

**Truro Select Board Meeting
Tuesday, March 31, 2020
Virtual Meeting**

Select Board Members Attending: Janet Worthington, Chair; Susan Areson, Kristen Reed, Stephanie Rein, Robert Weinstein

Attending: Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer; Assistant Town Manager Kelly Clark; Health Agent Emily Beebe

Chair Janet Worthington called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

Message to the Public

Chair Worthington asked Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer if she would address the message to the public, but Ms. Palmer requested a switch in the agenda order to give the Health Agent time to join the virtual meeting. Ms. Worthington rearranged the agenda and began with a different topic.

Town Manager Search

Kristen Reed discussed moving forward with the process of appointing a Town Manager Search Committee and how to proceed under the new terms of the Covid-19 situation. Janet Worthington said business as usual is not happening. She said that the Select Board needed to discuss the Town Manager position with Rae Ann Palmer first. Given the Covid virus, everything needs to stay as is for now, she said. Interviews could be a problem for both candidates and search committee applicants. Susan Areson said that not having the opportunity to interview some search committee applicants in person, could give those who already had been interviewed by the Select Board an unfair advantage. It struck her as awkward. She did, however, agree with Kristen Reed that the Select Board should try to have a committee in place for when they could interview the Town Manager candidates in person. Ms. Palmer relayed her discussion with the consultant, Bernard Lynch of Paradigm Associates, regarding forming a screening committee, but she had not discussed the 29 applicants for the Town Manager position with him.

Robert Weinstein asked Ms. Palmer's if she would be willing to stay on for a period of time up to three months beyond her expected retirement in June. He advocated suspending whatever was going on with the applicants, providing continuity in leadership and keeping Town government stable.

Kristen Reed questioned if the search committee formation and interviewing Town Manager candidates would be considered "essential" business, which the Town has committed to provide. She also asked Rae Ann Palmer about her willingness to postpone her retirement, but not indefinitely. If the Select Board decides that's what they would like, Ms. Palmer said she would

consider an extension of her service. Kristen Reed said it was important that someone who knows the town be in place to help navigate in this difficult time. She still wondered if organizing the search committee was relevant at this time.

Susan Areson suggested a month by month extension of Rae Ann Palmer's service, not that she wouldn't favor retaining Ms. Palmer for a three-month period. Ms. Areson considered the logistics of interviewing for the screening committee to have them in place and ready for the next steps in the Town Manager selection process.

Robert Weinstein said it would be less problematic to interview the search committee using virtual meetings, but he said it was important for the community to keep the current Town Manager on, provided she is willing to do so, for her leadership and knowledge. He and the Chair will have further discussions with the Town Manager, but he asked for more input from the other members of the Board

Stephanie Rein thanked Ms. Palmer for her willingness to continue on a month by month or on a 3-month basis. She didn't think the Town Manager application process could continue at this time. She thought the search committee appointments might be completed, depending upon circumstances. She said the virtual meeting option was a way to set the members for the search committee.

Janet Worthington said the first step would be to establish a plan with Rae Ann Palmer and inform the townspeople. The Select Board could defer a decision on how to proceed with forming the search committee and determining when Town Manager candidates could participate in live interviews. Vice-chair Robert Weinstein and Chair Worthington will work out a plan with Rae Ann Palmer. They will report on this at the next meeting. Susan Areson suggested holding weekly virtual meetings. Everyone agreed that this was a good plan for the Board and the town.

Covid-19 Update

Ms. Palmer said the letter to the public about travelers coming to town had been posted on the website. She said it has valuable information and had Assistant Town Manager Kelly Clark, who had the letter immediately available, read it out loud. The message stressed the limited health resources that Truro provides and discouraged people from coming to Truro. The notice requested that those who did relocate here bring their own provisions and self-quarantine for 14 days, the guideline from the governor for people who come into Massachusetts from elsewhere. Susan Areson suggested removing "newly released" from the posting when it appears next week. Select Board members agreed the message was good for now.

