

Select Board Meeting Minutes

February 14, 2023, Budget Task Force Meeting

Via GoToMeeting Platform

Select Board Members Present: Kristen Reed-Chair, John Dundas-Clerk, Sue Areson-Member, Stephanie Rein-Member

Select Board Members Absent: Robert Weinstein-Vice Chair, Stephanie Rein-Member

Others Present: Darrin Tangeman-Town Manager, Kelly Clark-Assistant Town Manager, Alex Lessin-Finance Director, Trudi Brazil-Town Accountant, Stephanie Costigan-Truro School Superintendent, Kolby Blehm-School Committee Chair, Robert Panessiti-Finance Committee (FinCom) Chair, Rich Wood-Finance Committee (FinCom) Vice Chair, Raphael Richter-Finance Committee (FinCom) Member

Chair Reed called the meeting to order at 8:30 am and introduced Members and Town staff present. Chair Reed then recognized FinCom Chair Panessiti. A quorum of FinCom members present, FinCom Chair Panessiti introduced the FinCom members and announced the FinCom meeting open.

Chair Reed led the discussions and reviews of the FY2024 Budget for the following departments: non-departmental budgets and reserved for outstanding Budget discussions.

Non-departmental Budgets

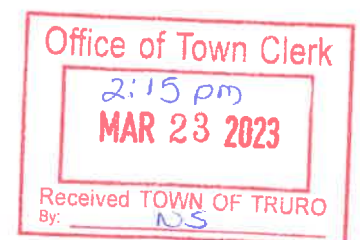
Prior to the presentation, FinCom Chair Panessiti announced that FinCom Member Richter had joined so there was now a forum of FinCom members. Chair Panessiti opened the FinCom meeting.

Chair Reed recognized Town Manager Tangeman and Finance Director Lessin. Finance Director Lessin presented an overview and the budget highlights for the FY2024 Non-departmental Budgets.

Members and Town staff discussed the purpose for the \$2,000 allocated for the Bike and Walkways Committee; the proposed budget for the Water Resources Oversight Committee (WROC) no longer exists and its responsibilities now fall under the Board of Health; intent to increase the reserve fund by \$25,000 to \$200,000; maintain the operating budget within the parameters of Proposition 2½; and a general override that would include \$125,000 for the reserve fund.

Outstanding Budget Discussions

Finance Director Lessin provided updated budget requests for the FY2024 Budgets for Recreation & Beach Department, Council on Aging, and for the Census. Finance Director Lessin then provided an operating budget summary and reviewed a draft budget summary recap. Town Manager Tangeman reviewed potential new initiatives and potential overrides (police, fire and rescue, and childcare programs). Town Manager Tangeman briefed the draft potential tax impact of the potential new initiatives and potential overrides.



Members and Town staff discussed Public Safety's 14.2% budget increase that included the 4 new firefighters/EMTs; any outside funding for the FY2023 budget and potential outside funding for FY2024 regarding the 4 new firefighters/EMTs to defray the cost of hiring those individuals; the purchase of a new ambulance on the CIP but not on the operating budget; the concept of free cash (not free and not cash); projection of state aid to the Town; the publishing and distribution of visual aids to better educate the public on the annual budget process ahead of the Town Meeting; email visual aids to subscribers of the Town electronic newsletter; united in messaging to the public and challenge misconceptions which the public may have about the budget process; the \$600,000 projection for Public Safety's facility; the Pond Village Study; the Wastewater Management Plan; the need for a new ambulance; ALS transport; the high contract cost of a private ambulatory service provider as a solution; fire department administrator's responsibility for invoicing and managing collections versus a contractor performing those tasks; and the process for raising and appropriating funds.

Additional discussions ensued regarding concerns about the Town's staffing challenges to deliver services and programs which citizens expect and to keep the community safe; suggestion to implement the term "out of school services" versus "after school services" to better and accurately reflect the needs of families utilizing those services; the backup plan should hiring goals not be met for firefighters/EMTs (i.e. RFP for Coastal Ambulance or similar private ambulatory services provider for a short-term solution due to high cost that could be 2x or 3x more costly than annual Town provided ambulatory services and the hiring of out-of-state certified EMTs for a stop gap option); clarification of the role for the administrator for the after school program; the likely reduction of seasonal staff positions if the after school program is fully staffed; the advantages of individual departmental overrides versus group overrides; inclusion of overrides in Warrant articles; and the citizens' ability to amend Warrant articles.

Member Dundas and FinCom Vice Chair Wood had departed the meeting.

Members discussed the need for additional Budget Task Force meetings and the consensus was to further discuss the FY2024 budgets in the respective body's meetings as they are very transparent and open to the public. Chair Reed thanked all the presenters and Town staff.

Member Areson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:14 am.

Member Rein seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Member Areson – Aye

Member Rein – Aye

Chair Reed - Aye

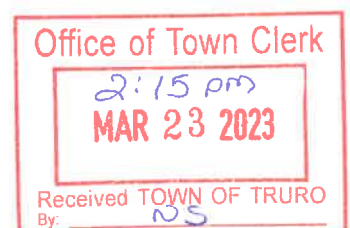
So voted, 3-0-0, motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,



Alexander O. Powers

Board/Committee/Commission Support Staff





Darrin K. Tangeman Under the Authority of the Truro Select Board

Public Records Material Attachment

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