000.00. While it appears to be an increase, there is no increase to the overall Town budget, due to that \$4,000.00 being brought over from the Recreation budget as a reclassification expenditure. There was a line item in the Recreation budget for a “birth to three” program. The program is held at the library. They have removed the funding from the Recreation budget and placed it into the Library budget.

Next was the CIP discussion. Director Ford stated that there are only two items. The first item is the project to replace the shelving in the children’s room. The second item is the consultant to reconfigure library space. They are having difficulty with the space. The children’s room is overflowing, and the community room is about ½ the size that it should be. The community room holds 60 people and the programs held in that room routinely hit 70-100 people in attendance. After consulting with the Library Trustees, Director Ford chose \$15,000 as a dollar amount to place in the CIP for a consultant. Finance Chair Meads wondered if hiring an architectural firm to do a consult regarding the actual structure of the library would be a better use of money.

Finance member Panessiti asked how many times a year does the Director find space to be an issue and is the COA being fully utilized, because we must be flexible with our resources. He stated that the Town cannot spend money on something that’s happening because of a demographic shift for a short period of time, and continue to spend money on short-term items. He is not entirely convinced that this has been a properly managed problem. Perhaps the COA space can be managed better, between library, school, and other people’s events. Chair Wisotzky wonders if having better storage facilities would alleviate some of the problems. Director Ford states that storage is the least of the issues. Library Trustee Chair Brotman added that the Trustees have postponed certain items; such as replacing the carpeting before any sort of reconfiguration takes place. She believes that getting a consultant would be money well spent.

A general discussion was held regarding “found money”. Chair Wisotzky would like a representative from the Finance Committee at the Board of Selectmen meeting, whenever that item is scheduled on an agenda. Finance Committee member Panessiti believes that any open forum of discussion regarding funds/budgeting should start with an overview from the Board of Selectmen (in concert with the Finance Committee) to state where the Town is headed, what the Town has been trying to do, and what the long-range vision is. Finance Committee member Wood pointed out that Annual Town Meeting is in three months. He believes there should be a well-orchestrated joint response (from Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen) to take the lead. A suggestion was posed by Finance Committee Chair Meads that perhaps something can be posted on the Town website with which citizens can give suggestions and ask questions regarding the money and what should be done with it. Selectman Weinstein agrees that there should be a process for informing the public, immediately, about where the money from the Dennis pledge ends up in the Town’s budget and how the money comes in incrementally.

Chair Wisotzky asked for a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen meeting at 9:45am  
Selectman Weinstein made the motion to adjourn.  
Selectman Burgess seconded.  
So voted 3-0 in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Noelle L. Scoullar

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Paul Wisotzky, Chair

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Jan Worthington, Vice-Chair

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Maureen Burgess, Clerk

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Jay Coburn

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Robert Weinstein