Health Agent Emily Beebe reported that she has a weekly meeting with the Department of Public Health, which was running in the background as she spoke. She said Governor Baker's stay at home and social distancing advisory underscores the current plan. Everyone should be treating everyone else as if they have Covid-19. People need to act as if they have it, she said. Social

distancing, the primary goal, is defined as purposefully and deliberately distancing from other people. A part of that is respecting other people and being conscious of their desire to have space, especially at grocery stores. The messages to wash your hands – wash your hands and don't touch your face remain. There's a new symptom check list put out by the World Health Organization that allows you to log on and give your symptoms to see if you should be tested. Posted on the Town website are: Governor Baker's advisory, Truro's statement to the public, the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) travel advisory and a good phone number (508-862-5595) for people if they have fever, cough and trouble breathing, but no relationship with a doctor. The Health Board has posted all this and other needed information on the Health Department's page and the Covid-19 page on the Town of Truro's website.

Health Agent Beebe took questions from the Select Board. In response to Ms. Worthington request for advice about wearing masks, the Health Agent said they are a good reminder for social distancing, a reminder not to touch your face, but masks are not protecting you and could give a false sense of security. If you are in isolation and trying to protect the people around you, the masks are recommended for reducing what's in the atmosphere of your space. She concluded, there are pluses and minuses on wearing masks. There's nothing wrong with wearing one to the grocery store as long as you know it is not protecting you. It does send a message to other people that you are taking distancing very seriously. Susan Areson asked about people who have had the virus, recovered and became immune. She wanted to know if there is a test to determine if an asymptomatic person had had the virus and become immune. Emily Beebe said she was curious about this herself but did not have any information at this time. She will report about the antibody test when information becomes available. Kristen Reed asked about false negatives and reporting of cases. Ms. Beebe said she had little information on this. Health officials can only work with the data as it is presented. She wished she had a better answer, she said.

Robert Weinstein asked about testing strictures in Barnstable County. Here primary care physicians have to be connected to Cape Cod Hospital. He is troubled by the lack of specific information on the number of cases for each Cape town. Emily Beebe said it was a decision at the state level to have the numbers reported on a county level. Posting the information on a daily basis is being done on the Truro website, Ms. Palmer said. Emily Beebe said soon there will be two numbers to post: active cases and recovered cases. Mr. Weinstein asked about information on steps people should follow if they think they should be tested. Ms. Beebe recommended the phone number she had given, 508-862-5595, for those who do not have a relationship with a doctor. Kelly Clark said information on who can get tested and how to do so was posted on the Town website.

Rae Ann Palmer reported on Town services. COA phone calls to elders of concern and other program participants and Food Pantry work continue. Another food pickup is planned for April 12th. Library staff is posting on social media and working from home with parental meetings and reading stories to kids online. The Police are continuing business as usual. DPW is working. The Transfer Station is very busy. Ms. Palmer reminded those who need access to the

Transfer Station to go online. There have been reports of rude reactions from those without permission. People attempting to use the Transfer Station need to be respectful to staff. A new time for yard waste disposals only was set for Wednesdays from 8 to 10 a.m. It had been too hard to manage regular trash and yard waste disposal at the same time. The DPW Director had asked about keeping the 5-day schedule at the Transfer Station until the end of May. Ms. Palmer supports his recommendation, but she wanted to hear from the Select Board members.

Stephanie Rein expressed support for DPW workers at the Transfer Station. She agreed that the five days schedule was reasonable for now, and the full seven day schedule could begin June 1st. Everyone agreed with this. Robert Weinstein said people should recognize that all of our first responders should be given the recommended distancing. Janet Worthington asked about first responder buttons for identification of staff at the Transfer Station. the Chair said she would look into this. Ms. Palmer said Truro DPW has been setting out trash barrels at the beaches.

Stephanie Rein commended Suzie who is getting food out to students through the Food for Kids program at the Truro Central School.

Rae Ann Palmer said the Outer Cape Managers have started conversations with the County Health Director and will be holding more meetings. Preparations at the state and county level are being made for the potential surge in cases, a matter of concern. She said the lines of communication are good.

Fire Chief/Emergency Management Director Timothy Collins joined the meeting to report on preparations and equipment secured for Truro. His department has increased the mask supply, their Tyvek suit supply, eye shields and gloves. They are better equipped to deal with a potential increase in cases. Janet Worthington asked about transports arrangements with Lower Cape and Provincetown. He said people are hesitant to go to the hospital, so there hasn't been an increase in calls. Fire/Rescue is screening every request for services, sending one person in to assess if personal protective equipment (PPE) suits need to be donned for transporting a patient to the hospital by ambulance. They are trying to limit exposure to personnel, maximize the use of PPE equipment and reduce the risk to other people in the house, Chief Collins said.

Rae Ann Palmer discussed other arrangements for Town business. She said people are working from home. Mail, accounting, financial transactions and permitting are all being covered. She acknowledged work of Health Agent Emily Beebe, Trudi Brazil in Accounting, Susan Joseph and Molly Stevens in the Town Clerk's office, and Nicole Tudor, Noelle Scoullar and Liz Sturdy in Administration. The staff is really pulling together, she said. She thanked IT Director David Wennerberg, who had arranged the Go to Meeting technology that is being used. Kelly Clark also has helped with IT set up, Ms. Palmer said.

Susan Areson asked for information on the nine cases of Covid-19 in town, but that was not something Ms. Palmer could disclose for reasons of privacy. Ms. Palmer said she had only

received one e-mail at the start of the meeting from the Planning Board Chair, informing the Board that she had tuned in to the virtual meeting.

Kristen Reed thanked whoever had constructed the helpful website information on remote meetings, the Covid-19 information and the updates. She suggested a centralized location for the Covid-19 information on the home page. She said people have been asking about live streaming the meetings. Ms. Palmer said equipment for live streaming is on order. Once the part comes in, meetings can be streamed live at the same time they are broadcast live on TV. In the past, there was a policy that did not allow for remote participation or live streaming, but these are different times, she said. Kristen Reed asked about press releases, the privacy policy for cases and, specifically, the relationship with the press. Rae Ann Palmer said the Department of Public Health guideline is to post information on the Town website. If something is newsworthy, the Town will prepare a press release, but the Town will not be sending a daily number count of cases to the press.

Rae Ann Palmer read, via e-mail, an enthusiastic endorsement of the virtual meeting from Susan Howe, who had been watching it. The meeting wound down with an exchange of pleasantries, more thanks to staff and a decision to move the weekly meetings to 2 o'clock on Tuesdays to accommodate the Health Agent's scheduled meetings with the Department of Public Health.

Next Meeting

Select Board members agreed with Ms. Palmer that the regular meeting for April 7, 2020 should begin at 2 p.m. Agenda for that meeting includes: appointment of Liz Sturdy as registrar of voters, discussion of Town Meeting and Election postponement and dates, nomination papers, the Pamet culvert at Truro Center and MS Society annual bike ride. Nomination paper due dates do not change, Ms. Palmer said. Janet Worthington suggested inviting a doctor to a future meeting if possible. Rae Ann Palmer gave some advice for attending Provincetown's virtual meeting. Kelly Clark will provide the Select Board with the number to call.

Adjournment

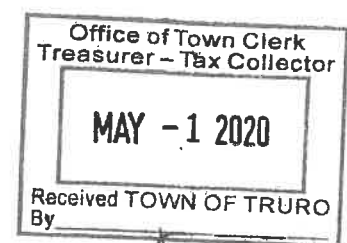
Robert Weinstein moved to adjourn. Susan Areson seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Rogers,
Secretary



Rae Ann Palmer, Town Manager
Under the Authority of the Truro Select Board



Public Records material of 3/31/2020

e-mails from Ann Greenbaum and Susan Howe

